



social care
institute for excellence

Collaborating and innovating in social care to improve lives

Annual report and financial statements 2024/25

31 March 2025



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institute for excellence

About SCIE

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) is an independent social care charity, collaborating and innovating with a wide range of partners and people with lived experience, to improve people's lives. Working across social care, health and related services such as housing, for adults, children and families, we contribute to the development and implementation of better care, support and safeguarding at local and national level.

As we are not-for-profit, our income goes towards improving social care, delivered through our four offers: innovative **consultancy**, expert **training**, extensive **resources** and information, and evidence-based **insights**. Co-production with people with lived experience underpins and informs what we do, and with over twenty years' experience we bring a wealth of trusted, evidence-based expertise to work together to help transform care.

“ SCIE has demonstrated considerable flexibility, making sure their input was responsive to the culture of adult services in Bromley and the needs of our residents. Their breadth of knowledge of social care, trends and best practice has really helped in planning and then making those adjustments as we've progressed. On co-production, they have supported to build on the good practice we already had in place and begin to embedding it as a guiding principle in the Council and beyond in our wider partnership. ”

Donna Glover

Director of Adult Services, London Borough of Bromley



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Chief executive's report

Our purpose at SCIE is to collaborate and innovate with a whole range of partners so that people can easily receive social care, and through it, live more independent, fulfilling and better lives.

That is why we exist. But we couldn't do it without you, our partners, and our amazing staff. Our achievements in the last year are joint achievements, and are down to the collaborative and innovative efforts that I see everywhere in social care, despite the hardship and the continuing pressures that so many of you working in social care face on a daily basis. I am proud that SCIE can help to shine a positive light on all the good work you do.

This has been a year of change, bringing fresh promise with the new Government's talk of a National Care Service. As the Casey Commission moves forward in its efforts to design a better system for the future, we look forward to working with Baroness Casey and partners across the sector – crucially including people receiving care and support, and their family carers – to create sustainable solutions that will truly improve lives.

Across our not-for-profit consultancy, insights, training and resources outputs this year, I have never more strongly seen the power of collaboration and innovation. Perhaps particularly so in our work supporting the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)'s Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF). When I visited Worcestershire to understand their project better, the programme leads Kim Terry and Mel Smith were clearly passionate about what they were going to be able to achieve for unpaid carers. I spoke to carers who told me how this work was significantly transforming what had been a very difficult experience for them, helping them to feel supported and connected. The commitment and enthusiasm of staff members shone through as they showed me how innovations like assistive technology were improving lives.

We have now completed our main support role to the ARF, although we are continuing in a small way to help where we can. This was a first of its kind grant fund in England in its focus on identifying and scaling up innovations particularly for unpaid carers, whose enormous selfless contribution does much to keep the system going. Do read our independent report 'Embracing change: scaling innovation in social care practice', setting out invaluable key learnings for the sector and best practice so far. We hope it offers you solutions and powerful insights into how to start, sustain and scale innovation. We look forward to reporting back further on progress from this rare, interesting testbed of innovation in practice.

We have had a successful first year working with Partners in Care and Health (PCH) on a programme of sector-led improvement support for social care and public health services in councils, funded by the DHSC. Local authorities and practitioners tell us our direct support, and range of resources supplementing it, are helping them deliver improved services in areas such as digital transformation, housing, safeguarding and co-production. We're also supporting local authorities requiring improvement post-Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection. I would like to thank all our partners, stakeholders, and supporters, along with my wonderful team at SCIE: every employee, the Board of Trustees, our Co-production Steering Group and wider network who collectively have delivered another successful year of impact to improve lives. It is only together that we can ensure everyone receives high quality care that enables choice, control and independence.



Best wishes

Kathryn Marsden, OBE (formerly Kathryn Smith)
Chief Executive, SCIE

Chair's report

Nine years of purpose, challenge, and reform

When I took on the role of Chair at the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) in July 2017, I joined an organisation with a distinguished legacy and a deep sense of mission. What I couldn't have fully appreciated then was just how much this journey would come to define my own commitment to social care reform – and how profoundly the values of co-production, evidence and partnership would shape both the direction of SCIE and the wider reform narrative.

SCIE's story over the past nine years is one of hard-won transformation – internally, as we restructured and reimagined the organisation for resilience and impact, and externally, as we played an increasingly vital role in responding to crises, shaping policy and catalysing long-overdue change in adult social care. When I arrived, SCIE faced financial fragility. Deficits were ongoing, and though austerity-era funding cuts contributed to the cause, the real challenge ran deeper. The business model had become unsustainable, our operating systems outdated and our organisational footprint misaligned with our income. We needed to change fundamentally to survive – let alone thrive.

Together with our exceptional Board and staff – and most crucially, in partnership with Kathryn Marsden (then Smith), whom I had the privilege of appointing as Chief Executive – we delivered that change. Kathryn brought strategic discipline, clarity of vision, and an unwavering commitment to our values. Her leadership through periods of uncertainty, including the COVID-19 pandemic, was exceptional. We transitioned SCIE into a remote-first organisation, modernised IT and finance systems, exited costly long-term liabilities such as the defined-benefit pension scheme, and diversified income streams. These changes were not easy. They required tough decisions and deep candour. But they worked. We moved from deficits to four consecutive surpluses and counting, built a meaningful reserve, and made strategic investments to create an organisation that is both financially resilient and fit for the future. These internal reforms matter not just for their own sake, but because they have strengthened SCIE's role as part of the sector's critical infrastructure – trusted to translate policy into practice, to convene diverse voices, and to deliver meaningful change.

Throughout my tenure, SCIE has remained close to the pulse of the sector. During the pandemic, we launched the National COVID Hub in record time, providing timely guidance and safeguarding resources accessed by hundreds of thousands. We supported local authorities and providers in adapting to fast-changing demands, showing SCIE at its agile best – anchored in purpose, driven by need.

But SCIE's role has extended far beyond crisis response. We have consistently influenced national policy – co-chairing the Commission on the Role of Housing in the Future of Care and Support, embedding Think Local Act Personal (TLAP)'s 'Making it Real' framework in CQC's new assurance model, contributing to the Adult Social Care White Paper, and shaping innovation through the ARF and sector-led improvement programmes. Among these, I am particularly proud of SCIE's work in 2024/25 supporting the DHSC's ARF. By helping local systems innovate for unpaid carers, SCIE demonstrated how lived experience and local insight can drive practical solutions with national relevance. This work exemplified the best of SCIE – strategic, people-centred, and grounded in the urgent realities of the system.

SCIE has actively contributed to key system reviews and reform agendas – most recently through our work to support the Casey Commission. These interventions are not merely consultative; they are part of how we embed reform. From parliamentary scrutiny to national design efforts, SCIE has become a bridge between people's experience and policy ambition.

The thread that runs through it all is the unfinished business of the Care Act 2014 – a law I had the privilege of helping shape as Care Services Minister. That legislation was a watershed moment: it consolidated decades of fragmented policy, placed wellbeing at the heart of care, strengthened rights for carers and promised a lifetime cap on care costs. It was, and remains, the most coherent blueprint for modern social care this country has produced.

But the promise of the Care Act has too often been betrayed by a lack of delivery. The cap, initially due in 2016, was deferred repeatedly before being finally abandoned in 2024. Local authorities, under increasing financial strain, continue to ration services. Millions of older people and working-age disabled adults remain unsupported. And unpaid carers – around 1.5 million providing more than 50 hours of care a week – shoulder a burden valued at £184 billion annually, often at enormous personal cost.

This is not just a policy failure. It is a moral failure – a systemic reluctance to match legislative vision with political resolve and investment. SCIE's internal renewal over these nine years has therefore never been just about financial turnaround or operational efficiency. It has been about ensuring that our organisation was ready to meet this national moment with clarity, credibility, and impact.

That moment may now be upon us. The launch of the Casey Commission in early 2025 represents the most promising opportunity in over a decade to restart reform. With interim proposals expected in 2026 and a full vision by 2028 – including the potential creation of a National Care Service underpinned by national care standards – this is a critical juncture. The Commission has rightly warned that failure is possible without a compelling, costed, data-driven case for reform. SCIE continues to argue that reform must not begin from scratch. The Care Act provides the foundation. What's needed now is implementation: embedding co-production as a form of governance, prioritising prevention investment, defining national care standards and creating enduring political consensus. We must move from aspiration to delivery—from legislation to lived experience.

As I prepare to hand over the baton, I do so with full confidence in SCIE's future. The organisation is financially sound, strategically focused and equipped with an exceptional leadership team. It is ready not only to continue delivering impact today, but to help shape the system we will need for the decade to come: one built on equity, national consistency and meaningful accountability. The next Chair will inherit an organisation well placed to support the implementation of national standards, the evolution of assurance models and the delivery of long-term reform. Our direction is now firmly future-facing – strengthening the infrastructure of care with the same determination that once rescued it from fragility.

I want to thank everyone who has shared this journey: staff, trustees, partners and above all, the people and communities we exist to serve. SCIE has been my professional home for nearly a decade, but it has also been something more: a place where values meet action, and where reform is not just advocated, but actively built. I hope the legacy we leave is clear: an organisation that lives the values it champions, that has helped steer the sector through storm and change and that now stands ready to support the transformation our country so urgently needs. It has been an honour to serve.



Rt Hon Paul Burstow,
Chair, SCIE
2017–2026

Who we are and what we do

We are an independent social care charity working with a wide range of partners and people with lived experience, to improve people's lives.

Our purpose

We collaborate and innovate in social care to improve lives

Our vision

A society which enables people who draw on social care to live fulfilling lives

Our mission

To support best practice, shape policy and raise awareness of the importance of social care, working together

Our strategic objectives

- Embed co-production and the voice of people with lived experience in the design and delivery of care and support services, policy and research
- Drive innovation and improvement in social care
- Influence and support implementation and delivery of better policy
- Improve safeguarding skills, knowledge and practice

From over 20 years' experience, we bring a wealth of trusted, evidence-based expertise to work collaboratively to help transform care. Our staff – former practitioners in social care, researchers, experts in training – bring immense depth of expertise and passion for the cause, based on frontline work, using the best available knowledge and evidence about what works in practice.

We translate this into expert advice, guidance and resources, that we share through support, partnerships and collaboration across social care, health and housing. As we are not-for-profit, our income goes towards improving social care.

Our four main offers are:



Your not-for-profit partner, working with you to identify and implement improvements.



Research, evidence and policy insights to drive improvements and innovation, and influence national policy and practice



Bespoke online or face-to-face learning and development including safeguarding, co-production, and strengths-based approaches.



Guidance and tools to support best practice, co-production and innovation

Our impact

We measure our impact across our consultancy, insights, training and resources offers in a number of ways. Here is a snapshot of our impact:

94%

of respondents said that using SCIE services had given them a clearer understanding of best practice

89%

of respondents said that using SCIE services had improved their confidence and skills on relevant topic/s

80%

of respondents said that using SCIE services had helped them improve their services or practice.

Sector reach

Through our consultancy, insights, training, and resources we support all those who work in social care, from local authorities to care providers, government departments and NHS bodies to a wide range of social care practitioners.



3,900,000

website visits



129,000

subscribers to our newsletter SCIELine



8,500

training delegates across all courses



5,500

e-learning course delegates



86,300

social media followers

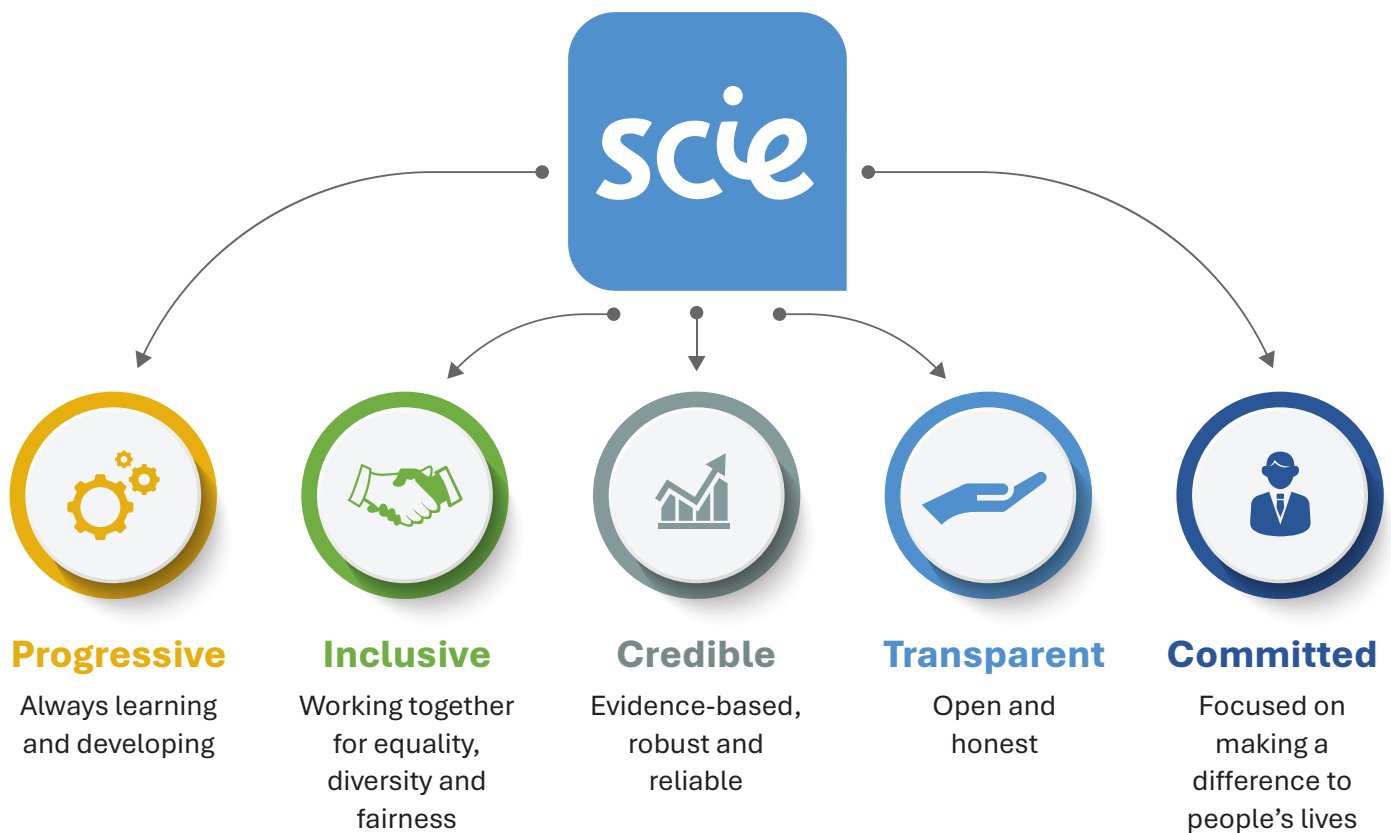


378,000

sector contacts

Our values

Living our values is critical to driving the culture we need to successfully deliver our strategic ambitions.



Our people

Our people are our biggest asset – they bring immense depth of expertise and passion for the cause, based on frontline work and years of broad experience. We cannot deliver our purpose without them, and we recognise the importance of every single person's contribution. Together we are stronger.



We regularly seek the views of our team recognising that those closest to an activity are often the people with the best ideas. We have a variety of ways for staff to share their views and make suggestions on things that we can do better. This includes our **Employee Forum**.



Our annual engagement survey, showed that in 2024/25 **93% of survey respondents reported that SCIE was a good place to work**. The data and insight gained from the result help to drive continuous improvement.



Importantly we work closely with our recognised union, **Unite**.



This year we have made great progress with our **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** delivery plan. We have co-produced an EDI vision with an accompanying set of principles that are aligned to our organisational values. Alongside this there has been other activity such as updating our EDI related policies. **96% of annual survey respondents reported that they trusted their line manager to treat all employees equally regardless of their age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender.**

Reflections on our achievements

Across the year we have been involved in numerous projects that highlight not only the impact of our work but also demonstrate our commitment to partnership and collaboration and the use of co-production throughout. In the following pages we spotlight key projects and their outcomes based on our consultancy, insights, training, and resources.

Before that, we wanted to reflect on what you have told us in our first ever Insight Improvement Survey and to highlight two projects in more detail that demonstrate our mission and vision in action.

Our new Insight Improvement Survey

In January 2025 we launched our Insight Improvement Survey to gather valuable insights from across social care to shape our services, ensuring we help you improve social care and people's lives as effectively as possible. We are very grateful to have had over 2,000 responses, providing important learning for our future work.



90%

respondents said that SCIE understands and cares about the need to make a difference to the lives of people who draw on care

85%

said our guidance helps them see the bigger picture of their work

85%

agreed that our collaboration with a wide range of social care partners brings useful experience and connections

“ SCIE staff are knowledgeable and experienced in social care ”

83%

respondents either strongly agreed or agreed

“ I trust SCIE because they reinvest their funding to improve social care rather than make profit ”

71%

respondents either strongly agreed or agreed

Reflections on the Accelerating Reform Fund (ARF) programme

What we did

The DHSC's ARF aims to boost the quality and accessibility of adult social care across England, by supporting innovation and scaling, and improving care and support services for unpaid carers.

SCIE has provided hands-on support to the ARF projects. We have been working with local areas to transform care by helping to identify issues and challenges, galvanising co-production and ensuring people who need care and unpaid carers are at the heart of projects.

We have also been encouraging local authorities to benefit from valuable shared learnings and peer-to-peer support by facilitating communities of practice across similar themes.

The ARF is a learning programme, so SCIE has an essential role in gathering and sharing evidence to understand how to successfully tackle the barriers to scaling up innovation in social care, alongside the ARF's national evaluation partner, Ipsos.

Reflecting on the past 12 months gives us an opportunity to review what we have learnt, what has worked best and most effectively. Some of the common challenges and requirements for future working have been identified below and on the following page:

Co-production and stakeholder engagement

The need to improve understanding of what meaningful co-production and effective stakeholder engagement is and how to embed it in design onwards.

Procurement

Feedback indicated that some Integrated Care System (ICS) areas managed procurement smoothly, while others faced significant challenges, highlighting the need for more streamlined and consistent procurement practices.

Project planning, strategic leadership and governance

Increasing both hard (specific technical knowledge and training) and soft (leadership, communication, and time management) project management skills is essential, as is transformative leadership and strong governance.



Digital literacy

Integrating new digital solutions with existing systems posed significant challenges. A substantial digital support package is required, and ensuring interoperability and managing data migration from legacy systems is critical to avoid data loss or corruption.

Sustainability and impact measurement

Helping projects develop clear theories of change and impact frameworks is a priority to ensure success.

Collaboration and partnership

Promoting collaboration across local authorities and ICS consortia is vital in reducing duplication and enhancing learning; partnerships with voluntary sectors, universities and charities enables innovation.

What's next?

The ARF was a one-of-a-kind DHSC fund to kick start and scale up innovations in social care with a particular focus around supporting unpaid carers.

The learnings emerging from SCIE's work, and the evaluation learnings that will be made public in Ipsos' findings, will be invaluable to the wider sector in helping understand what works and what doesn't work in supporting innovation in social care. We have shared key learnings and best practice so far in our 'Embracing change: scaling innovation in practice' report, and look forward to disseminating further learnings in due course. Evidence and learning on unpaid carers and innovation at this scale in adult social care provides huge potential so we urge that all learnings are used to drive forward future improvement.

“ SCIE has really listened to the concerns of LAs and the guidance has been responsive and prompt to that feedback. ”

SCIE stakeholder

“ SCIE's involvement has been invaluable in ensuring the success of this initiative. ”

ARF project lead

“ What the [ARF] did was offer us an opportunity to work out of our typical systems, where there may be more restrictions to being innovative. ”

Service Director for
Adult Social Care,
Cambridgeshire Council

While our main support phase ended March 2025, we are looking forward to continuing to support the momentum created by the ARF over the coming months however best we can.

Please visit our dedicated ARF webpage for our 'Embracing change' report, a wide range of case studies and ongoing updates on our activity and the support being provided.

Reflections on Ignite: Commissioning for the future training programme

In recognition of the critical role adult social care commissioners play, and because of the diverse and complex set of responsibilities they undertake, the DHSC invested in 'Ignite: Commissioning for the future', the first national training programme with a practical focus aimed at senior local authority commissioners of adult social care.

A DHSC review into commissioning capabilities within the sector identified a significant gap around support to develop commissioners' strategic leadership abilities and a lack of peer learning opportunities. SCIE was commissioned, in partnership with consultancy firm EY and West Midlands ADASS, to design and deliver a 'Commissioning for the future' pilot training programme. Launched in Spring 2024, the pilot was for approximately 150 senior adult social care commissioners in England.

What we did

SCIE worked with EY and ADASS to design and deliver a 'first of its kind' national training programme to deliver transformational change in adult social care commissioning. The programme was designed to support commissioners to strengthen the use of strategic, preventive and outcomes-based market shaping approaches.

SCIE supported with the design and delivery of the three learning modules and four masterclasses. We drew on our extensive knowledge of adult social care and commissioning, leveraging our networks to bring in aspirational people who could lead the discussion with senior commissioners.

This included experts from Community Catalysts, TLAP and IMPACT (Improving Adult Care Together) to support the following masterclasses:

01 | Equity, Diversion & Inclusion (EDI)

02 | Co-production

03 | Asset-based commissioning

04 | Sustaining & scaling innovation

Impact and outcomes

A transformational training programme was developed, designed to lead the future direction in commissioning adult social care, and our wide-reaching communications ensured full take-up.

“ SCIE has been absolutely invaluable with the Ignite programme. ”
DHSC stakeholder

Spotlight on impact



Your not-for-profit partner, working with you to identify and implement improvements.

During 2024/25 SCIE worked with over 20 clients across our local improvement, safeguarding and DHSC-funded work and launched partnerships with sector stakeholders including leading technology solutions provider Agilisys.

“ Using SCIE consultancy on our coproduction improvement journey has ensured the principles are embedded in our approach to service re-design. ”

Head of Adult Services, local authority

Spotlighted project:

Sandwell Council – Digital Maturity Programme



Aims

- Enhance digital awareness: develop a deeper understanding of digital maturity within the authority and promote best digital practices.
- Identify digital opportunities: identify key digital opportunities for improvement.
- Champion digital working: foster a culture of digital working and explore the potential of new digital tools to improve service delivery.
- Share best practices: facilitate knowledge exchange and learning by sharing best practices and promoting successful digital initiatives.
- Drive improvement: support local development and implement digital strategies to drive improvement and transformation.

Activities

- We provided a ‘critical friend’ role in reviewing the Sandwell Draft Digital Strategy, offering constructive feedback and identifying opportunities for further development.
- We focused on identification of the supporting engagement, communications, support, training and guidance elements and approaches required to support the successful introduction and acceptance of new technology into team practice.
- Having identified potential barriers to digital adoption, we developed strategies to address resistance to change.
- We encouraged co-production and user involvement in shaping digital solutions to enhance buy-in and effectiveness.
- We created opportunities for Sandwell Digital Pioneers to engage in community of practice events with colleagues from other Digital Maturity Pathfinder Authorities and wider networks.
- We promoted knowledge-sharing and the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and innovative approaches to digital adoption.
- To assess the effectiveness of engagement, training, and adoption strategies, we suggested qualitative and quantitative measures.

Impact and outcomes

With the support of SCIE, the tools are in place for the implementation and further development of the council's digital strategy which includes piloting key projects and establishing a staff champions group, which will provide a solid base for further innovation.

Feedback from our interviews and workshops provided valuable insights into how important culture change was to sustainable change.



“ For a while, there has been a feeling of disconnect between the strategy and how we support frontline practitioners to embed tech within their practice. Attending these (SCIE) workshops today has really helped me to understand the type of support that would enable them (staff) to confidently embed tech within the roles. ”

Sandwell stakeholder

“ Until today's session, I didn't know that 90% of these things [tech] existed. ”

Team member

“ Digital means more autonomy, this is more person-centred. ”

Sandwell stakeholder

Spotlight on impact



Research, evidence and policy insights to drive improvements and innovation, and influence national policy and practice.

We set a priority to speak with an authoritative voice on how we improve people's experiences and outcomes of social care, providing sector leadership and a strong policy perspective.

SCIE stands ready to work with the Government and the Casey Commission and other political parties to help establish a long term and sustainable future that will be to the benefit of all citizens and the economy.

“ They [SCIE] bring us expertise of a wide range of partners including people with lived experience. When I was talking to them it was like I was speaking to all the people they had spoken to. ”

policy maker

Spotlighted project:

CareTech Charter launch at political party conferences

CARETECH CHARTER



Aims

- Support innovation to improve lives, asking MPs, councillors and stakeholders to sign up to some practical recommendations to ensure digital technology is embedded in local and national infrastructure.
- We hope this Charter will stand the test of time and serve as a guiding light for the government and a useful asset for parties in catalysing positive change.

Activities

- We hosted panel discussions with Policy Connect at each of the major political party conferences, reflecting upon the vitality of innovation in driving the new Government's missions and creating a sustainable sector able to meet the needs of a 21st century population.
- The promotion of the CareTech Charter was central to each event.
- All panel discussions were well attended and gained engagement across all of SCIE's social media channels and externally through media exposure in the trade press.

Impact and outcomes

Members of Parliament, including Ben Coleman, Anna Dixon, Freddie van Mierlo and Steff Aquarone, participated in our panel discussions reflecting on local and national initiatives transforming the lives of people who rely on care and support, as well as their respective calls to action on what needs to change to secure a thriving social care system. Our presence at party conferences, in conjunction with wider public affairs efforts, have contributed to a growing profile for SCIE which culminated in our CEO, Kathryn Marsden OBE, being called to give oral evidence to the Health and Social Care Committee in January 2025 as part of their inquiry 'Adult social care: the cost of inaction'.

Spotlight on impact



Bespoke online or face-to-face learning and development including safeguarding, co-production, strengths-based approaches.

During 2024/25 SCIE trained over 3,000 people across our safeguarding, co-production and strengths-based approaches training offers.

“ I am so pleased with the content that was covered today and the team have been really complimentary about the impact of it on them and how they will use it in their working day. ”

Insight Improvement Survey feedback

“ The structure and content have been informative and provided a depth and breadth of information that will support all of our journeys in future work, in whatever way we choose to use the knowledge we have all gained. ”

Insight Improvement Survey feedback

Spotlighted project:

Spotlighted project: Lancashire County Council – embedding strengths based practice



Aims

- Create the right cultures and behaviours, consistently and across the county, that, along with structural and operational changes, will promote independence and community-based support and improve outcomes for residents across Lancashire.
- Support the workforce to develop the required knowledge, skills and capacity to embed a strengths-based approach into every part of adult social care.

Activities

- SCIE was commissioned to deliver a programme of leadership development and training to embed the culture change needed to address challenges within adult social care.
- Our training combined online facilitated sessions and in-person events.
- We provided tailored support across three cohorts including Strengths-based Practice Champions, Social Work and Practice Teams and Wider Adult Social Care Teams and support functions.



Impact and outcomes

Over 800 adult social care professionals participated in the training.

We surveyed participants post training, and 100% of respondents said that the training met their expectations, their knowledge had improved, they felt able to apply what they had learned to practice and would recommend it to others.

Qualitative feedback provided insights into how important the engagement and commitment of the participants were, coupled with the identification of any corresponding barriers that needed to be addressed.



“ Without access to the information provided, I would have not gained the skills and knowledge required to meet the demands of my job and general professional development. ”

Social worker, local authority

“ Fabulous, made me think about my practice. ”

Training delegate

“ Best SBA training ever. ”

Training delegate

Spotlight on impact



Guidance and tools to support best practice, co-production and innovation.

We have launched a wide range of resources over the last year including **Co-production impact** and **Housing toolkits**, a Care Equity evidence hub prototype, **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards tools**, and 'Get me to hospital' and 'Tackling inequalities in care for people with learning disabilities and autistic people' guidance.

“ This looks like a very useful resource to measure the impact for people of our developing Co-production strategy. ”

Director of Adult Services, local authority

Spotlighted project:

Co-production impact tool

Aims

- Support groups and organisations to assess and report on the impacts of co-production
- Help address a gap in co-production impact assessment
- Be relevant and align with local authorities' needs
- Ensure accessibility for the range of audiences.

Activities

In April 2024 we published a new co-production impact resource, building on the findings of recently published research projects including '**Developing our understanding of the difference co-production makes in social care**' and '**Findings from SCIE's Co-production Survey 2023**' which highlighted the need to better understand and report on the impacts of co-production.

We know that demonstrating longer-term impact from co-production and the benefit of investment in it is key to driving changes at a strategic level.

We therefore included step-by-step guidance on how to best develop a tailored co-production impact framework.



Impact and outcomes

This resource has provided:

- an improved approach to impact assessment and guidance on developing co-production impact frameworks
- a tailored co-production impact framework that speaks to local needs
- a better understanding of co-production impact and outcomes.

“ Reporting impact has always been challenging in general and I think (this resource is) a great help, it will help to organise the process and collect what is needed. ”

Manager, charity supporting people with learning disabilities

Spotlight on impact

Think Local Act Personal (TLAP)

TLAP is a national partnership committed to transforming health and care through personalisation and community-based support. The partnership is hosted by SCIE and spans central and local government, social care providers, the NHS, and the voluntary and community sector as well as people with lived experience, through the National Co-production Advisory Group (NCAG) and allies.

Spotlighted project:

Co-production of direct payments resources for practitioners

Aims

Direct payments can offer life-changing choice and control, but social care teams often face challenges in making them work well. A new set of bite-sized learning resources were designed for social workers and practitioners, helping to build confidence, spark reflection, and embed good direct payments practice.



Activities

Resources were created with the support of the Southwest Direct Payments Network, NCAG and the Independent Living Group.

They were designed to help those working in adult social care to learn more about direct payments and how you can use them to make a huge difference to people's lives. The resources included seven modules **Understanding Direct Payments learning series - TLAP**.

These modules included videos and the ability to test yourself at the end of each module, along with a feedback survey.

Impact and outcomes

The resources have received over 12,000 page views since launch (*as at July 2025*)

These resources enable those who work in adult social care to:

- co-produce outcomes with people
- give them choice and control
- enable flexibility for care and support to be tailored to a person's goals
- provide a clear and achievable means to measure how direct payments make a difference to each individual they work with.

93% of users have rated the resources as 'extremely useful' or 'useful'.

“Direct payments can appear complicated, this information simplifies the process.”

“Completing the modules has definitely provided me a better understanding – and I feel more confident about sharing this information with people.”

“Very user friendly and easy to understand.”

Future priorities

Thank you to all of our partners, collaborators, stakeholders and charitable supporters over the last year, it has been a privilege to work with you all.

In 2025/26 we look forward to continuing to work in partnership and collaboration with you. Do please get in touch if you would like to know more about the projects and activities we are planning.

Priority	We will...
<p>Embed co-production</p> <p>Embed co-production and the contribution of people with lived-experience in our work; the design and delivery of care and support services; in policy and in research to better meet peoples' needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● produce co-produced guidance, tools and workshops on using <i>Making it Real</i> across five domains (safe, effective, caring, responsive, well-led) within Local Authority Assurance, care homes and supported living, mental health services ● provide guidance and support to local authorities to set up their own <i>Making it Real</i> boards to shape local improvement plans in co-production ● work with commissioners to map opportunities and approaches to co-production onto the commissioning cycle ● continue to deliver an engaging and impactful Co-production Week that contributes to raising awareness across broad and varied audiences.

Priority	We will...
<p>Drive innovation</p> <p>Drive innovation and improvement in social care to deliver better outcomes for children and adults who need care and support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● deepen our partnership with PCH to provide an ever more joined up and user-centred service ● continue to evolve and promote our newly developed children's offer to market ● implement our new charitable offer (the SCIE 'Social Care Impact Awards'), evaluate its success, and roll out a second iteration based on learning. ● continue to increase the value of contracts and drive up the retention of repeat business with key clients.

Priority	We will...
<p>Better policy</p> <p>Influence and support implementation and delivery of better policy to improve the lives of people accessing care and support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● design and deliver policy round tables to influence the Casey Commission review of social care, such as the design of care standards and the capacity required to deliver the policy ● complete the development of our new Care Equity hub and promote its future potential across audiences ● close down our formal support on the ARF and continue capturing and disseminating post-ARF learning over the remainder of the year.

Priority	We will...
<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Improve safeguarding skills, knowledge and practice to keep children and adults safe and support their social wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● finalise a market research project and act on the findings for SCIE to deliver safeguarding support to relevant and appropriate audiences and markets ● continue to increase the value of contracts and drive up the retention of repeat business with key clients, along with developing a more proactive approach to selling services ● host roundtables to understand the intersection between personalisation and safeguarding.

Priority	We will...
<p>Organisational development</p> <p>Organisational development and infrastructure ('enablers')</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● oversee recruitment of a Chair Elect and new Trustees ● begin working towards the development of a new organisational strategy, underpinned by long term multi-year financial planning ● develop a new Target Operating Model including the development and mainstreaming of new tools and approaches into business as usual.



social care
institute for excellence

Governance report 2025



Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of SCIE for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of 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 Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

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

Each of the Trustees confirms that:

- so far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s.418 of the Companies Act 2006.

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

SCIE's Board of Trustees

Up to 15 people are able to sit on SCIE's Board of Trustees. At the time of this report, the board had 10 members, including its Chair. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

New Trustees are elected by existing Trustees and serve for a term of three years before retiring from office. Retiring Trustees can be nominated to serve a second consecutive term provided that no Trustee serves more than two consecutive terms of office, except with the unanimous support of all the other Trustees.

Constant regard is paid to the skills mix of the Trustees to ensure that they have all the necessary skills required to contribute fully to the charity's development.

On agreeing to become a Trustee of the Charity, the Trustees are thoroughly briefed by their co-Trustees on the history of the Charity, the day-to-day management, the responsibilities of the Trustees, the current objectives, and future plans. The Trustees are also encouraged to attend any courses which they feel are relevant to the development of their role, and to keep up-to-date on any changes in legislation.

The Board of Trustees is supported by an Audit and Risk Committee, a Nominations and People Committee and a Policy and Research Committee, which meet throughout the year.

The Audit and Risk Committee is established by the Board to make recommendations, provide oversight and assurance in respect of the Charity's financial integrity, transparency and effective risk management. The Committee oversees the accuracy and reliability of the Charity's financial reporting as well as evaluating the adequacy of internal controls. The Committee plays a pivotal role in maintaining accountability, good governance and the long-term sustainability of the Charity.

The Nominations and People Committee is established by the Board to make recommendations, provide oversight and assurance in respect to the Charity's arrangements for appointing and assessing the contribution of Trustees, including the Chair and Hon Treasurer. The Committee also provides the Board with assurance in respect of the Charity's people strategy and processes.

The Policy and Research Committee is a new committee, established by the Board in November 2024 to make recommendations and provide oversight and assurance in respect to the Charity's strategic objectives regarding innovation and improvement in social care. The Committee also provides assurance to the Board on the Charity's influencing and research objectives.

The following Trustees were in office at the time this report was approved and served throughout the year, except where shown:

Trustee	Appointed	Audit & Risk Committee	Nominations & People Committee	Policy & Research Committee
Rt Hon Paul Burstow (Chair)				member
Margaret Lally (Vice Chair)		member		chair
John Grosvenor		treasurer		
Rachel Armitage		member	member	
Georgia Chimbani				
Zoe Gould				member
Zoe Hallam		member		
Sean Holland			member	
Isaac Samuels	30/09/2024			
Brett Terry			chair	

Company Secretary	Kathryn Marsden OBE
Chief Executive	Kathryn Marsden OBE
Registered and principal office	Social Care Institute for Excellence Isosceles Head Office One High Street Egham TW20 9HJ E: info@scie.org.uk W: www.scie.org.uk
Company Registration Number	04289790 (England and Wales)
Charity Registration Number	1092778
Auditor	HaysMac LLP 10 Queen Street London EC4R 1AG
Banker	Barclays Bank plc Public Sector Team Level 27 1 Churchill Place London E14 5HP

This annual or Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with Part VIII of the Charities Act 2011 and constitutes a directors' report as required by the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements for the year to 31 March 2025 have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 38 to 41 of the financial statements and comply with the Charity's memorandum and articles of association, applicable laws and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Structure

The Chief Executive and Strategic Leadership Team staff attend and provide reports to regular meetings of the Board of Trustees. This enables the business of the Board, including strategy, development, and governance, to be undertaken collaboratively and in accordance with good practice. The Chief Executive manages the day-to-day activity with assistance from senior executives.

Through involvement of staff representatives, circulation of papers, and staff meetings, there is wide communication of board discussions and decisions to staff members.

Key management personnel

The key management personnel are the Trustees together with the Chief Executive and the Strategic Leadership Team. Payments made to Trustees are set out above with all such payments being approved by the Board, those receiving such payments absencing themselves from such approval.

All of SCIE's pay grades are externally evaluated by an external reward consultant. The consultant gathered relevant market data to design the associated pay levels. This involved extracting and gathering market data from a number of different sources in order to produce a rounded and robust outcome that smoothed out any anomalies which may exist in the source data. Data collected covers the Charity, Public, Institute, Academic and Research and Policy Sectors. In gathering pay data the consultant included organisations/data sources that are comparable with SCIE, in terms of size and location. After gathering data from these organisations and surveys, all of this was placed into a translator (which is merely a mechanism to extrapolate the salary figure from each organisation/data source at SCIE's job size level/grade). This produced an indicative salary figure for every possible job evaluation score and therefore allowed us to read-off the market salary data from the relevant data sources for each of SCIE's grades.

Charitable objectives

As set out in our memorandum and articles of association, SCIE's objective is the 'relief of need arising from youth, illness, disability, old age or poverty, by the review, provision and dissemination of knowledge of, and guidelines for, good practice, and other information, to persons who use, work in or are otherwise involved in social care'.

Income generation

SCIE raises income from statutory, earned and voluntary fundraising sources.

SCIE complies with the best practice advised by the Charity Commission and Fundraising Regulator and utilises a donation acceptance policy to support its ethical collaboration statement.

No external professional fundraisers work on behalf of SCIE. During the year, the Charity received no complaints about its fundraising activity.

All areas of income generation are supported by an Ethics Committee to ensure adherence to the charity's values.

Environmental social and governance

During the year, SCIE has taken a more strategic approach to the implementation of social value and its policies and reporting within the charity.

We now have in place a social value policy, a modern slavery and human trafficking statement, and a carbon reduction plan.

We will continue to challenge our ways of working and be conscious to minimise our environmental impact whilst pursuing our goals: <https://www.scie.org.uk/about/carbon-reduction-plan/>.

Equity, diversity and inclusion

Our vision

We will create a culture of continuous learning relating to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) that generates trust, meaningful activities and dialogue creating approaches that nudge us towards a fair, transparent and inclusive organisation.

Our principles – guided by our SCIE values

- Progressive – we are on an EDI journey and seek to learn and continuously improve
- Inclusive – we aim to model inclusion and ensure accessibility through our policies, processes and work
- Credible – we will monitor our progress annually and acknowledge where we are and plan our next steps for the year ahead
- Transparent – we will include EDI in our internal communications promoting good work and recognising what needs doing
- Committed – we will deliver our EDI action plan and engage with our employees to ensure its relevance.

Co-production Network

The Co-production Network and Co-Production Steering Group involves people who draw on care and support and family carers in shaping and influencing SCIE's work. Meeting regularly through the year to focus on its work programme, priorities, and performance from diverse lived experience, the SCIE Co-Production Steering Group advises on co-production and inclusion, including how to embed co-production within SCIE. The approach taken to co-production and inclusion is based on the social model of disability and adopts a rights-based approach. Members from the Co-Production Network are involved in SCIE projects, events and activities to ensure that SCIE's work is informed by lived experience.

Key risks

The Audit and Risk Committee regularly review the strategic risk register and have identified key risks and their mitigation. These include:

- Monitoring financial sustainability to ensure that our expenditure does not exceed our income. This risk is mitigated by careful budget management, planning, forecasting and credit control management.
- Monitoring internal controls and procedures to ensure they are effective. This risk is mitigated by regularly reviewing and testing internal controls and by closely liaising with staff to obtain their feedback (SCIE had a successful 2024/25 Internal Procurement Audit).
- Having a robust and effective cyber security strategy in place to protect our infrastructure, assets, staff and clients. This risk is mitigated by the appointment of a virtual Chief Information Security Officer (vCISO) who works closely with the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources and Head of IT, Systems and Data Governance.
- Ensuring full compliance with our legal, financial and data protection responsibilities. This risk is mitigated by undertaking regular reviews, for example at the Audit and Risk Committee and Board meetings. SCIE have also appointed an external data protection advisor, who undertakes an annual audit to review SCIE's ongoing compliance with data protection legislation.

Financial overview

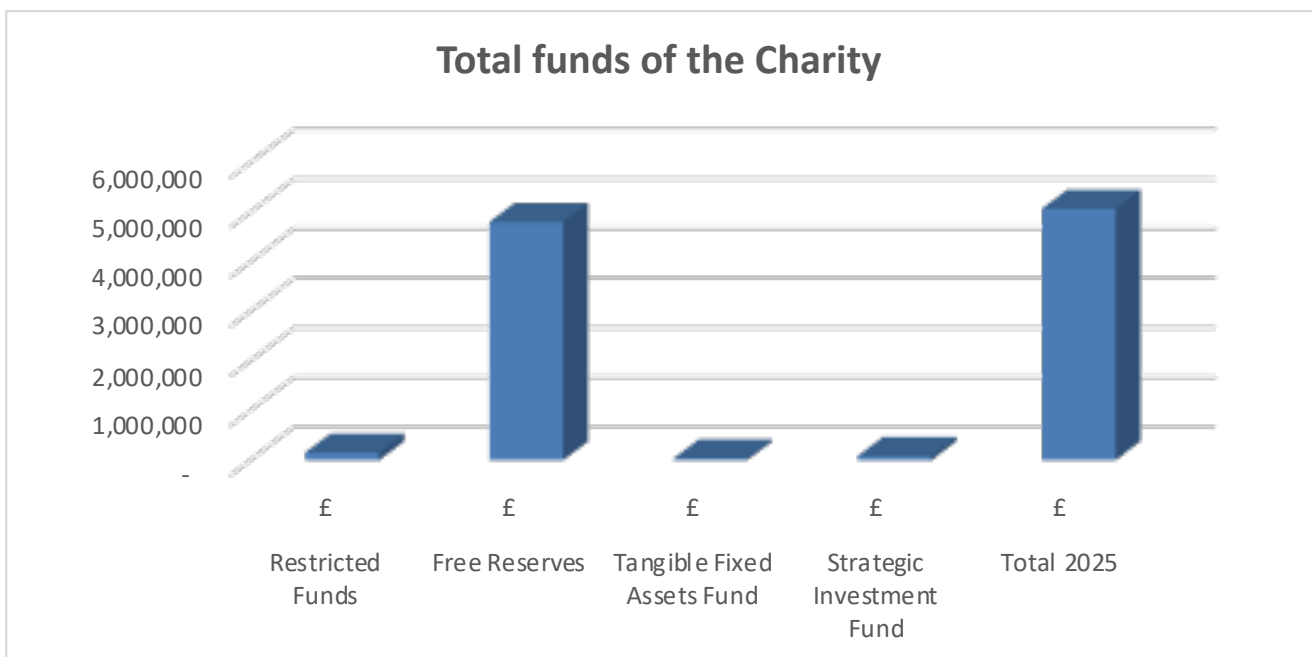
2024/25 represents another successful year for SCIE, on the back of recording operational surpluses for the 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years, after a number of operationally deficit financial years.

SCIE is pleased to report an operating surplus of £648,677 for the 2024/25 financial year and SCIE staff should be congratulated on this achievement as we look to build on this surplus moving forward.

SCIE's income for the 2024/25 financial year increased by 28% with expenditure increasing by 18% in comparison to the 2023/24 financial year. SCIE has its cost base firmly under control and we continue to seek to reduce and minimise expenditure where possible, regularly reviewing our strategies to maximise our income potential.

SCIE regularly reviews operations, to ensure that value for money in relation to goods and core services are being provided and received. SCIE's procurement policies and processes have been strengthened to ensure that quotes for goods and services received are both competitive and represent value for money.

SCIE remains a member of the SEI Master Trust Pension on a defined contribution benefit basis.



The balance sheet shows total funds to be in credit by £5,070,720 at 31 March 2025 (2024 – credit of £4,422,043). At this date, restricted funds amounted to a surplus of £196,231 (2024 surplus of £202,276).

These monies have either been restricted for use on specific projects or they comprise donations subject to donor-imposed conditions. Full details of these restricted funds can be found in note 12 to the financial statements together with an analysis of movements in the year. £33,508 (2024 – £15,875) of the total funds is represented by tangible fixed assets held in unrestricted funds.

SCIE's remaining general funds (being unrestricted funds excluding tangible fixed assets are 'free reserves' and total £4,840,980 at 31 March 2025 (2024 – £4,203,891).

SCIE received its income from two principal sources – grants and fees and commissioning income. It spent its money on charitable activities delivering projects and meeting contracts and agreements.

Policies

Reserves policy

SCIE carries out a diverse range of activities, some of which comprise short-term and externally funded projects, while others are long-term projects requiring ongoing financial commitment and investment.

The Trustees have examined the requirement for free reserves, that is, those unrestricted funds not invested in tangible fixed assets, designated for specific purposes or otherwise committed. This has been undertaken by a regular consideration of pension liabilities both by the Audit Committee and the Trustees, including the information from the most recent triennial review and the FRS 102 valuation. The Trustees have assessed the risks arising from a more uncertain future.

In the current climate, SCIE is determined to keep a level of reserves commensurate with balancing the need to release funds for new streams of income generation with the need to retain sufficient funds for liabilities and strategic investments; and, in addition, having funds to support three to six months of operating costs in the unlikely event of a closure. This would require reserves of £1 million to £2 million. The Trustees believe the minimum level of free reserves at this time, should be £2 million.

The level of free reserves was £4,840,980 at 31 March 2025. The Trustees believe that this level of free reserves is adequate but not excessive and that it is consistent with the reserves policy above. The current free reserves provide a solid foundation to support SCIE's transformation by enabling investment in the development of its commercial offer, diversification of sources of income, and in meeting its future liabilities.

Strategic Investment Fund

SCIE adopted a Strategic Investment Fund (SIF), for projects that align with our strategic objectives. SIFs are approved and reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee, with expenditure reported on a quarterly basis (see note 14). These funds are considered for the purposes of financial reporting and risk management.

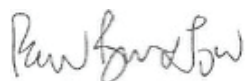
Investment policy

SCIE does not have long-term investments. Funds that are surplus to requirements in the short term are kept on treasury deposit.

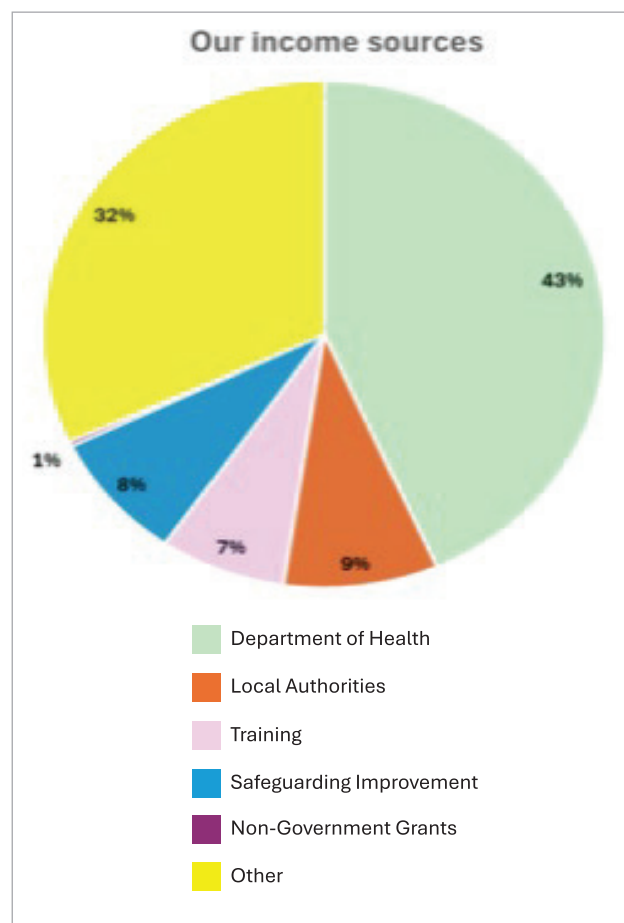
The Charity's assets

Acquisitions and disposals of fixed assets during the year are recorded in the notes to the financial statements (see note 8).

Trustees' report (including the strategic report) approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:
Trustee: Paul Burstow



Approved by the Trustees on: 6 October 2025



Independent auditor's report

to the members of Social Care Institute for Excellence

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Social Care Institute for Excellence for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the 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.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report (which includes the strategic report and the directors' 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' Annual Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report (which incorporates the strategic report and the directors' report).

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us, or
- the charitable company 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, or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 22, 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

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

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

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, income tax, payroll tax and sales tax legislation.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to management bias in accounting estimates. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud
- evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities
- identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations, postings by unusual users or with unusual descriptions, and
- challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities 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.

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. 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, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Kathryn Burton (Senior Statutory Auditor)
10 Queen Street Place, London EC4R 1AG

For and on behalf of HaysMac LLP, Statutory Auditor

Date: 11th December 2025

Statement of financial activities: Year to 31 March 2025

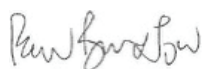
	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £
Income from:							
Donations and Legacies	1	—	—	—	1,798	—	1,798
Short-term bank deposits							
Interest receivable		152,553	—	152,553	151,061	—	151,061
Charitable activities							
Contracts, grants, service level agreements and fees receivable	12	3,289,920	2,755,446	6,045,366	1,731,357	2,969,428	4,700,785
Total income		3,442,473	2,755,446	6,197,919	1,884,216	2,969,428	4,853,644
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	2						
Provision and dissemination of knowledge and good practice in social care		2,716,228	2,761,491	5,477,719	1,697,591	2,954,428	4,652,019
Total operational expenditure		2,716,228	2,761,491	5,477,719	1,697,591	2,954,428	4,652,019
Expenditure from Strategic Investment Fund 14	14	71,523	—	71,523	125,822	—	125,822
Total expenditure		2,787,751	2,761,491	5,549,242	1,823,413	2,954,428	4,777,841
Net income (expenditure) for the year before gains and losses		654,722	(6,045)	648,677	60,803	15,000	75,803
Net movement in funds		654,722	(6,045)	648,677	60,803	15,000	75,803
Reconciliation of funds: fund balances brought forward at 1 April 2024		4,219,767	202,276	4,422,043	4,158,694	187,276	4,346,240
Funds balances carried forward 31 March 2025		4,874,489	196,231	5,070,720	4,219,767	202,276	4,422,043

All of the Charity's activities derived from continuing operations during the above two financial periods. There are no other recognised gains and losses. The accounting policies and notes to the accounts also form part of the financial statements.

Balance sheet: as at 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	8		33,508		15,875
Current assets					
Debtors	9	731,518		522,860	
Cash at bank and in hand		5,124,490		4,469,660	
		<u>5,856,008</u>		<u>4,992,520</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(818,796)		(586,352)	
Net current assets			<u>5,037,212</u>		4,406,168
Total net assets					
			<u>5,070,720</u>		<u>4,422,043</u>
The funds of the charity					
Restricted funds					
Unrestricted funds	12		196,232		202,277
. General fund					
..Free reserves	13		4,759,075		4,050,463
Strategic Investment Fund	14		81,905		153,428
. Tangible fixed assets fund	13		33,508		15,875
			<u>5,070,720</u>		<u>4,422,043</u>

Financial statements and notes to the accounts approved by the Trustees of Social Care Institute for Excellence and signed on their behalf by:



Trustee: Paul Burstow

Approved on: 6 October 2025



Trustee: John Grosvenor

Approved on: 6 October 2025

Statement of cash flows: Year to 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash provided by operating activities	A	537,108	1,065,665
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Interest received		152,553	151,061
Disposal of tangible fixed assets		0	0
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(34,831)	(16,140)
Net cash provided by investing activities		117,722	134,921
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		654,830	1,200,586
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2024	B	4,469,660	3,269,074
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2025	B	5,124,490	4,469,660

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 31 March 2025

A Reconciliation of net expenditure for the year to net cash provided by operating activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income for the year (as per the statement of financial activities)	648,677	75,803
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	17,197	6,758
FRS 102 pension charge	—	(58,333)
Interest receivable	(152,553)	(151,061)
(Increase) decrease in debtors	(208,658)	1,350,392
(Decrease) increase in creditors	232,445	(157,894)
Net cash provided by operating activities	537,108	1,065,665

B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	5,124,490	4,469,660

Social Care Institute for Excellence does not have any borrowings or lease obligations. Net debt consists therefore of the cash at bank and in hand.

Principal accounting policies: Year to 31 March 2025

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are laid out below.

Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been prepared for the year to 31 March 2025 with comparative information provided in respect to the year to 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP FRS 102) second edition, issued on 1 January 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the financial statements requires the Trustees to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the financial statements where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- estimating the useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purposes of calculating the depreciation charge
- estimating the amount of income to be accrued in respect of contractual work completed; and
- estimating the amount to defer in relation to contractual and grant income received during the year.

Assessment of going concern

The Trustees have assessed the Charity's financial position and its ability to continue operating as a going concern. Based on this assessment, the Trustees are satisfied that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these financial statements.

The Charity maintains strong financial reserves, currently standing at circa £4million, which provides a buffer against potential risks and uncertainties. In addition, the Charity has a strong income pipeline, with a diversified range of income-generating activities.

While there will be challenges ahead, the Trustees believe that there are no material uncertainties that cast significant doubt on the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern. As a result, the Trustees believe it is appropriate for the financial statements to be prepared on a going concern basis, which are free from material uncertainties.

Income recognition

Income is recognised in the year in which the Charity is entitled to receipt, it is probable the Charity will receive the income and the amount can be measured with reasonable certainty. Income is deferred only when the Charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it, or where the donor or funder has specified that the income is to be expended in a future accounting period.

Income comprises interest receivable on short-term deposits with the Charity's bankers, grants and funding from government and other agencies and income from commercial sources.

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Grants and funding from government and other agencies have been included as income from charitable activities as these comprise either contracts for services or they relate to specific services.

Income of a contractual nature and income generated from commercial sources is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the Charity and the revenue can be reliably measured. It is measured as the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

Expenditure recognition

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure comprises direct costs and support costs.

All expenditure is incurred on the Charity's primary charitable purposes as described in the Trustees' report. It includes all costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the charity through the provision of its charitable activities. Such costs include direct and support costs including governance costs.

All expenditure is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs represent indirect charitable expenditure. In order to carry out the primary purposes of the Charity it is necessary to provide support in the form of personnel development, financial procedures, provision of office services and equipment and a suitable working environment.

Governance costs comprise the costs involving the public accountability of the Charity (including audit costs) and costs in respect to its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs and governance costs are allocated as described in note 3 to these financial statements.

Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing more than £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised. Tangible fixed assets are capitalised and depreciated at the following annual rates in order to write them off over their estimated useful lives:

- computer and IT equipment (including software) – 33.3% per annum based on cost
- office furniture and fittings – 25% to 33.3% per annum based on cost
- leasehold improvements – over the remaining period of the lease.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash receipt where such discounting is material.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short-term deposits. Cash placed on deposit for more than one year is disclosed as a fixed-asset investment.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

Fund structure

Restricted funds comprise monies raised for, or which have their use restricted to, a specific purpose, or contributions subject to donor-imposed conditions.

The general fund represents those monies which are available for application towards achieving any charitable purpose that falls within the Charity's objects. It is represented by free reserves.

The tangible fixed-assets fund represents the net book value of the Charity's tangible fixed assets held under unrestricted funds. This fund has been separated from other unrestricted funds to emphasise that the assets are of fundamental importance to the Charity being able to achieve its charitable objectives and, as such, their value should not be regarded as realisable.

Notes to the financial statements: Year to 31 March 2025

01. Donations and legacies, contracts, grants, service level agreements and fees receivable

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £
Department of Health and Social Care project grants	—	2,693,092	2,693,092	—	2,969,234	2,969,234
Department of Health, Northern Ireland	41,346	—	41,346	97,344	—	97,344
Fees and commissioning	2,981,902	—	2,981,902	1,363,252	—	1,363,252
Donations and legacies	—	—	—	1,798	—	1,798
Other funders	419,226	62,354	481,580	421,822	194	422,016
	3,442,474	2,755,446	6,197,920	1,884,216	2,969,428	4,853,644

The above donations and legacies, contracts, grants, service level agreements and fees receivable relate to the sole charitable activity of Business, Development & Delivery (BDD).

02. Provision and dissemination of knowledge and good practice in social care

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £
Business, Development & Delivery (BDD)						
Staff costs	1,833,629	—	1,833,629	557,253	(907)	556,346
Donations and legacies	—	—	—	—	1,798	1,798
Commissioning costs	779,555	479,457	1,259,012	302,404	2,123,306	2,425,710
Electronic access and publication costs	10,609	26,822	37,431	106,386	24,895	131,281
Support costs (note 3)	92,435	2,255,212	2,347,647	731,549	805,336	1,536,885
Strategic Investment Fund (note 14)	71,523	—	71,523	125,822	—	125,822
	2,787,751	2,761,491	5,549,242	1,823,414	2,954,428	4,777,842

03. Support costs

	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
Staff costs	1,490,013	972,189
Office costs	—	23,375
Governance costs (Excluding staff costs)	28,797	27,489
Other costs	900,361	513,832
Total	2,419,171	1,536,885

04. Net income (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
Staff costs (note 5)	4,588,191	3,497,779
Auditor's remuneration		
· Statutory audit services		
.. Current year	24,286	
.. Previous year		28,490
Depreciation	17,197	6,758

05. Employees and staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	2,914,369	1,983,510
Social security costs	312,222	208,747
Other pension costs	287,740	98,806
	3,514,331	2,291,063
Payments to agency staff and consultants	897,218	1,072,591
Other staff related costs	176,642	134,125
	4,588,191	3,497,779

Included within wages and salaries are fees paid by SCIE to consultants who are treated as employees for tax purposes but are not SCIE employees as defined by employment law and thus are not included within the average number of employees in the table below.

Payments to agency staff during the period reflect the need to have personnel in post in order to progress the work of SCIE. Other staff-related costs include expenditure in respect to staff training, staff meetings and reimbursed out-of-pocket expenses.

The average number of employees during the period, analysed by function, was as follows:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Charitable activities		
Business, Development & Delivery (BDD)	59	47
Governance	2	1
	61	48

The number of employees who earned £60,000 per annum or more (including taxable benefits but excluding employer pension contributions) during the year was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
£60,001 - £70,000	3	3
£70,001 - £80,000	4	4
£80,001 - £90,000	1	—
£90,001 - £100,000	1	—
£140,001 - £150,000	—	1
£150,001 - £160,000	1	—
	10	8

Contributions were made to a defined contribution pension scheme in respect of employees.

The key management personnel of the Charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the Charity on a day-to-day basis comprised the Chief Executive and the Strategic Leadership Team. The total remuneration (including taxable benefits and employers pension contributions) of the key management personnel for the year was £778,767 (2024 - £730,822)

06. Payments in relation to Trustees

In accordance with the Charity's memorandum and articles of association, the Chair of the Trustees was paid £29,525 (2024 — £28,341) during the year for services undertaken in the administration of the Charity. The payment for such services has been authorised by the Charity Commission and is in line with the 2016 Charities Act.

Out-of-pocket travelling and subsistence expenses of £511 were incurred during the year (2024 — £1,252).

The Charity has purchased insurance to protect it from any loss arising from the neglect or defaults of its Trustees, employees and agents and to indemnify the Trustees or other officers against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part. The insurance premium paid by the Charity during the year totalled £16,787 (2024 — £16,815) and provides cover of up to a maximum of £5 million (2024 — £5 million).

Except as noted above, the Charity did not enter into any other transactions with related parties in the current or prior years.

07. Taxation

The company is a Charity under the Finance Act 2010 (schedule 6, paragraph 1) definition. Accordingly, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains within categories covered by the Corporation Tax Act 2010 (part 11, chapter 3) or the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 (section 256), to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes. No tax charge arose in the period (2024 – none).

SCIE is registered for VAT but is partially exempt and so only able to recover a proportion of its input tax.

08. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer and IT Equipment	Software	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	25,454	87,292	112,746
Additions	34,831		34,831
Disposals			
At 31 March 2025	60,285	87,292	147,577
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	9,579	87,292	96,871
Charge for year	17,197		17,197
Disposals			
At 31 March 2025	26,776	87,292	114,068
Net book values			
At 31 March 2025	33,508		33,508
Disposals			
At 31 March 2024	6,493		6,493

09. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Prepayments and accrued income	222,059	210,880
Allowance for impairment of debtors	(6,760)	—
Fees and other income receivable	516,218	311,980
	731,518	522,860

10. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	£	£
Expense creditors	288,518	230,366
Taxation and social security	372,828	155,051
Other	26,546	—
Accruals	92,953	116,979
Deferred income (note 11)	37,951	83,956
	818,796	586,352

11. Deferred income

	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2024	83,956	345,768
Income received in advance	37,951	83,956
Released to statement of financial activities	(83,956)	(345,768)
Balance at 31 March 2025 (note 10)	37,951	83,956

Deferred income comprises funding received in advance from government and other agencies.

12. Restricted Funds

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

	At 01-Apr 2024 £	Income £	Direct costs £	Expenditure support costs £	Fund transfers £	At 31-Mar 2025 £
70, Dunhill	70,097	—	—	—	—	70,097
Oak Foundation	3,001	—	—	—	—	3,001
LRS programme	4,226	—	—	—	—	4,226
Innovation Network	12,322	—	—	—	—	12,322
Think Local Act Personal (TLAP)	174,582	1,033,977	(879,237)	(185,000)	—	144,322
Vochtech	—	42,353	(38,139)	—	—	4,214
Nesta National Fundraising	(61,951)	20,001	—	—	—	(41,950)
	202,277	1,096,331	(917,376)	(185,000)	—	196,232

	At 01-Apr 2023 £	Income £	Direct costs £	Expenditure support costs £	Fund transfers £	At 31-Mar 2024 £
DHSC commissions core	—	1,901,352	(1,312,208)	(589,144)	—	—
Dunhill	70,097	10,600	(7,727)	(2,873)	—	70,097
Oak Foundation	3,001	33,693	(24,562)	(9,131)	—	3,001
LRS programme	4,226	—	—	—	—	4,226
Innovation Network	12,322	—	—	—	—	12,322
Think Local Act Personal (TLAP)	174,582	963,590	(778,590)	(185,000)	—	174,582
Nesta National Fundraising	(76,952)	60,194	(26,005)	(19,188)	—	(61,951)
	187,276	2,969,429	(2,149,092)	(805,336)	—	202,277

The specific purposes for which the funds were to be used are as follows:

Department of Health and Social Care commission

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) provided funding to SCIE to benefit from our unique position as an independent social care charity working with a wide range of partners and people with lived experience, to improve people's lives through innovative consultancy, expert training, extensive resources and information and evidence-based insights for the continual improvement of social care.

This included:

- provision of sector leadership in conjunction with DHSC, providing social care expertise and insight to DHSC and bringing together national social care leads to co-ordinate responses to social care issues and policy, and wider sector leadership
- provision of evidence-based resources and practical information around best practice, innovation and improvement in social care
- maintenance and review of key content that the sector is dependent on, including safeguarding adults, the Care Act, mental capacity and co-production
- preparation and support for the sector in relation to new policy and funding initiatives such as the ARF including understanding local authority level of preparedness and priorities and delivering a package of support to projects as they start up, deliver and embed change.

Think Local Act Personal

The TLAP partnership comprises over 30 national and umbrella organisations representing a broad interest in personalisation and community-based support. SCIE hosts the central team and also provides back-office services such as facilities, finance and HR support. The funds are provided by the DHSC.

VocTech Trust

During the financial year, the Charity received a restricted grant to develop digital tech-based solutions for learning. The Grant will support early-stage ideas using digital tools to transform how people gain skills for work.

Other funds

As at 31 March 2025, the Charity was holding a number of residual restricted funds from Dunhill, the Oak Foundation, LRS Programme and Innovational Network where the related projects or activities have been completed. These balances are being retained in line with the terms of the donations and will either be applied to continuation or follow-on work consistent with the original purpose, or will be reviewed in consultation with the funders to determine their appropriate use.

13. Analysis of movement on funds

The below tables show the movement in the restricted and free reserves of the organisation for both the current and prior year. Asset movements refer to the adjustments that have been made to the tangible fixed-asset fund to reflect the amount of committed depreciation outstanding at the end of the financial year. The pension movements refer to adjustments that arose due to actuarial gains/losses following the yearly actuarial review. The Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) refers to expenditure incurred in 2024 in relation to two SIF projects, approved by the Board of Trustees.

	Restricted funds	Free reserves	Tangible fixed assets fund	Strategic Investment Fund	Total 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 1 April 2024	202,277	4,050,463	15,875	153,428	4,422,043
Movements:					
(Deficit)/surplus for the year, before expenditure on Strategic Investment Fund	(6,045)	726,245	—	—	720,200
Strategic Investment Fund	—	—	—	(71,523)	(71,523)
Asset movement	—	(17,633)	17,633	—	—
Fund balances at 31 March 2025	196,232	4,759,075	33,508	81,905	5,070,720

	Restricted funds	Free reserves	Tangible fixed assets fund	Strategic Investment Fund	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 1 April 2023	187,276	4,152,471	6,493	—	4,346,240
Movements:					
(Deficit)/surplus for the year, before expenditure on Strategic Investment Fund	15,001	186,624	—	—	201,625
Strategic Investment Fund	—	(279,250)	—	153,428	(125,822)
FRS 102 pension liability movement	—	—	—	—	—
Asset movement	—	(9,382)	9,382	—	—
Fund balances at 31 March 2024	202,277	4,050,463	15,875	153,428	4,422,043

14. Strategic Investment Fund (SIF)

In the 2023 financial year, the Charity received a refund of Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) surplus of £1.2 million, ceasing the Charity's involvement with the LGPS. Using this pension refund, SCIE adopted a "Strategic Investment Fund" (SIF, for projects that align with SCIE's strategic objectives). The Board of Trustees approved three SIF projects (covering the areas of Care Equity Commission, children's services and marketing), i.e. expenditure that could be incurred for three strategic projects which could be funded via the LGPS refund held in the Charity's unrestricted reserves. For the 2025 financial year, SIF expenditure totaled £71,523 against a budget of £153,428. (2024 expenditure - £125,822).

15. Members' liability

In the event of the Charity being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.



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SCIE hosts Think Local Act Personal (TLAP)

www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/About-us