Sustrans annual report and financial statements 2023-2024

Sustrans

Year ended 31 March 2024

Charity Number	326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)
Company Number	1797726 (England and Wales)

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Legal and administrative information

Sustrans is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its Articles of Association.

Registered Office	2 Cathedral Square, Bristol BS1 5DD
Charity Number	326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)
Company Number	1797726 (England and Wales)

Trustees and Directors

The trustees[1] who were in office during the year and up to the date of signing the Annual Report and Financial Statements were:

Moray Macdonald (R, P)	Chair
Heather Preen (AR, E, P)	Vice Chair[2]
Helen Simpson (AR, F)	
Su Crighton (E, F, I)	
Alistair Gibbons (FP, I)	
Catherine Max (AR)	(retired 27 February 2024)
Stuart Mills (FP, E)	(resigned 20 January 2024)
Frank Swinton (FP, R, E, I)	
Fiona Westwood (FP, R, F)	
Nicola Wood MBE (AR, R, P)	
Benita Mehra (E, F)	(appointed on 7 July 2023)
Carol-Ann Boyter (I, P)	(appointed on 7 July 2023)
Tessa Dwyer (F, P)	(appointed on 19 January 2024)
Zahir Nayani (F, I)	(appointed on 19 January 2024)
Mohammed Ibrahim Ali (F, E)	(appointed on 19 January 2024)

AR = Audit and Risk Committee (until January 2024)
FP = Finance and Performance Committee (until January 2024)
E = Estates Committee
R = Remuneration Committee (until January 2024)
F = Finance Committee (from January 2024)
I = Impact Committee (from January 2024)
P = People Committee (from January 2024)

Rhona Marsland was appointed in the year as a non-Trustee Associate of the Board.

Company Secretary Paul Clinton[3]

Notes:
1 Trustee biographies are available on our website.
2 Helen Simpson was Vice Chair until 19 January 2024.
3 Andy Appleby was Company Secretary until 7 July 2023.

Executive Directors

The Executive Directors[4] in post during the year and up to the date of signing the Annual Report and Financial Statements were:

Xavier Brice	Chief Executive
Sally Copley	Executive Director, External Affairs (until September 2023)
Paul Twocock	Executive Director, External Affairs (from April 2024)
Susie Dunham	Executive Director, Impact
Harry Hayer	Executive Director, People and Organisational Development
Sam Kemp	Executive Director, Finance, Fundraising and Resources
Matt Winfield	Chief Operating Officer (from October 2023)[5]

Notes:
4 Executive Director biographies are available on our website.
5 Matt Winfield was Executive Director, England, Wales and Northern Ireland until September 2023. Scotland was represented at Exec by the Scotland Director, Karen McGregor until September 2023.

Advisers

Independent auditors

Crowe UK LLP
Fourth Floor
St James House
St James Square
Cheltenham, GL50 3PR

Solicitors

Bevan Brittan LLP
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Bristol, BS2 0HQ

Burness Paul LLP
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Edinburgh, EH3 9WJ

Investment Manager

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8 Finsbury Circus
London, ECM 7AZ

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
Bristol City Centre Branch
PO Box 1000, BX1 1LT

Clydesdale Bank plc
23 Bank Street
Airdrie, ML6 6AD3

Handelsbanken
66 Queen Square
Bristol, BS1 4JP

Santander UK plc
12 Baldwin Street
Bristol, BS1 1SD

Creating change together: Our vision for healthier places and happier lives

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle. We want to see a society where the way we all travel creates healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

In today's complex and uncertain world, the need to achieve Net Zero is widely recognised. The role of transport as well as its impact on people and places is pivotal.

Transport produced 27% of the UK's total emissions in 2019. Of this, the majority (91%) came from road transport vehicles. This needs to be addressed urgently.

That's why we work across the UK to help people walk, wheel and cycle more – and feel better connected and healthier from doing so. We're passionate about making it easier to leave the car at home by creating safe routes that link up with public transport and active travel alternatives.

As custodians of the National Cycle Network, in the last year (2023-2024) we've delivered hundreds of projects up and down the country, removed hundreds of restrictive barriers and opened up access to new users of the Network. And we have continued to work in tandem with communities to inspire them to change the way we all travel every day, forging closer connections with our neighbours and reducing traffic to create a more sustainable society for us all.

But we haven't done this alone. It is thanks to the support of our generous donors, our dedicated volunteers and our partners, that we've been able to reach even more people, empowering them to make healthier travel choices.

In the years to come, we will continue our vital work to create a fairer society by making affordable active travel options accessible to everyone. Because we know that by doing this, we can improve health and wellbeing, increase social connection and improve the environment.

– **Xavier Brice, Sustrans Chief Executive**

Public benefit

In setting our aims and objectives, carrying out our activities, and reporting on our achievements, we have complied with the requirements of the Charities Act to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. The remainder of this report describes how Sustrans has planned and delivered its public benefit.

Our aims and objectives

Sustrans' charitable objects, as set out in our articles of association, are:

- to promote and encourage, both in the UK and overseas, for the public benefit the development in the community and the provision of safe routes, paths and facilities for cycling, walking and other forms of low energy transport
- to undertake and carry on projects and activities of a charitable nature which will assist in promoting healthy recreation, the protection of the environment and the conservation of energy resources.

Our vision

Our vision is of a society where the way we travel creates healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

Our mission

Our mission is to make it easier for everyone to walk and cycle.

Our strategy

Last year Sustrans completed the fourth year of our 2020-2025 strategy. We have made significant progress in achieving our goals under our Paths for Everyone and Liveable Cities and Towns strategic priorities.

Towards the end of the year, we began work on developing our next five-year strategy, which will be in place by April 2025. We will be reviewing how Sustrans can best make progress towards our vision between 2025 and 2030.

Our strategic priorities

Making it easy to leave the car at home delivers a better environment for everybody. How we choose (or are forced) to travel, and our car-dependency is ruining our environment and contributing towards climate change. This is disproportionately affecting people from marginalised groups and those living in areas with high deprivation, particularly in inner cities.

Air pollution is the biggest environmental threat to health in the UK. What's more, communities already at risk of poorer health are being further disadvantaged by higher exposure to polluted air. Living near busy or dangerous roads can also prevent people from accessing green and public space.

It’s because of these challenges that we focus our work on two strategic priorities:

Paths for everyone

The National Cycle Network provides a vital backbone to the country, connecting communities to each other and helping neighbourhoods come to life.

As custodians of this Network, we work to ensure it is accessible to everyone and easy to reach from towns and cities, so it continues to be a treasured national asset that is loved locally.

Liveable cities and towns for everyone

We believe the places where we live, work and enjoy ourselves should be planned around people, not cars.

To create more liveable cities and towns, we work with decision-makers looking to bring about positive change, helping them to plan and provide active travel options for their communities.

We work to shape policy, provide expertise on planning and building active travel infrastructure, and deliver programmes which shift people away from car use and help communities come to life.

We’re for everyone

We’re determined to be ‘for everyone’, recognising that to achieve this, we must address inequity by focusing our work where it can benefit the people most in need and have the greatest positive impact.

We make sure that communities are at the heart of everything we do. We listen to the needs and wants of people, particularly the most marginalised. And we talk to local communities all over the UK to find out what matters to the people who live there.

Together, we can make change happen

We are only able to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone with the support and involvement of others who share our vision.

Our work wouldn’t be possible without our generous donors and our dedicated team of volunteers.

We are forever grateful to every individual, company, partner organisation, local authority, lottery funder, trust or foundation who contributes to our work.

With your support, collaboration and commitment we are helping communities across the UK to come to life.

Helping communities come to life in 2023-2024

Putting people first

Working for and with communities is central to delivering our mission and strategic objectives. This year, we supported long-established volunteer and community groups and worked with many new groups across the UK to help turn our vision into reality.

In December 2023, we completed our evaluation for a project that put community involvement at the heart of the National Cycle Network. Supported by Sport England's Together Fund, we administered £150,000 to 26 community groups so that they could help more than 2,500 people from culturally diverse communities get involved in and enjoy the National Cycle Network. We focussed on reaching low socio-economic groups, disabled people and people with long-term health conditions. On average they rated their overall experience of the projects as a 9.5 out of 10. 95% of these participants said they enjoyed the project they were involved in, and 91% said the project increased their confidence to be more active.

In London, we supported Cycle Sisters to offer guided rides run by local female Muslim volunteers, creating an inclusive and culturally sensitive space for women to try cycling and discover local routes. While our Riverside Hostels Project involved people at risk of homelessness living in riverside hotels in led rides, walks and local conservation, generously funded by the City Bridge Foundation. We also helped to deliver the All-Ability Cycling Hub in Inwood Park, Hounslow. It's open to people who live, work or study in Hounslow, and there really is a cycle to suit everyone. Some are side-by-side, others have wheelchair platforms attached to them, and there are tricycles and bicycles too. Everyone says how much happier and healthier they feel after the sessions. This project was generously funded by The London Marathon Foundation.

In England, local community groups and people got involved in a range of projects across the National Cycle Network including painting a bridge on National Cycle Network route 6 in Swarkestone, Derbyshire, and celebrating local heroes through our portrait benches project across the Network including former Southampton footballer Aman Dosanj, the first British South Asian to represent England at any level.

In Wales, we engaged school children in developing designs for improvements and re-painting of the Millenium Mileposts that dot the National Cycle Network across the nation.

In Scotland, we worked with a community group with £11,000 of 'seed funding' for engagement activities, including the creation of a promotional video, to develop a long distance (22 miles) active travel route in Ayrshire – The Culzean Way (between Ayr and Girvan).

Many communities up and down the country have helped us roll out School Streets – working with schools and local authorities to close roads to vehicles during school drop-off and pick-up times.

Paths for everyone

Improving the quality of the Network

With the support of our strategic partners, this year we completed over 356 projects across the UK to improve the National Cycle Network. These included the construction of new traffic-free routes, resurfacing and improving access on existing routes, and removing and redesigning barriers along the Network.

Improving accessibility on the Network

There are thousands of restrictive barriers on traffic-free sections of the Network that prevent many people from accessing and enjoying their local routes. This year we removed or redesigned 615 barriers across the country, exceeding our target of 320.

Josh runs a free service which allows people with mobility issues to experience the joys of traffic-free routes through his trishaw rides. However, a restrictive barrier on Route 2 of the National Cycle Network stopped him in his tracks, having to get off the trishaw and precariously navigate through a pair of close-set bollards and past a chicane barrier. With support and guidance from Sustrans colleagues and local Sustrans volunteers, the barrier was redesigned - opening up the route and making it much more accessible.

"It's so easy to get through now compared to what it was like before. When I do led rides everyone is really pleased about it. We did a Facebook post on the barrier too and there were some local people who use mobility scooters who made some nice comments about how it's made things more accessible for them too, which is great."

— *Josh*

Read his story: How I redesigned a barrier on the National Cycle Network: Josh's story - Sustrans.org.uk

Increasing the diversity of Network users

We continue to work towards a UK-wide network of traffic-free paths for everyone. That is why we have been working hard to help new users discover the National Cycle Network.

In Market Harborough, we transformed a one mile stretch of the National Cycle Network which runs along the Grand Union Canal. Working with the Canal & River Trust and Harborough District Council, in just 15 weeks, the path underwent a transformative resurfacing with a natural stone chip layer, providing a smoother experience for cyclists, walkers and wheelchair users alike. With accessibility as a top priority, the path's width has been increased, ensuring a comfortable passage for everyone, regardless of mobility.

Towards the end of the newly resurfaced section, the path reaches Wellington Place - a large new housing estate. Like many new housing developments, this site is on the edge of town and the development could have risked locking in further car-dependency. However, the improvements to Route 6 mean that residents of the new estate have better options. With Route 6 they have the choice of a 10-minute cycle into town, and a 15-minute ride to the train station.

Read more about this project: A path reborn: Market Harborough's Grand Union Canal undergoes transformation - Sustrans.org.uk

Tracking our progress

To help make sure we are delivering the change we want to see, we track our progress against performance indicators and targets that we set at the start of each year. The table below summarises what we have achieved on our Paths for everyone priority at the end of 2023-2024.

Performance indicator	Target	Actual	Commentary
% total Network miles good/very good	64%	64%	Several construction projects have been delayed into 2024-2025, impacting achievement of some targets, but nevertheless we have exceeded our target for the delivery of on-road to traffic-free miles.
% Sustrans controlled traffic-free miles very good	29%	27%	
# on-road to traffic-free miles delivered	11	15.5	
# on-road to quiet-way miles delivered	17	11.5	
# barriers removed or redesigned	320	615	Target exceeded
# barriers removed or redesigned on Sustrans-owned land	65	67	Target exceeded
# activation projects delivered by December 2023	50	53	Target exceeded
% removed and reclassified miles where signage has been addressed	79%	75%	Removal and reclassification of high speed and high volume on-road National Cycle Network routes in 2020 left a legacy of Network branded signs across 3,733 miles. These signs now need to be amended. Progress is slow due to difficulties in securing Highway Authority permissions in some areas, and an overall challenge of securing funding for this work.
# new community groups involved on the Network	132	177	Target exceeded
% awareness of Sustrans as the charity behind the Network	>11%	11%	Awareness maintained at 2022-2023 level.
Sub-standard crossings improved	4	3	As sub-standard crossings are on-road, Sustrans needs to influence Highways Authorities to improve them. Unfortunately, we were unable to achieve our target for 2023-2024 as this is not a funding priority for some areas.

In the coming year

Continuing to improve the quality and accessibility of the Network

We will continue to make improvements to the Network, developing new traffic-free routes, resurfacing existing paths, making access improvements and redesigning barriers. We have now finalised our UK-wide Network Development Plan, a blueprint for the Network of the future. We will work with our partners to align this with their national, regional and local plans for walking, wheeling and cycling.

Prioritising the environment in our Network development

We will focus on becoming even more environmentally positive throughout delivery of National Cycle Network infrastructure projects. To do this, we will continue to not only maintain but enhance biodiversity both on our land and in the projects we deliver, such as the Lias Line scheme in Warwickshire. Read more about how we're making space for nature on the National Cycle Network – Sustrans.org.uk

Improved mapping and information

With generous funding from the Motability Foundation, we have delivered the first phase of our digital transformation project to improve our mapping of the National Cycle Network for disabled people. We will now deliver the next phase of this important work.

Liveable cities and towns for everyone

During 2023-2024, our teams worked hard to encourage ambitious change in our towns and cities, demonstrate what's possible and to amplify seldom-heard voices in urban areas – particularly within our focus cities and towns.

Across the UK, we have sought to increase political support for walking, wheeling and cycling, reinforcing the need for continued investment. We have:

- worked with schools to get more children walking, wheeling and cycling
- engaged communities to create changes to neighbourhoods that they want to see
- taken a more place-based approach working with volunteers and communities
- in consultation with residents and communities, planned and delivered key elements of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

Encouraging ambitious change

In March we released the 2024 Walking and Cycling Index. The Index is the biggest ever survey of walking, wheeling and cycling in urban areas across the UK and Ireland. Each area reports on the progress they have made towards making walking, wheeling and cycling more attractive, everyday ways to travel. Since our first reports in 2015, this data has informed policy decisions, justified investment and enabled cities to develop more ambitious action plans for walking, wheeling and cycling.

Demonstrating what's possible

Our schools programme continues to help more children walk, wheel and cycle to school safely across the UK. For example, in Northern Ireland we celebrated 10 years of work in this area. Over the past decade we have seen an increase in pupils travelling actively to school from 30% to 42%. Pupils being driven to school decreased from 62% to 49%. And there are now 27 schools across Northern Ireland that have achieved Gold awards for excellence in building and sustaining a culture of active school travel.

Across the rest of the UK, as well as completing a range of local improvements to help more children travel to school actively, Sustrans managed distribution of children's bikes with funding from our 'Start the Cycle' campaign. And we co-delivered Cycle to School Week with The Bikeability Trust, producing resources for schools (downloaded 1,252 times) and provided direct support to 11 bike buses through the FRideDays project, generously funded by Schwalbe.

In Scotland our George Street First New Town project was runner up at the Pineapple Awards for 'Best Future Public Space'. The project is part of Edinburgh's plan for greater pedestrianised spaces and a greener, more accessible urban experience of the world heritage site. Meanwhile we also opened a range of projects to connect people to green spaces including the Perth Creative Exchange Community Garden, the Eddleston Water Path and the Papdale Park project in Orkney.

We have set up active travel hubs across the UK to help more people discover healthier, more affordable ways to travel. This year, our hubs hosted activities to help build peoples' confidence on a bike. They offered free bike parking, information on local walking and cycling routes, and bike maintenance sessions to help people fix up their bikes. We opened new hubs in Belfast, Hartlepool and Middlesbrough.

We held our annual UK-wide inter-school Big Walk and Wheel challenge between 11-22 March 2024. The challenge saw 2.3 million trips to school logged by over 2,200 schools. The two weeks were once again generously supported by headline sponsor cycle tyre manufacturer Schwalbe.

Tracking our progress

To help make sure we are delivering the change we want to see, we track our progress against performance indicators and targets that we set at the start of each year. The table below summarises what we have achieved on our Liveable cities and towns for everyone priority at the end of 2023-2024.

Performance indicator	Target	Actual	Commentary
# of focus cities and towns	38	38	In our five-year business plan we set out that we would work to 'raise ambition for change' in a focused number of urban areas across the UK. This year we have worked to do this in the targeted number of cities and towns.
Increase in # of project sites that are part of a place-based approach	>565	325	Place-based working is a people-centred, bottom-up approach used to meet the unique needs of communities in a given location. Though we have not met our target, we have been working hard to ensure more of our projects are delivered in this way.
# of new and existing volunteer and community groups involved in our LCT projects	131	156	Target exceeded
# of School Streets initiatives delivered in focus cities and towns	42	20	We want to increase the work we are doing in focus cities and towns to build momentum towards Sustrans vision – these three KPIs track our progress in three specific areas. Though funding constraints have meant we have not achieved all of our targets, progress has been made.
# of Low Traffic Neighbourhood initiatives delivered in focus cities and towns	17	13	
# of behaviour change initiatives delivered in focus cities and towns	163	177	
# of exemplar places identified	12	10	In our five-year business plan we committed to co-create 10 exemplar places by 2025. We have defined these as 'internationally recognisable' places, where urban leaders across and outside the UK recognise the positive change in the place and Sustrans' contribution. At the end of 2023-2024 we have identified 10 exemplar places. We hope to identify more in the final year of our business plan.

In the coming year

We will continue to campaign for more investment so that everyone has the choice to travel more healthily and affordably around our neighbourhoods. This is more crucial than ever in the context of a cost-of-living crisis and recent government budget cuts.

We will continue to adopt a people-centred, bottom-up approach to meet the unique needs of communities in the areas we work. This will involve working with people who live locally, as well as organisations and stakeholders, to agree objectives and the resources needed to achieve a collective ambition.

We will continue to deliver practical projects that make it easier for people to walk and cycle and that reduce traffic in our neighbourhoods – particularly in our focus cities and towns.

The future funding environment is likely to present many challenges. These challenges will require us to respond effectively so we can continue to have impact at scale whilst achieving efficiencies across all our work.

Influencing for change

Across the UK and the UK Government

We believe everyone should have the right to walk, wheel or cycle around our neighbourhoods with ease, independence, and confidence. That's why we're campaigning to increase investment in active travel, stop parking on the pavement, and for new developments to be built where all the essentials are close by. To do this, we have been amplifying the voices of those who are seldom heard and building robust evidence to demonstrate the positive impact of active travel.

Sustrans has had many campaign wins across the year including maintaining funding for Active Travel Fund 4, the expansion of the ULEZ in London, the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Wales, local authority powers to prohibit pavement parking in Scotland, Environmental Land Management Schemes include payments for permissive access and Labour signalling to set targets for modal shift to lower emissions from the transport sector.

Long-term National Cycle Network funding and political support

We are pushing for a shift towards long-term funding certainty for the National Cycle Network, away from one-off grants and taking this to Government and shadow ministers. This included feeding into parliamentary debates, via our Parliamentary Champions to ensure that the relevant ministers are regularly reminded of the importance of the Network in constituencies across the country and of every political persuasion. In parallel, we have delivered eight visits and campaign events on the Network with Champions and high-profile MPs including Ed Miliband, Alex Chalk and Anneliese Dodds.

The Walking and Cycling Index

In summer 2023 Sustrans released an interactive Walking and Cycling Index Data Tool. It includes behavioural and attitudinal dashboards that allow anyone to explore and compare our data in much more detail. This includes, for the first time, the ability for decision makers, officers, academics and campaign groups to draw comparisons across cities, years, member authorities and demographic groups.

Walking and Cycling Index city reports were released in March with press releases going out in each region and launch events featuring key decision makers taking place in most areas. Media coverage was good in many areas, especially across Ireland and for the launch of the UK report later that month which also featured our first ever parliamentary roundtable in an important election year.

Stopping parking on the pavement

We delivered a report for the Local Government Association (LGA) on Inclusive Pavements that received widespread media coverage. This included national, regional and trade news coverage and an interview with Xavier Brice on BBC Breakfast. This work was inspired by our own Disabled Citizens Inquiry and supported work by Sustrans that pulled together active travel and disability charities and the LGA working on pavement parking to prevent a united front in a meeting with Labour, led by the lived experience of disabled people.

Spatial planning to support walkable neighbourhoods

Our Stepping off the Road to Nowhere report was launched with Create Streets in early 2024. Working in partnership with Create Streets we were generously funded by The Rees Jeffreys Road Fund and Foundation for Integrated Transport. The report looked at a proposed (subsequently cancelled) housing development in Chippenham, Wiltshire. It demonstrates that 'gentle densification' could build the same 7,500 homes on 40% of the land and the £75 million subsidy for a new road could instead be spent on active travel links, public transport and town centre improvements.

The report was covered in the Sunday Times. We have been discussing it with political and civil service contacts for some time, we now plan to present it to them more comprehensively. It is politically timely as political parties are making ambitious claims about building new homes including within party manifestos. The report demonstrates a way forward that would counter some of the opposition to new housing developments.

We also proposed an amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act which received large levels of cross-party support and led to a commitment from civil servants to work together on policy change to enable health inequalities to be considered in the planning system.

Increasing access to nature

We have ensured that the National Cycle Network forms part of the Government's solution, as they develop plans to meet their commitment that everyone should live within a 15-minute walk of nature. This included positioning the Network as an asset across the entire country to help people access nature and nature in its own right. This Government ambition spearheaded the creation of our new Biodiversity Strategy for the Network. We have been discussing this with Labour, including advisors to ministers. There is potential for the Network to be better recognised as both a route to natural spaces, and green space in its own right.

In Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Assembly

With the return of the Northern Ireland Assembly in February 2024, we have met with the Infrastructure Minister and presented to the NIA Committee on Infrastructure.

The All-Party Group on Cycling has continued to meet, and we have played a prominent role in influencing its agenda. We gave a briefing on the Active School Travel programme and the School Streets initiative. During the absence of a sitting Stormont Executive, we kept the pressure on the Department for Infrastructure to build the Belfast Cycling Network and ensure that 10% of the transport budget is allocated to active travel, as legislated by the Climate Change Act. We play an active role in the Stakeholder Forum with the Department for Infrastructure on active travel.
We successfully lobbied (with Cycling UK Northern Ireland) the Department for Infrastructure to reverse its decision to stop funding the Active School Travel programme which has now worked in more than 500 schools over a decade recording year-on-year improvements in active travel in participating schools. A recent RMU study highlighted the economic benefits of the programme too.

We play an active role on the Healthy NI Forum. We recently met with the Agriculture and Environment Minister and continue to push for a Clean Air Act.

We made strong responses to a Consultation on Hospital Car Parking Charges and a strategy on Obesity Prevention.

Championing accessibility

As part of our aim to be a charity for everyone, we delivered a cycle skills course to newcomers to Northern Ireland through the Belfast Community Active Travel programme in the summer of 2023. Through a partnership with other local organisations, the participants were given upcycled bicycles at the end of their training to enable them to seek out job opportunities as well as get to know the areas they had moved to better.

Strategic Transport Planning

The Department for Infrastructure commissioned the development of Regional Transport Plans. We are a delivery partner in the development of the Eastern Transport Plan (formerly the Belfast Metropolitan Area) which will set the framework for making transport policy and investment decisions up until 2035.

In Scotland

Delivering fairer transport choice in the heart of Scotland's cities

We worked with Scotland's local authorities and communities to give people fairer and better journey choices in our biggest cities. In July 2023, the South City Way in Glasgow was completed up to the Clyde. This new 2.5km segregated route, delivered through partnership between our Places for Everyone programme and Glasgow City Council, means people can now easily and safely walk, wheel and cycle into the city centre. Already, monitoring shows that 13% of all journeys along Victoria Road are now made by bike thanks to the new route. In Edinburgh, the completion of the City Centre West to East Link in March 2024 has created a traffic-free cycling route through the heart of the city centre, alongside major improvements to pavements, crossings, and street landscaping.

Creating safer, healthier connections across rural Scotland

In April 2023, we supported Orkney Council in delivering Papdale Park in Kirkwall - creating a safe and accessible walking, wheeling and cycling connection to school as well as a play space for children and young people. At the opposite end of the country, in July 2023, the Eddleston Water Path in the Scottish Borders was completed. This 6km path has enabled people to safely walk, wheel and cycle between Peebles and Eddleston for the first time via a protected, segregated route alongside a national speed limit road.

Working with Scotland's communities to create liveable neighbourhoods

We supported a community-led design project to transform a busy area of Dundee into a more valuable and attractive space to travel through and spend time in. Working with the Stobswell Forum community group and partners Dundee City Council and Scottish Water, permanent enhancements suggested by the community were designed and installed on five routes off Albert Street in Dundee. The team effort means there is now better signage and wayfinding links to benefit those living, working and travelling through the district.

Improving data-led transport planning in Scotland

A new Network Planning Tool, developed by Sustrans and the University of Leeds using funding from Transport Scotland, uses trip 'origin-destination' data to estimate the relative potential for cycling uptake on most streets and paths across Scotland. It provides an evidence base to develop data-led cycle network plans in their local area. The Network Planning Tool is already being used to inform network planning across Scotland, including the Tactran Regional Active Travel Network.

A key role in delivering Scotland's new Cycling Framework for Active Travel

In 2023, the Scottish Government published the Cycling Framework for Active Travel - A plan for everyday cycling. Sustrans Scotland is a key delivery partner supporting Transport Scotland's national objectives around network planning, safe infrastructure, fair access and monitoring. The framework commits to creating a Scotland-wide network blueprint, using investment in the National Cycle Network to connect communities across the country.

In Wales

In October, we hosted a webinar "Creating happier, healthier neighbourhoods in Wales". Our invited expert speakers provided an exploration of latest practice in Wales and the UK, and was an opportunity to share ideas and ask questions on how all parts of Wales can develop in a way that puts people first. Over 100 elected members and senior decision-makers attended online, with almost 300 viewing the recording.

Yn mis Hydref, cynhalion ni gweminar "Creu cymdogaethau hapusach, iachach yng Nghymru". Rhoddodd ein siaradwyr arbenigol gwadd archwiliad o'r ymarfer diweddaraf yng Nghymru a'r DU, ac roedd yn gyfle i rannu syniadau a gofyn cwestiynau ar sut gall pob rhan o Gymru datblygu mewn ffordd sy'n blaenoriaethu pobl. Mynychodd dros 100 o aelodau etholedig ac uwch penderfynwyr yn rhithwir, efo bron i 300 yn gwylio'r recordiad.

In February, Sustrans Cymru published ‘Walk, Wheel and Thrive: Well-being and the National Cycle Network’. The report set out the contribution of the Network against all seven of Wales’ National Wellbeing Goals. For example, it highlighted the numerous benefits to people’s lives in terms of health and well-being, the economic benefits, the way the Network supports access to green space and supports biodiversity, and the links it provides residents and visitors to cultural and historical sites in Wales. Alongside the positive benefits the report highlighted a need for urgent action to protect the Network for future generations. The report forms the basis of ongoing visits with elected members, business in the Senedd and a communications campaign in Wales.

Yn mis Chwefror, cyhoeddodd Sustrans Cymru 'Cerdded, Olwyno, a Ffynnu: Lles a'r Rhwydwaith Beicio Cenedlaethol'. Gosododd yr adroddiad cyfraniad y Rhwydwaith yn erbyn pob un o saith Amcan Lles Cenedlaethol Cymru. Er enghraifft, amlygodd y nifer o fanteision i fywydau pobl yn nhermau iechyd a lles, manteision economaidd, sut mae'r Rhwydwaith yn cefnogi mynediad at fannau gwyrdd a chefnogi bioamrywiaeth, a'r cysylltiadau mae'n darparu i breswylwyr ac ymwelwyr i leoliadau diwylliannol a hanesyddol yng Nghymru. Yn gyfochrog a'r manteision cadarnhaol, mae'r adroddiad yn amlygu'r angen am weithrediad ar frys er mwyn diogelu'r Rhwydwaith er lles cenedlaethau'r dyfodol. Yr adroddiad yw sylfaen ymweliadau cyfredol ag aelodau etholedig, busnes yn y Senedd ac ymgyrch cyfathrebu yng Nghymru.

There were many notable pieces of legislation and new policy in Wales during the year. Sustrans Cymru played a significant role in contributing to their development and we continue to work to support their implementation. Default 20mph speed limits on restricted roads were introduced in September, covering around 97% of roads that were previously 30mph. The North Wales Transport Commission published its final report and recommendations in December. The Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act gained royal assent in January, which included new powers for local authorities to enforce motor vehicle engine idling, new powers to introduce road user charging on trunk roads, and a new duty for public authorities to promote active travel.

Roedd yna lawer o ddeddfwriaethau nodedig a pholisïau newydd yng Nghymru yn ystod y flwyddyn, a chwaraeodd Sustrans Cymru rhan sylweddol gan gyfrannu tuag at eu datblygiad a pharhawn yn ein gwaith i gefnogi'u gweithrediad. Cafodd terfynau cyflymder safonol o 20mya ar hewlydd cyfyngedig eu cyflwyno yn mis Medi, yn effeithio ar oddeutu 97% o ffyrdd oedd cynt yn 30mya. Cyhoeddodd Comisiwn Trafnidiaeth Gogledd Cymru ei adroddiad a'i argymhellion olaf yn mis Rhagfyr. Enillodd Bil yr Amgylchedd (Ansawdd Aer a Seinweddau) (Cymru) cydsyniad brenhinol yn mis Ionawr, sy'n cynnwys pwerau newydd ar ran awdurdodau lleol er mwyn iddynt orfodi segura motor cerbyd modur, pwerau newydd i gyflwyno codi tal ar ddefnyddwyr ffyrdd, a dyletswydd newydd ar awdurdodau lleol i hyrwyddo teithio llesol.

Our people

The dedication of our people remains our most valued asset and over the last year we continued to recognise this and improve our offer to colleagues.

We know that pay is a significant part of the working experience, and we want to ensure that everyone is valued for their contributions and that we attract and retain talent in a competitive job market. That is why we made the bold decision to invest significantly in improving our colleagues' pay and benefits in 2024.

We are proud to say that we agreed a recognition agreement with Unite the Union and look forward to building a constructive and productive relationship.

As part of simplifying our structures and laying the foundation for clearer career structures we introduced job families for over a third of the organisation. We also launched a new Learning Management System that will vastly improve the ability of our colleagues to access learning just-in-time.

In the coming year

We want to develop our focus and offer around performance, learning and careers. We plan to introduce a learning curriculum for Line Managers and build on our job families with an associated learning curriculum.

Our colleagues tell us they want more support with their careers, so it's our aim to develop some talent management processes, tools and skills to enable this.

We will continue to enhance our colleague relations and engagement by developing our colleague networks and colleague forums to help ensure our colleagues have a voice in Sustrans.

Our Pay Gap

We are in a minority of organisations that report a pay gap on gender, disability, ethnicity and LGB+.

In 2023 our mean gender pay gap was 4.59% and our median gender pay gap has reduced to 0%. This is a decrease from our median pay gap of 4.38% in 2022, and a significant shift after remaining approximately the same since 2019, following a 2018 pay review that considerably reduced our gender pay gap.

Our mean disability pay gap increased from 1% in 2022 to 2.3% in 2023 and our median disability pay gap has remained constant at 0%.

Only 11% of large charities report on their ethnicity pay gap. In 2023 our mean ethnicity pay gap was 4.35%, representing an increase from 3.2% in 2022. Our median ethnicity pay gap was 0% in 2023.

Sustrans is one of only three large charities to report on sexual orientation pay gap. In 2023 our mean sexual orientation pay gap was 1.6% and our median sexual orientation pay gap was 0%.

Our pay structure and pay policy are relatively prescriptive and standardised and therefore our main opportunities for improving our pay gap are to increase the diversity of colleagues at higher grades and improve the retention of colleagues.
Further actions in 2024-2025:

- Undertake analysis of how flexible working is taken up by different demographics within our workforce, and across different pay grades, and whether this impacts on pay and progression.
- Monitor the uptake of shared parental leave by the different demographics in our workforce, so that we can understand the impact of recent changes to our leave policies, including our shared parental leave policy.
- Review our progress on implementing the For Everyone Strategic Framework and action plans on a quarterly basis.

Volunteering

Volunteering supports Sustrans to work with and for communities; reaching more people; increasing our impact by scaling up our delivery work, voice and empowering legacy.

Volunteering provides opportunities to broaden our voice and reach; connect us to people, places and society; bring knowledge, skills, and experience; bring different perspective and challenge the status quo; and provide long term commitment to place.

Thousands of people across the UK volunteer their time to help look after their local communities by engaging with schools, supporting wildlife conservation, caring for the National Cycle Network and much more.

Sustrans volunteering helps create happier and healthier lives for everyone.

What we've achieved this year

Over the past year volunteering at Sustrans has seen many highlights. Over **15,000 hours** of volunteering activity were recorded by volunteers:

- **660** volunteers logged **5,100** activities caring for the National Cycle Network
- **170** volunteers logged **1,200** activities in communities
- **40** volunteers logged **120** sessions of admin support and media volunteering.

230 volunteers were trained and sent out to check the condition and safety of 900 Millenium Mileposts.

In addition, 12,894 standard Network signs were sent out for volunteers to install. This is a clear indication of the effort invested into ensuring the Network is well-signed and navigable.

In 2023-2024 we have worked to develop an ArcGIS Signage and Wayfinding app, process, guidance and training. This will be trialled in 2024-2025 before rolling out to volunteers and colleagues to provide a more transparent and co-ordinated approach to signage activities.

As well as this, over 300 led walks and rides were organised and delivered by volunteers, supporting more people to walk, wheel and cycle in their local community.

Telling the story of volunteering impact

Four case studies were put together by the Research and Monitoring Unit, with help from the volunteering team and the support of two research volunteers.
These can be accessed via the Showcasing the impact that volunteers have Storymap

Volunteering stories from across the UK and Celebrating volunteering 2023 storymaps provide a more snapshot overview of dozens of volunteering impact stories that took place across the UK in 2023-2024.

Volunteer engagement training has been rolled out internally to 230 colleagues across the charity, building our capacity to deliver great work in line with the volunteering strategy. This is mandatory training for anyone directly managing volunteers or line managing a colleague who line manages volunteers.

Implementation of the new Volunteer engagement platform

Following the launch of Assemble in 2022-2023, our Volunteer Engagement platform, we focused work on its successful implementation with both colleagues and volunteers. By the end of the financial year 2023-2024 over 50% of volunteers are now regularly engaging on the platform.

The system makes it easier for volunteers to access opportunities, guidance, training and the latest news from their region, as well as to record the impact they deliver.

Our Volunteering for everyone standard

People volunteering with Sustrans should expect to be treated with respect, dignity and kindness by other volunteers and our employees at all times.

This is why we've developed a Volunteering for everyone standard. The guidance is there to ensure that everyone feels safe, welcome and included when volunteering with Sustrans.

The standard sets out the values and behaviours we expect of people engaged with volunteering activities. It also explains how to recognise when behaviour is unacceptable and how to address this.

How we fund our work

Sustrans' approach to funding and fundraising

Sustrans collaborates with governments and local authorities throughout the UK to help people walk, wheel and cycle more. By working in partnership with decision-makers, Sustrans is able to transform communities and strives to create a fairer society by making affordable active travel options accessible to everyone. Much of the funding we receive from national or local government supports the creation and maintenance of infrastructure that enables more walking, wheeling and cycling to happen in a safer environment.

Additionally, we greatly benefit from the generosity of donors, trusts, foundations, corporate partners, philanthropists, and customers who make purchases from our e-commerce shop. These contributions allow us to maintain and enhance the National Cycle Network, including protecting ecology and wildlife, implement programmes to support children to travel actively to school, deliver research projects, influence government policy, and support our volunteers.

Individual donors

Sustrans is enormously grateful to the generous donors who consistently support our work. Many of our new donors are recruited through our face-to-face programme on the National Cycle Network. In 2023-2024 the number of donors we engaged increased by 41% (on the previous year), and we experienced a significant increase in the average monthly gift for new regular givers, rising from £8.85 to £9.24.

In 2023-2024, we continued to expand our face-to-face programme. Our in-house team opened a new fundraising location in Glasgow and increased activities in other established offices. During this time, we stopped delivering our face-to-face programme in areas with limited engagement such as Liverpool, Plymouth, and York, which allowed us to reallocate resources to more promising locations.

We also ran a pilot with an external professional fundraising agency, Appco, between May and September 2023. Appco conducted face-to-face fundraising activities on behalf of Sustrans on the National Cycle Network and tested our proposition at events and private sites. Sustrans is now analysing the outcomes of these test activities to determine future use of professional fundraising agencies.

Throughout 2023-2024 we ran several campaigns to raise unrestricted income, including an upgrade campaign for existing regular donors, a raffle, and a spring appeal which focused on protecting the National Cycle Network. The spring appeal became the most successful fundraising campaign since 2016 and greatly surpassed its fundraising goal.

We successfully tested various digital engagement offers, including a new value exchange programme, lead generation, and adverts for single donations. The best performing adverts offered a traffic-free guide download, and gifts to support our ecology work on the National Cycle Network. We will continue to test, monitor and develop these activities next year.

For our telephone work, we partnered with Ethicall, who assisted us in delivering our annual upgrade campaign, a reactivation telephone campaign, and a campaign to convert new leads generated through a digital value exchange activity into regular donors. We plan to continue these activities on a rolling basis during 2024-2025.

Legacy giving

In 2023-2024 we continued to benefit from the generosity of those that left Sustrans a gift in their Will. In 2024-2025 we have exciting plans to further develop our legacy offer proactively inviting supporters to remember Sustrans in this meaningful way.

Partnerships

Sustrans is incredibly grateful to all our corporate supporters, trusts and foundations, lottery funders and philanthropists, without whom we couldn't deliver some of our most innovative work. Our partnerships allow us to work right at the heart of communities, engage with schools across the UK, deliver research and connect people and places.

Notable partnerships we would like to give special thanks to include:

- The Sport England Together Fund who helped us to empower community organisations on, or near, the National Cycle Network disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis to engage in walking, cycling and wheeling.
- The Freshfield Foundation, who enabled us to engage and plan for the improvement of streets in Liverpool City Region and the continuation of the Walking and Cycling Index; instrumental in securing funding for active travel across England.
- The abrdn Financial Fairness Trust, The London Marathon Foundation, and City Bridge Foundation, (the funding arm of The City of London Corporation's charity, Bridge House Estates (1035628)), who supported us to make walking, wheeling, and cycling more accessible for underrepresented groups and disadvantaged communities.
- Motability Foundation, who supported us in the Phase One development of the Online Accessibility Map and Route Planner for the National Cycle Network and to deliver a London-wide accessible cycle loan/training programme for disabled people, in partnership with Wheels for Wellbeing and Peddle my Wheels.
- Schwalbe Tyres UK Limited who kindly sponsored the Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel for a third year in a row and facilitated the expansion of the new FRideDays Bike Bus initiative, enabling children across the UK to travel actively to school.

E-commerce

During 2023-2024 we focused on growing our E-commerce audience to increase sales from our online shop, which specialises in our own range of maps, guides and digital downloads of our routes. We remain committed to ensuring our products, packaging, and methods are as sustainably sourced as possible, focusing on UK-based production.

We have also focused on product development and increased our product range by launching GPX files for our long-distance routes; introduced more third-party guidebooks; as well as cycling accessories and gifts. We will remain focused on product development in 2024-2025, and due to increasing demand for digital products, we will be testing a wider range of digital products. Excitingly, since introducing EU shipping in 2022-2023, we have seen in an increase in sales from Europe, especially the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland.

Our environmental impact

Making active travel easily accessible delivers a better environment for everybody. We are committed to continuously improving our environmental performance, and we recognise that the activities which underpin our work can negatively affect the environment through emissions, impacts on nature along our paths and the use of resources.

Biodiversity Action Plan

As custodians of the National Cycle Network, it's our responsibility to ensure that greenways contribute to improving national biodiversity. As well as being custodians, we are landowners and developers, so it's within our gift to make a positive difference to the natural world. We do this by improving the management of our existing routes and by protecting and enhancing habitats when designing new ones. In 2023-2024 we set out our Biodiversity Action Plan which sets out how we will help develop the National Cycle Network into a network for wildlife, as well as people over the coming years.

Sustainability and carbon reporting

Having formalised our carbon reduction targets in 2023 (net zero for our direct operations by 2030, and net zero for all indirect activities including supply chain by 2040), we are taking a more coordinated and proactive approach to sustainability and carbon management across the charity.

Construction activity to create new or improve existing active travel infrastructure is our most carbon intensive activity. This year we have explored more detailed carbon assessments to better understand how to design and contract construction activities to reduce carbon. The coming year will see more consistent processes being introduced so that carbon management and the principles of PAS2080:2023 (Carbon Management in Infrastructure standard) are adopted in a proportionate way for the type and scale of works Sustrans contracts.

The adoption of a new 'preferred supplier' process is providing the basis for more sustainable procurement. By engaging with our biggest suppliers, we are identifying how mature their decarbonisation plans are and how this aligns with our 2040 net zero goal. We will continue to work proactively with our preferred suppliers to show demand for low carbon supply chains and will support Sustrans colleagues to adopt more sustainable procurement principles when purchasing new goods and services.

In addition to carbon mitigation, we are also taking more practical steps to manage the risks of the climate emergency through climate change adaptation measures. Risks from floods, storms, extreme heat are all of relevance to the National Cycle Network, and we are mapping how this will affect our infrastructure in the medium to long term future to inform maintenance procedures and design plans.

The methodology used to calculate the 2023-2024 Sustrans carbon footprint has built upon previous years reporting to improve the overall accuracy and completeness of the annual assessment. Most noticeable changes can be seen for gas which in 2023-2024 reports much higher emissions, and in the supply chain which reports much lower emissions. These changes are purely data and processing improvements and do not reflect any substantive changes to buildings or spending. Continued efforts are being made to work with our supply chain partners to provide a 'bottom-up' carbon footprint for high spend or high carbon sectors which would significantly improve the accuracy of our supply chain carbon accounting.

		Carbon emission tCO_2e		Fuel Use	
		2023/24	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2022/23**
Scope 1	Gas for offices	**19**	10	102,952 kWh	54,640 kWh
	Fuel for vehicles	**57**	60	22,677 l	23,656 l
	Fuel for site equipment	**8**	7	3,442 l	2,852 l
Scope 2	Electricity for offices*	**14 (28)**	(28)	136,590 kWh	143,790 kWh
Total Scope 1 and 2		**98**	105		
Scope 3	Fuel and energy related activities	**23**	27		
	Business Travel	**116**	122		
	Employee Commuting	**53**	53		
	Home working	**153**	153		
	Supply Chain - construction spend**	**3,239**	4,900		
	Supply Chain – non construction related spend**	**2,637**	5,400		
Total Scope 3		**6,221**	10,655		

*In 2023-2024 a combined market and location-based approach has been used to calculate Scope 2 electricity emissions. Where electricity is purchased directly from an energy supplier the specific carbon intensity of the tariff has been applied. Where electricity is recharged by a landlord, the exact fuel mix is unknown, so a location-based approach has been adopted using the UK grid average. For comparison purposes the location-based method is also shown in brackets, the difference representing the reduction in emissions through the purchase of green electricity tariffs.

**The reported carbon emissions for our supply chain activities are an estimate derived from financial spend (£) per sector. We acknowledge that this approach does not provide the same degree of accuracy as the other emissions reported, however this is included for transparency and to highlight the scale of the carbon impact of purchased goods and services in comparison to our core operational activities.

We are following GHG Protocol in our approach to carbon management.

Financial review

Sustrans is funded through a mixture of government grants, fundraising activity and paid contracted activities which deliver our objectives. There is investment in our agenda in all nations of the United Kingdom and by local authorities across these four countries.

The income that we generate is spent efficiently to deliver the best possible impact. As well as providing funding to others through our grant programmes, we also work in partnership with communities and with local and national governments to deliver projects and programmes that make it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We invest our fundraising income into managing the parts of the National Cycle Network that we own, and in supporting our unfunded activities, such as our influencing and campaigning activity.

Our financial performance in 2023-2024

In 2023-2024 income of £146.4M and expenditure of £144.5M left a surplus for the year of £1.9M. Income and expenditure in the prior year were £112.5M and £109.7M respectively. This significant increase in financial activity highlights the impact Sustrans is having across the UK.

The surplus for the 2023-2024 year, from a break-even budget, was achieved in the main thanks to better than anticipated bank interest on deposit. The surplus of £1.9M is welcome at a time when the charity is facing considerable funding uncertainty. This has resulted in an increase to the general reserves fund to better mitigate the risks set out in following sections of this report.

Principal funding sources in 2023-2024

Charitable Activities contributed 94% (2022-2023 – 93%) of all income, with the balance provided by donations, legacies, and investments.

Our principal funding sources are government grants. In 2023-2024 we received £98M (2022-2023: £64M) from Transport Scotland, £23M (2022-2023: £27M) from the Department for Transport, and £1.4M (2022-2023: £0.9M) from the Welsh government (see note 18).

Contractual activity, mostly with local authorities and other public bodies, amounted to £9.9M (2022-2023 - £9.7M).

Fundraising contributed £4.2M to our income in 2023-2024 (2022-2023: £5.8M), of which £0.0M (2022-2023: £1.6M) was restricted.

Investment income rose from £2.5M in 2022-2023 to £4.9M in 2023-2024 due to rising interest rates.

Our future financial picture and going concern status

We have several key funding streams – notably our government-funded programmes – which offer us financial protection in the near term. Our reserves balance further mitigates remaining financial risks. The economic uncertainty for the whole country means that we have recognised we have further financial risks in relation to 2024-2025 and beyond. These are set out in the 'principal risks' section of this report.

We are working to bolster our fundraising operations so that we have a secure core of funding that will enable us to continue to deliver our charity's objectives should other income sources start to reduce. We are actively planning to ensure that we can react quickly to changing financial risks, and opportunities, in a sustainable way.

After making enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future being at least 12 months from the date of approval of these financial statements. The charity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

The Trustees have considered specifically the financial risks associated with the current economic uncertainty. The Trustees consider that Sustrans has the flexibility to respond to any unexpected fluctuations in income levels and has adequate reserves and operational provisions to manage the loss of major funding streams.

Our reserves policy

Our reserves policy enables management of general reserves to ensure we hold an appropriate level of accessible funds to mitigate against identified financial risks (see following section on 'Principal risks and uncertainties'), while ensuring we are making timely and strategic use of our funds. The policy focuses purely on general reserves, as these are the funds that can be deployed at the discretion of the trustees.

We hold general reserves to provide cover for unexpected changes in income and expenditure, allowing us to continue activities in the event of:

- temporary loss of income
- permanent fall in income, allowing time to adjust our cost base or business model
- incurring one-off costs that are not covered from donor funds.

General reserves also allow us to implement new strategic priorities or invest in new opportunities to achieve our goals. Our general reserves are matched by highly liquid investments so that we can draw on them quickly if necessary.

In 2023-2024 our target general reserves range was £6.3m-£7.8M; our closing general reserves of £9.6M are therefore above the target range. Ahead of approving the 2024-2025 financial budget, the Board has reviewed an update of the detailed risk assessment used to assess the level of general reserves that is appropriate for the charity to maintain.

Based on the risk assessment, the Board increased the target range for 2024-2025 to £8M-£10M.

Our investment policy

Project funds are held by Sustrans 'on trust' and are not to be considered for investment purposes. The principal consideration for these project funds is security. Credit worthiness is the overriding consideration, so project funds should only be held by banks holding a short-term credit rating of Good.

Sustrans has total reserves of approximately £15M. A portion of these reserves has been identified as long-term reserves available for investment. £3M was invested during the year and is managed by Rathbone Greenbank. The long-term reserves are invested, in line with our ethical policy, to grow at least in line with inflation over the long-term.

The Board of Sustrans has delegated investment decisions to the Finance Committee. Investment management is delegated to an authorised professional investment manager, regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.

Principal risks

Risk management is central to the successful achievement of our strategic aims and objectives.

The Board of Trustees has overall accountability for risk management and annually reviews the charity's principal risks. It sets risk appetite and risk tolerance limits and approves the risk management framework, which sets out the processes to identify, assess, respond, monitor, and report our risks.

The Finance Committee is responsible for oversight of the charity's Corporate Risk Register. It meets at least four times per year and scrutinises the most significant corporate risks facing the charity and the progress made in achieving target risk ratings.

There are six principal risks which reflect individual corporate risks or a combination of corporate risks that can seriously affect the performance or reputation of the charity:

1. Financial sustainability

A reliance on government funding coupled with the financial uncertainty of pressures on public sector budgets, external factors such as the cost-of-living crisis and inflation, and a more competitive environment for raising funds from other sources creates a risk around the loss of key funding for Sustrans.

To mitigate this risk, we proactively engage with our key funders to ensure we continue to deliver valuable outcomes, and we are actively seeking to diversify our sources of funding. We have embarked on a programme to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our operating model which will improve our agility and responsiveness to financial opportunities and risks. We have also established reserves to ensure that the charity can remain operational in the event of the sudden loss of a significant source of funding.

2. Turnover and vacancies

There is increasing competition for skills and experience, which creates a risk to Sustrans' capacity and capability to deliver the impact that we want to see. To mitigate this risk, we have reviewed our pay policy to ensure that it is transparent, fair and we can attract and retain great people. We engage positively with the structures and arrangements put in place following a vote to recognise a union.

We have adopted progressive policies around flexible working, and we believe that our culture and vision enable us to be an employer of choice and build greater diversity across our teams. We recognise that we need to be agile and responsive to emerging opportunities, so adopt a strategic approach to partnerships and collaboration with other organisations to support the delivery of our work.

3. Deterioration and damage to our assets

Maintaining the National Cycle Network and Sustrans' estate involves managing engineered structures and ex-railway assets such as bridges, embankments, and drainage systems, as well as the land and ecologies around our paths. Due to the age and history of the assets and additional complications caused by climate change and extreme weather events, this creates a risk around ensuring the routes remain useable and accessible.

To mitigate this risk, we have put in place a comprehensive inspection regime and a programme of planned maintenance for all our assets. An asset ranking tool has been implemented to identify those assets we need to prioritise for maintenance. We have an Estates Committee as a sub-committee of our Board of Trustees to oversee the management of our assets and to mitigate the risks associated with asset management. To address the impact of climate change on our assets, we are seeking to improve our understanding of how to develop more climate resilient paths. In addition, we are ensuring our land acquisition approval processes consider potential climate impacts. We continually review our assets strategy to consider the risk of climate change and to ensure that our strategy and resources can safely maintain our assets.

4. False perceptions of our work

False perceptions and reports of what we do have increased in media and social media in recent years due to campaigning by some against investment in making it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle. If these false perceptions are repeated and spread without mitigation it could negatively impact on support for our work from individuals, partners, local and national governments.

To mitigate this risk, we monitor media and social media, so where effective we can correct misconceptions. We proactively tell the story of positive impact of our work through campaigns, our communications channels and in direct conversations with our stakeholders. Where campaigners directly criticise our work, we aim to foster constructive dialogue with them, rather than polarised conflict through social media or media, so we can understand their concerns and feedback and have an opportunity explain the positive impact we are trying to have in communities.

5. Children or vulnerable adults may be harmed in connection with our activities

Engaging with communities is a priority for Sustrans, but this creates a risk in ensuring that we are safeguarding the children and vulnerable adults that we work with.

To mitigate this risk, we regularly review our safeguarding policy and procedures, and we are committed to providing training to all colleagues and volunteers who work with children and vulnerable adults. We have additional training for our Directors and Trustees on their roles and responsibilities for safeguarding. We have a team of Designated Safeguarding Officers who oversee our safeguarding processes and implement changes to ensure we are upholding our responsibility to safeguarding in everything we do.

6. Data breaches and disruption to our services

The dependence on information technology has dramatically increased in recent years, and this creates risks in relation to ensuring robust and reliable systems, information governance, and cyber security.

To mitigate these risks, we have developed an IT strategy as part of our improving our operating model strategic priority. This includes implementing integrated systems that support productivity, and identifying ways of working that will better meet our future needs. We regularly review and train colleagues in our data protection policies. We comply with the Cyber Essentials standard and are moving core systems to the cloud.

Fundraising

Fundraising compliance and conforming to recognised standards

Sustrans is, and always has been, committed to ensuring a transparent and ethical approach to fundraising activities. We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and committed to the Code of Fundraising Practice. We are also governed and guided by the Charity Commission.

Our colleagues are trained in accordance with the Fundraising Regulator's code, and this ensures that our fundraising activities are neither intrusive nor persistent. Our fundraising promise further demonstrates our clear commitment to how we treat our donors:

- we will commit to high standards
- we will be clear, honest, open, and respectful
- we will be fair and reasonable
- we will be accountable and responsible.

In 2023-2024 we undertook an internal review of our fundraising compliance. From this review, four new policies were created to help us govern compliance including 'Protecting Vulnerable People in Fundraising', 'Know your Donor and Suspicious Donations', 'Refunds', and 'Working with Professional Fundraisers'. These policies have helped shape how we train our teams around compliance and empower them.

Personal data and consent

Our donors' personal data is held in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR). All data is held securely and only for as long as required. We will never sell or share donors' details with other organisations to use for their own purposes, other than when we are required to do so by law.

Since 2022-2023 we have been operating under legitimate interest as our lawful basis for processing data, which is reflected in all our privacy policies on our website, and accessible to supporters every time they donate or purchase from our shop.

We make every effort to ensure that our fundraising activity never feels unreasonably intrusive, persistent or pressurised, but rather focuses on inspiring support and celebrating the impact of our donors and their gifts. Donors can manage their permissions by contacting our Supporter Care team. We always respect the wishes of donors who do not wish to receive fundraising communications, including those who have registered with the Fundraising Preference Service.

Fundraising complaints

Our ethical and open approach to fundraising is reflected in the low number of fundraising complaints that we have received, with 11 recorded in 2023-2024. The number of fundraising complaints received has increased over the last year, by five. This has coincided with Sustrans' new and expanding fundraising activities.

Our complaints process and policy continue to be transparent and accessible to the public on our website and by request, and we are committed to ensuring our three-stage complaints process is always handled with empathy and diligence.

Face-to-face fundraising

A major strand of our fundraising activity engages new supporters face-to-face on the National Cycle Network. Although we partner with 'Inspired People' to recruit agency fundraisers on our behalf, all our in-house face-to-face fundraisers are trained and managed directly by Sustrans.

Our in-house fundraisers receive in-depth training, including recognising people in vulnerable circumstances, and are always required to be friendly, professional and never engage in actions that could be construed as pressurising or manipulative. Our team of fundraisers are supervised by a team leader, who assesses their performance and conduct on an ongoing daily basis. Regular coaching and formal performance reviews are conducted with all of our fundraisers.

In 2023-2024 Sustrans also ran a face-to-face pilot with the professional fundraising agency, Appco, between May and September. Sustrans had oversight of Appco's in-house training and monitored Appco's performance and fundraising compliance throughout the pilot.

Protecting people in vulnerable circumstances

Sustrans takes its responsibility in protecting vulnerable people very seriously and has clear procedures for reporting and managing any concerns. We ensure all fundraisers are trained to identify the needs of people in vulnerable circumstances. Our fundraisers are also trained to recognise someone who may not have the capacity to make an informed decision, and therefore not make a financial ask, and report their concerns to their manager. Any donation received via post will be viewed in a similar way, with any concerns over the individual being reported to the Supporter Operations Manager.

In 2023-2024 Sustrans approved and rolled out its Protecting Vulnerable People in Fundraising policy. This policy is now embedded and readily available to all colleagues across Sustrans, and is shaping the training our colleagues receive.

Working with external fundraisers

We work with Ethicall, a professional telephone fundraising agency. They are registered with the Fundraising Regulator, the Chartered Institute of Fundraising, and are accredited by the Data and Marketing Association. We monitor their work through training and listening to phone calls and have been happy with their quality and ethical approach to fundraising. We will continue to build our relationship and monitor Ethicall's performance moving into 2024-2025.

In 2023-2024 Sustrans piloted working with the professional fundraising agency, Appco. They are registered with the Fundraising Regulator, and the Chartered Institute of Fundraising in England and Scotland. We monitored Appco through the pilot scheme with regular meetings and performance reviews, as well as monitoring complaints and feedback received about the fundraisers. We also monitored their welcome calls with supporters through call listening, rating their performance and compliance. We did spot-check mystery shopping during the pilot, and we had oversight of their compliance training, which was delivered in-house by Appco. We were happy that Appco remained compliant to the Code and our expectations of ethical fundraising throughout the pilot.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

Sustrans is a registered charity in England and Wales and in Scotland, and a private company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. It is governed by its Board of Trustees operating under the terms of the Articles of Association as amended in July 2023.

Charity Governance Code

Sustrans supports the principles of good governance set out in the Charity Governance Code ("Code") for larger charities and adopted use of the Code in 2018. Trustees welcomed the refreshed version of the Code published in December 2020, with its enhanced principles of integrity, equality, diversity, and inclusion.

As part of its approach to continuous improvement of governance arrangements, the Board reviewed the charity's practice against the Code's requirements as well as conducting a wider Board effectiveness review. The recommendations informed an improvement schedule which was approved by the Board in July 2023.

Over the course of 2023-2024, the Board continued to work through the improvement schedule. The Board's improvement work included:

- Strengthening its practice in equality, diversity, and inclusion, including in its recruitment of new Trustees.
- Reviewing the current Board committee structure and membership to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- Strengthening the induction process for new Trustees.
- Revising the Deputy Chair role description to clarify specific responsibilities.
- Reviewing the policy framework, with this work continuing into 2024-2025.
- Continuing to improve the format of meetings to increase the efficiency of Board time.

The Board believes that the charity's governance meets the requirements of the Code in all key areas and particular focus continues to be given to the areas highlighted in the improvement schedule.

Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the governance and strategy of Sustrans. The Articles of Association allow for between five and fifteen Trustees, who have full legal responsibility for the activities of Sustrans. They are the company Directors of Sustrans for the purposes of company law.

Trustees are appointed for a term of three years and can be re-appointed for a second consecutive term. In exceptional circumstances a Trustee may be appointed for one further term. To support succession planning, Fiona Westwood was appointed for a third term in September 2023 to end in July 2024. At this point, Fiona will have served six and a half years on the Board, which is still within the good practice guidelines set out in the Code.

The Board has a deep commitment to Sustrans' value of 'for everyone' and to involving people with different and seldom-heard voices. The Board has been strengthening its practice in equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that all Trustees feel welcomed and able to participate.

As of 31 March 2024, there were eight women and five men on the Board of Trustees.

None of the Trustees received any remuneration.

Role of Trustees

Trustees monitor and have overall responsibility for:

- Approving the overall strategy and annual budget of the organisation, ensuring the allocation of the necessary resources to achieve the objectives defined in the business plan.
- Ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of controls, financial and otherwise.
- Keeping proper accounting records which comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities' Statement of Recommend Practice.
- Safeguarding the assets of the charity and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.
- Providing assurance that the charity is operating efficiently and effectively, carrying out a risk assessment to identify possible risks to the achievement of the charity's objectives and establishing procedures, actions, and systems to mitigate them.

This monitoring of financial and other areas of performance ensures that the Trustees are continually appraised of progress, and the risks the charity faces.

The Trustees meet at least five times a year. Meetings are held virtually and in different geographical locations, giving the Trustees the opportunity to experience Sustrans work and/or engage with stakeholders. In 2023-2024, the Board held five Board meetings. Trustee attendance at Board meetings was:

Meeting	Attendance[1]
May 2023	90% (9/10)
July 2023	75% (9/12)
September 2023	83% (8/12)
January 2024	93% (14/15)
March 2024	100% (13/13)

Notes:
1 Attendance is based on the number of Trustees eligible to attend at the time.

The Board has appointed 'Trustee Champions' in specific areas such as safeguarding and equality, diversity, and inclusion, to support the Board's governance role and to provide additional support to the Executive.

Board Committees

In September 2023, the Board reviewed the committee structure to ensure that the charity has a robust governance model in place. The new committee structure consisting of a Finance Committee, Impact Committee, People Committee and Estates Committee was approved by the Board and implemented in January 2024. Ensuring that the charity is impact-led is a priority for the Board. The changes to the committee structure enable Trustees to have greater scrutiny of our impact. As the charity looks to deepen its approach to equity, diversity and inclusion and following the recognition of a Trade Union, the new structure also enables greater focus from Trustees on people-related issues. The new committees provide oversight on the following matters:

- Finance Committee: financial performance, internal financial controls, risk management, and matters regarding the external audit.
- People Committee: pay policies, people and culture matters, and recruitment of Trustees.
- Impact Committee: scrutiny of strategic and operational performance and the charity's delivery and reporting of impact.
- Estates Committee: monitoring of Sustrans' property portfolio, approvals of certain disposals and acquisitions, and asset management.

Each committee is chaired by a Trustee, with terms of reference and functions delegated by the Board. Committees meet as required, typically quarterly. Minutes of meetings are circulated to all Trustees, and committee Chairs provide a report to the following Board meeting.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The Trustees have a wide range of skills and experience. The Trustees, together with the Executive, identify the skills, experience and background required of the Trustees to ensure that the Board can deliver its duties, and to support and challenge the Executive.

The People Committee oversees the succession planning for, and the recruitment of, a skills-based Board. Trustee roles are advertised widely, including on Sustrans' website and a search agent is used. The Board has adopted a Board Succession and Diversity Statement to demonstrate its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion when recruiting to the Board.

In 2023, the Board appointed a Board Associate. This is a 12-month development role for aspiring Trustees. The Board Associate is not a Trustee or Director of Sustrans in law and has no associated responsibilities or voting rights. They can gain insight into the role of Trustee by observing Board meetings, having access to a Board mentor and other learning and development opportunities.

Trustee induction and training

The induction for new Trustees includes the provision of a Trustee Handbook containing key documentation, one-to-one meetings with key people, project visits, and attending externally provided Trustee induction and refresher training.

In 2023, the Board strengthened its induction process for new Trustees, including a review of key onboarding documents for incoming Trustees. Feedback from recently recruited Trustees will be taken onboard to further improve this process.

Trustees have appraisals with the Chair of the Board, which enables any development needs to be identified and addressed. Training, project visits and information sessions are all part of the

ongoing development process to ensure Trustees are up to date on the charity and their responsibilities. All Trustees receive periodic updates and guidance on their role as Trustees of the charity.

Conflicts of interest

Each Trustee is required to disclose potential or actual conflicts of interest in recruitment and annually for inclusion in the register of interests and at Board or Committee meetings if relevant. The Register is included in Board and Committee meeting papers.

Executive

The day-to-day running of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive, who in turn delegates specific responsibilities to members of the Executive team. The Trustees set out delegated authority through the Scheme of Delegation, which is reviewed annually. The Chief Executive and members of the Executive team are not Directors for the purposes of company law.

The Executive team meets fortnightly to enable rapid, agile decision-making, as well as quarterly for an away day. Their purpose is to review the performance of the charity's work, and to address any issues and opportunities arising with regards to finance, health and safety, risk management, resourcing, programme delivery, or influencing work.

Executive remuneration

Sustrans is committed to ensuring that it has a fair, robust and evidenced-based approach to setting levels of remuneration for all employees, appropriate for the roles people perform and the responsibilities they undertake to deliver the charity's aims, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, employment status, disability or marital status. The People Committee is comprised of Trustees, with a remit to consider the charity's pay policy and to set parameters for Executive Director remuneration. The Board of Trustees sets the salary of the Chief Executive. Sustrans uses the Hay job evaluation system to assess the size and scope of job roles. It also uses established external, independent and relevant pay data for benchmarking purposes to ensure that individual levels of pay are appropriate and comparable with similar roles in organisations of a similar size and complexity.

The annual salary for Executive Director roles at Sustrans for the year ended 31 March 2024 is detailed here:

Title	Key areas of responsibility	2023-2024 Salary
Chief Executive	Overall executive leadership of the organisation with responsibility for delivering Sustrans' charitable purpose, strategy and governance. External facing role with partners and stakeholders. Leadership of the Executive Team.	£140-150K
Chief Operating Officer[1]	Lead Executive Director for the delivery of operational strategy and services in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England.	£110-120K
Executive Director, People and Organisation Development	Responsible for the oversight, development and delivery of people and volunteering strategies, policy frameworks and approaches.	£100-110K
Executive Director, Finance, Fundraising and Resources[2]	Responsibility for oversight and management of Sustrans' overall financial performance and sustainability, business and commercial development, fundraising and supporter engagement, IT and health and safety.	£100-110K
Executive Director, Impact	Responsible for research and monitoring, infrastructure, estates, urbanism, paths for everyone and safeguarding.	£100-110K
Executive Director, External Affairs[3]	Responsible for policy, public affairs, strategic communications and brand.	£100-110K

Notes:
1 Post created in October 2023.
2 Post given additional responsibility for fundraising in October 2023.
3 Post vacant from September 2023.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also Directors of Sustrans for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard FRS 102 applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of affairs, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and

Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

As permitted by the Articles of Association, the Trustees have the benefit of an indemnity which is a qualifying third-party indemnity provision as defined by Section 234 of the Companies Act 2006. The indemnity was in force throughout the last financial year and is currently in force. The charitable company also purchased and maintained throughout the financial year Trustees' and Officers' liability insurance in respect of itself and its Trustees.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website.

In line with charities' best practice, the Trustees have reviewed the criteria for charities, set out in the Charities Act 2011, and concluded that:

- Sustrans' purposes remain charitable.
- Sustrans satisfies the public benefit test.

Section 172 statement

Section 172 of the Companies Act 2006 requires Trustees (the Directors) to act in the way they consider, in good faith, would be most likely to promote the success of the charity to achieve its charitable purposes. It states that in doing so, the Directors should have regard, amongst other matters, to:

- Likely consequences of any decision in the long term.
- Interests of the charity's employees.
- Need to foster the charity's relationships with suppliers, customers, and others.
- Impact of the charity's operations on the community and the environment.
- Desirability of the charity maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct.
- Need to act fairly as between members of the company.

Our strategic priorities were developed as part of a long-term strategy to make it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle. We routinely review external developments and horizon scan for future trends and ensure that our plans can be adapted as needed to meet changing circumstances.

The Trustees act in good faith to make decisions, the outcome of which, they consider will most likely be to promote the success of the charitable company both in current periods and in the long term.

In discharging their duties above, the Trustees carefully consider amongst other matters, the impact on and interests of other stakeholders in the charitable company and factor these into their decision-making processes.

Likely consequences of any decisions in the long term

When considering proposals and setting strategies the Trustees consider both long and short-term consequences. During the year, relevant matters Trustees considered included the financial situation and the development of Sustrans' 2025-2030 strategy.

Employees

Our colleagues are vital to Sustrans, and we regard ongoing, regular engagement with them as a top priority. We measure employee engagement through regular surveys and address any issues raised as quickly as possible through departmental action plans. Feedback from our employee representative forum and trade union representatives is shared regularly with our Executive team and Board.

We also have employee networks which have been set up to bring together and represent specific groups of employees, aimed at helping to establish a sense of community and support for these groups of people, as well as providing social and professional networks.

We are committed to promoting a healthy workforce comprising both physical and mental wellbeing. Trustees receive information on various employee metrics. We keep colleagues informed of key issues through structured communication channels, including monthly One Sustrans webinars. We promote inclusion in the workplace and provide training and development opportunities.

Customers and suppliers

Our relationships with partners and suppliers are key to our effectiveness. Sustrans seeks to pay all suppliers any undisputed amounts due and within agreed terms.

In 2023, the Board approved a new Procurement Policy for the charity that seeks to introduce and embed an approach to procurement which draws on best practice and strengthens our relationships with our key suppliers.

The Finance Committee has the authority to approve contracts on behalf of the Board in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation. In doing so, they provide assurance to the Board that the Procurement Policy has been complied with, and that the process was fair and robust.

Community and the environment

Working for and with communities is central to delivering our mission and strategic objectives. Board meetings offer Trustees the opportunity to visit projects and engage with local stakeholders.

In September 2023, Trustees attended a roundtable discussion with some of the charity's key stakeholders from the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, the Future Generations Commissioner, and Transport for Wales to explore how we can work in partnership to support Sustrans' vision across Wales.

The charity recognises the importance of its environmental responsibilities and has policies aimed at reducing any potential detrimental environmental impact of its activities.

In 2023, the Board approved the charity's new Environmental Policy and established a Carbon Reduction Plan. Progress against the plan is reported annually to the Impact Committee. At its January meeting, the Board received a presentation on Sustrans' Biodiversity Strategy.

Standards and conduct

The charity has a series of defined codes of practice regarding ethical standards and the conduct of business. These are clearly communicated to every colleague and adherence is expected and enforced.

Being fair and inclusive in everything we do

Inclusivity and fairness are important to the Trustees. The benefits of walking, wheeling, and cycling are not experienced in the same way by everyone. We prioritise work with people and in places where we can make the most difference to those who may feel excluded. We involve people with different and seldom-heard voices, to develop solutions that work for everyone. We keep questioning and asking if we can do more. We know we cannot do this on our own, so we work closely with others.

We are also committed to inclusivity inside the charity, supported by our groups and networks, promoted by the charity's For Everyone Strategic Framework, and underpinned by our values and the way in which leaders and their teams work. The Board is taking active steps to improve its diversity when seeking new Trustees and to ensure that it is fully inclusive.

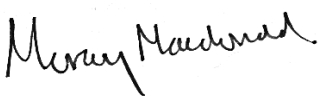
In 2023, the Board approved the For Everyone Strategic Framework, including an internal and external Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan. It aims to demonstrate visible leadership, provide shape to the charity's external work, and inform the development of Sustrans' 2025-2030 strategy. Progress against the action plans is reported quarterly to the Board. An annual report will be published on Sustrans' website.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware.
- Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

By order of the Board of Trustees who approve the Strategic Report as Directors.



Moray Macdonald
Sustrans Chair of Trustees
5 August 2024

Independent auditor's report to the members and trustees of Sustrans

Opinion

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

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (amended).

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit

- the information given in the Trustees' Report, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement earlier in this document, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a

whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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

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

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error, and discussed these between our audit team members. We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Companies Act 2006 and The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, together with the Charities SORP (FRS102) 2019. We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

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

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

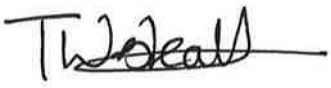
We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be within the timing of recognition of grant and contract income, and the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management,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

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

regulations.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the charitable company's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body and the charitable company's Trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tara Westcott
Senior Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of
Crowe U.K. LLP
Statutory Auditor
4th Floor
St James House
St James' Square
Cheltenham
GL50 3PR

Date: 13 August 2024

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2024

(Including an Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	**Total Funds 2024 £'000**	Total Funds 2023 £'000
Income					
Donations and Legacies		4,224	5	**4,229**	5,827
Charitable activities	2	9,919	127,311	**137,230**	104,159
Investment income		4,946	-	**4,946**	2,477
Total income		19,089	127,316	**146,405**	112,463
Expenditure					
Raising funds		2,460	-	**2,460**	2,150
Charitable activities		14,572	127,697	**142,269**	107,534
Total expenditure	3	17,032	127,697	**144,729**	109,684
Net gain on investments	9	216	-	216	-
Net income / (expenditure)	5	2,273	(381)	**1,892**	2,779
Transfers between funds	12	(146)	146	**-**	-
Net movement in funds		2,127	(235)	**1,892**	2,779
Reconciliation of funds					
Fund balances brought forward		9,540	3,421	**12,961**	10,182
Fund balances carried forward		11,667	3,186	**14,853**	12,961

The notes on pages 49 to 71 are an integral part of these financial statements.

All gains and losses recognised in the year are included in the Statement of Financial Activities. All income and expenditure relates to continuing operations.

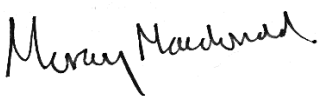
There is no difference between the net income for the years stated above and their historical cost equivalents.

Balance Sheet at 31 March 2024

Company Number 1797726 (England and Wales)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
		£'000	**£'000**	**£'000**	£'000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	7	2,063	1,064	**3,127**	3,322
Investments	9	3,216	-	**3,216**	-
		5,279	1,064	**6,343**	3,322
Current assets					
Stock		214	-	**214**	256
Debtors	8	21,686	-	**21,686**	7,108
Cash at bank and in hand		71,162	2,988	**74,150**	165,206
Total Current Assets		93,062	2,988	**96,050**	172,570
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(86,674)	(866)	**(87,540)**	(162,931)
Net current Assets		6,388	2,122	**8,510**	9,639
Total Net Assets		11,667	3,186	**14,853**	12,961
The Funds of the Charity					
Restricted	12			**3,186**	3,421
Unrestricted					
Designated	13			**2,063**	2,252
General				**9,604**	7,288
				11,667	9,540
Total Funds				**14,853**	12,961

The notes on pages 49 to 71 are an integral part of these financial statements. These financial statements on pages 46 to 71 including the notes, were approved by the trustees on 5th August 2024 and were signed on their behalf by:



Moray Macdonald
Chair

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	£'000	£'000
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	**1,892**	2,779
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	**308**	337
Interest and dividends from investments	**(4,946)**	(2,477)
(Profit) on the sale of fixed assets	**(308)**	(271)
(Increase) / decrease in stocks	**42**	(23)
(Increase) in debtors	**(14,578)**	(811)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	**(75,391)**	7,984
(Gains) on investments	**(216)**	-
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	**(93,197)**	7,518
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Interest and dividends from investments	**4,946**	2,477
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	**351**	299
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	**(156)**	(426)
(Purchase) of investments	**(3,000)**	-
Net cash provided by investing activities	**2,141**	2,350
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	**(91,056)**	9,868
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	**165,206**	155,338
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	**74,150**	165,206

There is no movement on net debt in the year other than cash.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Principle accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention in UK pounds sterling.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for charities, which is based on the Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 effective from 1st January 2019, the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) regulations 2006 and Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis and accounting policies have been applied consistently. The financial statements have been prepared on the basis that it is a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Sustrans has two wholly owned subsidiaries, which have not been consolidated on the basis that they are dormant.

b) Going concern

We have a number of key funding streams – notably our government-funded programmes – which offer us financial protection in the near term. Our reserves balance further mitigates remaining financial risks.

We are optimistic, however, given that all UK governments are recognising the importance of walking and cycling to the economy, environment and public health.

But we are not complacent. We are working to bolster our fundraising operations so that we have a secure core of funding that will enable us to continue to deliver our charity's objectives should other income sources start to reduce. We are actively planning to ensure that we can react quickly to changing financial risks, and opportunities, in a sustainable way.

After making enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future being at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements.

The Charity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements. The Trustees have considered specifically the financial risks associated with the current economic uncertainty.

The Trustees consider that Sustrans has the flexibility to respond to any unexpected fluctuations in income levels and has adequate reserves and operational provisions to manage the loss of major funding streams.

c) Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are funds that are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for a particular purpose. The aim and use of designated funds is set out in Note 13 to the financial statements.

Restricted Funds - Income restricted to a specific purpose is treated as restricted funds. The description and purpose of these restricted funds are provided in Note 12.

d) Incoming Resources

Income is recognised in the statement of financial activities (SoFA) when a transaction or other event results in an increase in the charity's assets or a reduction in its liabilities.

Income is only recognised when all of the following criteria are met:

- Entitlement – control over the rights or other access to the economic benefit has passed to the Charity.
- Probable – it is more likely than not that the economic benefits associated with the transaction or gift will flow to the Charity.
- Measurement – the monetary value or amount of the income can be measured reliably and the costs incurred for the transaction and the costs to complete the transaction can be measured reliably.
- If any of these criteria are not met but the cash has been received, then the income is deferred.
- Donations – Donations are accounted for in the year in which they are receivable.
- Legacies – For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of: the date on which the Charity is aware that probate has been granted; the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the Charity that a distribution will be made; or when a distribution is received from the estate.
- Grants receivable – Grants from government bodies and other sources are received for specific projects and are recognised in accordance with their individual terms and conditions. Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds which is when any performance conditions attached are met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be reliably measured. Grant income will be deferred if received in advance of meeting performance conditions or if the funder specifically states that the income must be spent in a future accounting period.
- Investment income - investment income relates to interest receivable from bank accounts and dividends receivable. They are accounted for in the year in which they are receivable.

e) Resources Expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Support costs have been allocated to activities on the basis of full-time equivalent employee numbers. Non-recoverable VAT is attributed to the heading of cost where the expenditure is incurred.

All expenditure up to the year-end payable on projects under the management of the Charity has been included in the financial statements. Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities. Governance costs are those incurred in connection with administration of the Charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory regulations.

f) Tangible assets

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £2,000 are capitalised and included at cost. Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their expected useful lives on a straight-line basis. The rates of depreciation utilised are as follows:

IT Equipment	25% per annum
Plant and machinery	25% per annum
Office refurbishments	10% per annum or the lease term

Freehold land and buildings are not depreciated because (a) it is the Trustees' intention to hold the assets for the long term and (b) their residual value is at least equal to the carrying value. Assets not depreciated are subjected to an annual impairment review.

g) Investments

Investments are stated at fair value which is determined by reference to market value.

h) Key sources of estimation uncertainty and judgements

Preparation of the financial statements requires management to make estimates and judgements. The items in the financial statements where the most significant estimates and judgements have been made are:

- Income recognition on grants: Income is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, the amount can be measured, and the receipt is probable. Where terms and conditions have not been met, or uncertainty exists as to whether Sustrans can meet the terms and conditions otherwise outside of its control, the income is not recognised but deferred as a liability until it is probable that the terms and conditions imposed can be met.
- Valuation of tangible fixed assets and assessment of the remaining useful lives of tangible fixed assets: see accounting policy (1f) for details of the estimate of useful economic lives applied and consideration of impairment.
- Valuation of debtors with regards to making an assessment for impairment: see accounting policy (1d).
- Accrued and deferred income: Income is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, the amount can be measured, and the receipt is probable. Where terms and conditions have not been met, or uncertainty exists as to whether Sustrans can meet the terms and conditions otherwise outside of its control, the income is not recognised but deferred as a liability until it is probable that the terms and conditions imposed can be met.

i) Stock

The Charity holds stocks of maps which are recognised at cost and adjusted (where applicable) for any loss of service potential.

j) Maintenance

The Charity has a maintenance obligation over several disused railways where it owns the land and structures upon it. A planned maintenance policy is adopted with routine maintenance expenditure being funded from Restricted funds and Designated funds as appropriate. Significant short-term maintenance liabilities are provided for as and when there is a constructive obligation.

k) Taxation

The company, which is a registered Charity, is entitled to taxation exemptions on all income and gains properly applied for its charitable purposes.

l) Pension costs

The Charity makes contributions to a defined contribution pension scheme on behalf of certain employees. The cost of these contributions is charged in the financial statements as incurred. This scheme is available to all employees.

m) Operating leases

Rentals applicable to operating leases, where substantially all the benefits and risk of ownership remain with the lessor, are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight-line basis.

n) Grants

Grants payable in furtherance of the Charity's objects are recognised when the commitment is communicated to the grant recipient or when payment is due in accordance with the terms of the contract, which is normally upon providing evidence of the project work being undertaken.

o) Volunteers

The Charity benefits from gifts in kind in the form of volunteer time and unclaimed out of pocket expenses. As per the Charity SORP, these are not recognised in the accounts as they cannot be reliably valued, but further information is provided in the Trustees' annual report.

p) Financial instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

q) Redundancies

Termination payments are accounted for in the period an obligation is made or liability incurred.

r) Cash

Cash includes UK bank balances available within 121 days.

2. Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	**Total 2024**	Total 2023 (restated)
	£'000	£'000	**£'000**	£'000
Central	526	820	**1,346**	707
England	4,783	25,094	**29,877**	32,631
London	1,451	247	**1,698**	2,134
Northern Ireland	835	38	**873**	950
Scotland	1,024	99,691	**100,715**	65,464
Wales	1,300	1,421	**2,721**	2,273
	9,919	127,311	**137,230**	104,159

A considerable proportion of Sustrans' impact is delivered through the management of performance-related grants. In a number of significant cases this funding is paid to the charity in advance of delivery. Accordingly the income is deferred until the performance related conditions are met and the income is then recognised. This can lead to the charity holding significant amounts as cash (please see the Balance Sheet) and deferred income (please see note 10).

For 2023/24 a 'central' category has been introduced to reflect charitable activities delivered across the UK. The 2022/23 number is restated to provide a comparative figure on the same basis.

3. Total Expenditure

	Activities undertaken directly	Grant funding of activities (to institutions)*	Support costs	**Total 2024**	Total 2023 (restated)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	**£'000**	£'000
Raising funds	2,249	-	211	**2,460**	2,081
Charitable Activities					
Central	2,100	-	578	**2,678**	2,047
England	18,252	11,732	2,325	**32,309**	34,458
London	2,136	71	486	**2,693**	2,830
Northern Ireland	934	11	227	**1,172**	1,285
Scotland	17,169	81,011	2,091	**100,271**	64,221
Wales	2,425	266	455	**3,146**	2,762
	43,016	93,091	6,162	**142,269**	107,603
Total expenditure	**45,265**	**93,091**	**6,373**	**144,729**	109,684

*See Note 17.

Sustrans' charitable activities are delivered by geographically focussed teams across the UK.

For 2023/24 a 'central' category has been introduced to reflect charitable activities delivered across the UK. The 2022/23 number is restated to provide a comparative figure on the same basis.

The introduction of the 'central' category has changed the allocation of support costs, a consequence of which is that the comparative figure for 'raising funds' has changed.

4. Analysis of support costs

	Chief Executive and Governance	Finance	IT	People	**Total 2024**	Total 2023 (restated)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	**£'000**	£'000
Raising funds	34	42	73	62	**211**	185
Central	94	114	201	169	**578**	532
England	379	459	809	678	**2,325**	2,154
London	79	96	169	142	**486**	562
Northern Ireland	37	45	79	66	**227**	234
Scotland	341	413	727	610	**2,091**	1,853
Wales	74	90	158	133	**455**	442
Total 2024	1,038	1,259	2,216	1,860	**6,373**	5,962
Total 2023 (restated)	783	1,061	2,322	1,796	**5,962**	

For 2023/24 a 'central' category has been introduced to reflect charitable activities delivered across the UK. The 2022/23 number is restated to provide a comparative figure on the same basis.

5. Net income / (expenditure)

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
This is stated after charging:		
Trustees of the Charity are not paid		
Travel and associated expenses incurred by employees and 15 (2023:11) Trustees for attendance at meetings	**15**	14
Fees payable for statutory audit	**21**	20
Trustee liability insurance	**2**	2
	38	36
Fees payable to the auditors for assurance services other than statutory audit	**4**	2
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**308**	337

6. Employee costs

	2024	2023 (restated)
Average full-time equivalent number of employees	**Number**	Number
Raising Funds	**21.2**	19.4
Support Functions	**79.9**	72.6
Charitable Activities		
Central	**58.0**	56.0
England	**233.4**	226.6
London	**48.8**	59.1
Northern Ireland	**22.7**	24.7
Scotland	**209.9**	194.9
Wales	**45.7**	46.5
	719.6	699.8

The average head count (number of employees) during the year was 811 (2023: 779).

For 2023/24 a 'central' category has been introduced to reflect charitable activities delivered across the UK. The 2022/23 number is restated to provide a comparative figure on the same basis.

	2024	2023
Staff costs (for the above employees)	**£'000**	£'000
Wages and salaries	**24,967**	22,619
Social Security costs	**2,374**	2,193
Employer's pension contributions	**2,222**	1,609
	29,563	26,421

Statutory redundancy payments totalling £196K (2023: £22K) were made during the year.

	2024	2023
	Number	Number
The following number of employees received remuneration falling within the following ranges:		
£60,000 to £69,999	**13**	12
£70,000 to £79,999	**5**	1
£90,000 to £99,999	**-**	6
£100,000 to £110,000	**4**	-
£130,000 to £139,999	**-**	1
£140,000 to £149,999	**1**	-

The remuneration shown above is the only employee benefit received by key management personnel.

All jobs are sized according to the Hay job evaluation system.

In the year the Trustees approved a new Executive Remuneration Policy for the CEO and Executive Team based on the Korn Ferry 'public sector and not-for-profit' benchmark at median level to calibrate the remuneration of Executive Team posts.

The key management personnel are the Executive team, and during the year, the total payroll cost for members of the Executive team was £793K (2023: £810K).

7. Tangible assets

	Freehold land and buildings	Office refurbishment	IT Equipment	Plant and Machinery	**Total**
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	**£'000**
Cost					
At 1 April 2023	**2,167**	**1,058**	**179**	**930**	**4,334**
Additions	**35**	**-**	**-**	**121**	**156**
Disposals	**(3)**	**-**	**(25)**	**(202)**	**(230)**
At 31 March 2024	**2,199**	**1,058**	**154**	**849**	**4,260**
Accumulated depreciation					
At 1 April 2023	**-**	**212**	**171**	**629**	**1,012**
Charge for the year	**-**	**145**	**7**	**156**	**308**
Disposals	**-**	**-**	**(25)**	**(162)**	**(187)**
At 31 March 2024	**-**	**357**	**153**	**623**	**1,133**
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2024	**2,199**	**701**	**1**	**226**	**3,127**
At 31 March 2023	**2,167**	**846**	**8**	**301**	**3,332**

Tangible fixed assets held in restricted funds total £1,064K (2023: £1,070K) and comprise the National Cycle Network Centre £903K (2023: £903K), land holdings in Yorkshire totalling £150K (2023: £150K), and plant and machinery £11K (2023: £17K).

As at 31 March 2024, there were no capital commitments (2023: nil).

8. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Trade Debtors	**4,368**	3,251
Accrued income	**16,099**	2,688
Sundry debtors and prepayments	**1,219**	1,169
	21,686	7,108

9. Investments

				2024	2023
	Cash	T-bills	Other listed investments	**Total**	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	**£'000**	£'000
Valuation as 1st April 2023	-	-	-	**-**	-
Additions	3,000	-	-	**3,000**	-
Purchases	(9,489)	6,713	2,776	**-**	-
Disposals	6,544	(6,402)	(178)	**(36)**	-
Interest receivable	20	-	-	**20**	-
Dividends receivable	16	-	-	**16**	-
Investment management fee	(3)	-	-	**(3)**	-
Net gain on investments	-	34	185	**219**	-
Valuation at 31st March 2024	88	345	2,783	**3,216**	-
Liquidity				**920**	-
Equity-type risk				**2,010**	-
Diversifiers				**286**	-
				3,216	**-**

Investments are reported at market value at year end.

10. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Trade Creditors	**10,362**	7,153
Payments received on account for contracts or performance related grants	**36,159**	126,530
Accruals	**39,721**	28,155
Taxation and social security	**1,298**	1,093
	87,540	162,931

Reconciliation of payments received on account for contracts or performance related grants

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Brought forward as at 1 April 2023	**126,530**	132,979
Released in the year	**(96,550)**	(73,099)
New balances deferred	**6,179**	66,650
Carried forward as at 31 March 2024	**36,159**	126,530

The new balances deferred in the year of £6.2M (2023: £66.7M) includes funding from the Department of Transport of £4.5M (2023: £2.9M) and Transport Scotland of £0.0M (2023: £58.9M). Of the Transport Scotland funds brought forward £72.7M (2023: £43.4M) was released in the year. Of the Department of Transport funds brought forward £21.9M (2023: £27.0M) was released in the year.

11. Financial instruments

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Financial Assets		
Cash	**74,150**	165,206
Accrued income	**16,099**	2,688
Trade debtors (settlement amount after trade discount)	**4,368**	3,251
Investments (stated at market value)	**3,216**	-
Financial Liabilities		
Trade creditors (settlement amount after trade discount)	**(10,362)**	(7,153)
Accruals	**(39,721)**	(28,155)

12. Restricted income funds

	Notes	Balance at 1 Apr 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers from unrestricted funds £'000	**Balance at 31 Mar 2024 £'000**
Consett & Sunderland Railway Path		-	3	(62)	59	**-**
Paisley to Kilwinning & Kilmacolm		113	58	(26)	-	**145**
York to Selby Railway Path		450	12	(1)		**461**
Worthington Railway Path – Derby		-	-	(25)	25	**-**
Mirehouse Railway Path		-	-	(55)	55	**-**
Historic railway path funds	(1)	**563**	**73**	**(169)**	**139**	**606**
National Cycle Network Centre	(2)	139	-	(11)	-	**128**
Kirklees maintenance fund	(3)	100	-	-	-	**100**
Two Tunnels maintenance fund	(4)	83	-	-	-	**83**
Catterick maintenance fund	(5)	17	-	(2)	-	**15**
Castleford Greenway	(6)	121	-	(2)	-	**119**
Lune Valley Cycleway	(7)	2,360	5	(262)	-	**2,103**
Asda Parklet	(8)	21	-	-	-	**21**
Big Give	(9)	17	-	(6)	-	**11**
Inclusive cycle loans	(10)	-	87	(87)	-	**-**
Online accessibility route planner	(11)	-	104	(104)	-	**-**
Inwood Inclusive Cycle Hub	(12)	-	17	(17)	-	**-**
Riverside Hostels	(13)	-	50	(57)	7	**-**
abrdn Financial Fairness Trust	(14)		40	(40)	-	**-**
		2,858	**303**	**(588)**	**7**	**2,580**
Central		**-**	589	(589)	**-**	**-**
England		-	25,079	(25,079)	-	**-**
London		-	180	(180)	-	**-**
Northern Ireland		-	38	(38)	-	**-**
Scotland		-	99,633	(99,633)	-	**-**
Wales		-	1,421	(1,421)	-	**-**
		-	**126,940**	**(126,940)**	**-**	**-**
		3,421	**127,316**	**(127,697)**	**146**	**3,186**

1. The historic railway path funds cover routes acquired from BRB (Residuary) Ltd. Agreements with the relevant local authority state that income arising from the land must be ring-fenced to that land. Where unrestricted funds have been spent on these routes these are shown as transfers into the fund.
2. In the financial year to 31 March 2004 the Charity acquired a building in central Bristol to be the new National Cycle Network Centre. A grant for £605k was received from the Millennium Commission to assist with the purchase. An appeal to supporters and trusts raised a further £332k. This restricted fund is used to maintain the building.
3. A maintenance fund from Yorkshire Water to be spent on the network within Kirklees.
4. A fund restricted to the long-term maintenance of the Two Tunnels in Bath.
5. Funds received for the long-term maintenance of the Connect 2 project at Catterick, Yorkshire.
6. Funds received in 2017/18 from the Railway Heritage Trust for the viaduct and greenway phases connecting to the Castleford Greenway in Yorkshire.
7. Funds received from a major donor for the Lune Valley Cycleway in Lancashire.
8. A donation received from a major supermarket to create a pocket park near the NCN 66 in Leeds.
9. Funds received from individual donors and match funding from the Big Give to undertake ecology work along the National Cycle Network.
10. Funds received from the Motability Foundation to deliver an accessible cycle loan/training programme for disabled people.
11. Funds received from the Motability Foundation to develop an online accessibility map and route planner for the National Cycle Network.
12. Funds from the London Marathon Foundation to expand the Inwood Inclusive Cycle Hub.
13. Funds received from City Bridge Foundation to empower hostel residents with long-term mental health conditions to feel more confident with active travel decisions.
14. The grant is to demonstrate the demand for, and benefits from, providing financial support to people who need a cycle but currently cannot access the Cycle to Work scheme. These are people not in employment, or on low incomes

13. Designated funds

		Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers (to) / from unrestricted funds	**Balance at 31 March 2024**
	Notes	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	**£'000**
Fixed asset fund	(1)	2,252	-	(302)	113	**2,063**
		2,252	**-**	**(302)**	**113**	**2,063**

(1) The fixed asset fund has been set up to facilitate the identification of those funds that require time to be made liquid and should therefore be excluded from the freely available reserves calculation. It represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets, except for those that form part of Restricted Funds. The change in the fixed asset fund over the year arises from the net change in unrestricted tangible fixed assets during this year.

14. Limitation by guarantee

The Company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. The liability for members in the event of winding up is limited to an amount not exceeding £1 per member.

15. Financial commitments

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
The total of future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:		
1. Not later than one year	**340**	355
2. Later than one year and not later than five years	**466**	567
	806	922
Lease payments recognised as an expense	**447**	334

16. Legal charges

In December 1995 the Charity entered into a debenture with the Millennium Commission giving a floating charge over the assets of the Charity as part of the agreement for grants from the Millennium Commission. In the financial year to 31 March 2004 the Charity acquired a building in central Bristol to be the new National Cycle Network Centre. A grant for £605,000 was received from the Millennium Commission to assist with this purchase. A charge over the building was created, in addition to the existing Debenture held by the Commission, in October 2005.

When the Millennium Commission was abolished in November 2006 these charges transferred to its successor, the Big Lottery Fund. In August 2014 the Big Lottery Fund released Sustrans from the floating charge, but the fixed charge over the building in central Bristol remains.

Over a number of years Sustrans acquired disused railway lines in England which were covered by a fixed charge in favour of the appropriate authority. The legal charges in existence are as follows:

- Land situated at Naburn, Escrick and Riccall, North Yorkshire is covered by a fixed charge in favour of Selby District Council
- Land on the Consett to Sunderland Railway is covered by a fixed charge in favour of Derwentside and Chester-le-Street District Councils (now Durham County Council) and Sunderland City Council
- Land forming the track bed of part of the disused railway in Cumbria is covered by a fixed charge in favour of Copeland Borough Council
- The Worthington Branch Line is covered by a fixed charge in favour of Derbyshire County Council and Leicestershire County Council
- The Foss Island branch line is covered by a fixed charge in favour of the City of York Council.

17. Grants paid to institutions

During the reporting year grants of more than £500K have been paid to the following institutions as reimbursement for project delivery:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Aberdeen City Council	**908**	86
Aberdeenshire Council	**956**	83
Angus Council	**3,329**	393
Argyll & Bute Council	**904**	250
Canal & River Trust	**4,238**	1,013
Cheshire East Council	**551**	-
City of Edinburgh Council	**20,449**	13,458
Cornwall Council	**-**	581
Dorset County Council	**668**	516
Dumfries & Galloway Council	**732**	24
Dundee City Council	**10,779**	4,100
East Ayrshire Council	**1,626**	14
East Lothian Council	**755**	709
East Renfrewshire Council	**3,513**	321
Edinburgh & Lothians Greenspace	**1,496**	657
Fife Council	**2,600**	476
First MTR South Western Trains Ltd	**555**	487
Glasgow City Council	**4,644**	3,046
Gloucestershire County Council	**-**	1,000
Green Action Trust	**1,109**	352
Hampshire County Council	**-**	521
Highland Council	**2,515**	1,089
Inverclyde Council	**2,724**	316
KPT Development Trust	**805**	279
Lancashire County Council	**-**	406
North Ayrshire Council	**714**	236
North Somerset Council	**-**	800
Queens Cross Housing Association	**3,000**	38
Scotrail Railways	**841**	1,462
Scottish Borders Council	**3,521**	9,324
Scottish Canals	**2,388**	2,956
SE Trains Limited	**287**	1,039
South Ayrshire Council	**836**	1,067
Stirling Council	**3,502**	752
Others less than £500K	**12,145**	10,645
	93,091	58,495

18. Grants received from government bodies

During the year grants of more than £100K were received from government bodies in relation to a wide number of projects that fall under the Charity's objectives as outlined in the Trustees' Report. The granting government bodies were:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Transport Scotland	**97,933**	63,664
Department for Transport	**22,526**	27,349
Warwickshire County Council	**1,781**	-
Welsh Government	**1,408**	948
National Highways	**254**	160
Other government bodies	**107**	288
Total	**124,009**	92,409

19. Net Assets

	2024			2023		
	Restricted Funds	**Unrestricted Funds**	**Total**	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total
	£'000	**£'000**	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fixed assets	**1,064**	**5,279**	**6,343**	1,070	2,252	3,322
Current assets	**2,988**	**93,062**	**96,050**	3,134	169,436	172,570
Creditors due within one year	**(866)**	**(86,674)**	**(87,540)**	(783)	(162,148)	(162,931)
Total	**3,186**	**11,667**	**14,853**	3,421	9,540	12,961

20. Railway Paths Limited

Railway Paths Limited was established as a Charity in May 1998 to take ownership of a number of disused railway lines from Rail Property Ltd as to transform them into walking, horse-riding and cycling routes for the benefit of the public.

Although Sustrans and Railway Paths Limited are not legally connected entities, we have disclosed the transactions between the two organisations below in the interests of transparency.

During the year Sustrans charged Railway Paths Limited £121K (2023: £121K), for expenses management, bookkeeping and other services. Railway Paths Limited charged Sustrans £60K (2023: £68K) for bridge and estate management services.

At the 31st March 2024 £19K (2023: £15K) was owed by Sustrans to Railway Paths Limited, and £42K (2023: £43K) was owed by Railway Paths Limited to Sustrans.

There were no other related party transactions in the current or prior year.

21. Subsidiaries

The following were subsidiary undertakings of Sustrans:

Name	Company Number	Class of shares	Holding
Sustrans (Trading) Limited	03635468	Ordinary	100%
Sustainable Transport Limited	03732011	Ordinary	100%

The financial results of the subsidiaries for the year ended 31 March 2024 were:

Name	Net assets (£)
Sustrans (Trading) Limited	1
Sustainable Transport Limited	1

Both subsidiaries are dormant entities and had no trading activity during this or the prior year. Both subsidiaries have the same registered office or principal place of business as Sustrans.

22. Comparative notes from 2022/23 financial statements Statement of Financial Activities

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	**Total Funds 2023 £'000**
Income				
Donations and Legacies		4,271	1,556	**5,827**
Charitable activities	2	9,727	94,432	**104,159**
Investment income		2,477	-	**2,477**
Total income		16,475	95,988	**112,463**
Expenditure				
Raising funds		2,150	-	**2,150**
Charitable activities		12,786	94,748	**107,534**
Total expenditure	3	14,936	94,748	**109,684**
Net income / (expenditure)	5	1,539	1,240	**2,779**
Transfers between funds		(155)	155	**-**
Net movement in funds		1,384	1,395	**2,779**
Reconciliation of funds				
Fund balances brought forward		8,156	2,026	**10,182**
Fund balances carried forward		9,540	3,421	**12,961**

23. Comparative notes from 2022/23 financial statements Balance Sheet at 31 March 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total Funds 2023 £'000
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	7	2,252	1,070	**3,322**
Current assets				
Stock		256	-	**256**
Debtors	8	7,108	-	**7,108**
Cash at bank and in hand		162,072	3,134	**165,206**
Total Current Assets		169,436	3,134	**172,570**
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(162,148)	(783)	**(162,931)**
Net current Assets		7,288	2,351	**9,639**
Total Net Assets		9,540	3,421	**12,961**
The Funds of the Charity				
Restricted	12			**3,421**
Unrestricted				
Designated	13			**2,252**
General				**7,288**
				9,540
Total Funds				**12,961**

24. Comparative notes from 2022/23 financial statements
Restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers from unrestricted funds	**Balance at 31 March 2023**
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	**£'000**
Consett and Sunderland Railway Path	-	3	(71)	68	**-**
Paisley to Kilwinning and Kilmacolm	108	5	-	-	**113**
York to Selby Railway Path	443	12	(5)		**450**
Worthington Railway Path – Derby	-	-	(34)	34	**-**
Mirehouse Railway Path	-	-	(44)	44	**-**
Historic railway path funds	**551**	**20**	**(154)**	**146**	**563**
National Cycle Network Centre	223	-	(84)	-	**139**
Kirklees maintenance fund	100	-	-	-	**100**
Two Tunnels maintenance fund	83	-	-	-	**83**
Catterick maintenance fund	17	-	-	-	**17**
Castleford Greenway	122	-	(1)	-	**121**
Lune Valley Cycleway	862	1,530	(32)	-	**2,360**
Beadnell to Dunston Steads	3	-	(12)	9	**-**
Asda Parklet	21	-	-	-	**21**
Camel Trail access improvements	3	-	(3)	-	**-**
Big Give	41	-	(24)	-	**17**
	1,475	**1,530**	**(156)**	**9**	**2,858**
England	-	28,761	(28,761)	-	**-**
London	-	360	(360)	-	**-**
Northern Ireland	-	99	(99)	-	**-**
Scotland	-	64,239	(64,239)	-	**-**
Wales	-	979	(979)	-	**-**
	-	**94,438**	**(94,438)**	**-**	**-**
	2,026	**95,988**	**(94,748)**	**155**	**3,421**

25. Comparative notes for 2022/23 financial statements
Designated funds

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers (to) / from unrestricted funds	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	**£'000**
Fixed asset fund	2,208	-	(331)	375	**2,252**
NCN repairs fund	1,000	-	-	(1,000)	**-**
Restructure fund	2,966	-	-	(2,966)	**-**
	6,174	**-**	**(331)**	**(3,591)**	**2,252**