



National Star

Realising the aspirations
of people with disabilities



Annual Report and Accounts 2024 – 2025

Year ended 31 August 2025

National Star is a working name of National Star Foundation which is registered in England and Wales, company number 00522846, charity number 220239. Registered office Ullenwood Manor, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9QU



Without National Star...

“Max wouldn't have the input of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy.

”
Kirsten
Max's mum

For the first time in years Max is getting a taste of independence. He can walk, with the aid of a walker to a door, open it and decide for himself if he wants to go in.

Max, who is a residential learner, is a very curious and lively young man who is loving his time at National Star.

In 2019, Max was diagnosed with Phelan–McDermid syndrome (PMS), a rare genetic disorder that affects how a person's brain develops and functions, and how the body functions. He has a severe learning disability and many health issues and requires specialist teaching and therapies. Max also has complex uncontrolled epilepsy.

Before arriving at college, Max had received very little therapeutic support. With the help of National Star's physiotherapy team, Max has learned to use a Grillo Gait Trainer, a piece of equipment which helps his posture and provides him with the stability he needs to walk. While he still requires staff to be with him, he can move independently. This has been life changing.

The physiotherapy team is working with their speech and language colleagues to see if they can develop a form of communication so that Max can articulate his own choices on where he wants to go.

'Max is so lucky to be able to have the input of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy and to be looked after by such a caring and dedicated team,' says his mum Kirsten.



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Student welcome

Speaking up for ourselves



Ella
Student Union
representative

Going to National Star College is helping us be ready for the future. Here we learn how to speak up for ourselves and how to be more independent in the hope that we can live by ourselves with carers. The most important thing about National Star is that it builds our confidence so that we can help more students to speak up.

The Student Union is where we can talk about the college and any changes we would like to see in the future. We also help with the college balls.

We have had a busy year. We went to the Houses of Parliament to talk about life after college and how some people find it hard to find things to do after leaving National Star (See 'What comes after education', Page 19).

It's important for students to be listened to. Being given the chance to feed back and feel heard is helping me not to be nervous about speaking up for myself and my friends (See 'Learner voice', Page 9).

Chief Executive's and Chair's Statement

Seeing the potential

We passionately believe that young adults with disabilities have a right to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives and have much to contribute to their communities.

In 2024 – 2025 National Star delivered more than 866,845 hours of high-quality education, care and support. Not only do we support young adults to grow and develop to achieve their aspirations but we also endeavour to ensure they are at the heart of all decisions that impact them, at local, regional and national levels.

Our national research project, 'What happens after education', which we launched in 2025, reflected the voices of hundreds of young adults and their families and carers. It highlighted the challenges young people with disabilities face as they prepare for adulthood and demonstrated the growing need for our services.

Our intent to meet that need is what drives our growth strategy. In the past 12 months we completed the extension of education provision at Hereford, launched a new specialist service at a mainstream college and commenced plans to expand our long-term residence in Malvern.

On the wider stage, National Star has contributed to government reviews, hosted ministerial visits and lobbied MPs and other key decision makers.

No one organisation can achieve change. It takes collaboration and shared vision for National Star to achieve all that we do, from our committed professional teams and partner organisations, to policy makers and fundraisers.

Next year will be a pivotal year for young people as the government announces proposed changes to specialist education and continues with its comprehensive social care review.

Together we can support all young adults with disabilities to become equal and active citizens and make our communities better places to live and work.



Lynette Barrett

Lynette Barrett
Chief Executive

When I joined National Star a year ago as Chair of Trustees, I knew about the charity's impact on the lives of young adults with disabilities and their families. What has exceeded my expectations is how life-changing that experience is.

When trustees and governors have engaged with learners, former learners, residents and families, we hear about the transformation of lives. How young adults arrived at National Star unsure of their place in the community, lacking confidence and accepting the limitations society places on them.

Thanks to the work by the charity's multi-disciplinary teams these same young adults leave National Star more confident, healthier, both mentally and physically, and aware of their own potential and equipped to be active citizens. There are those who have learned to manage their anxieties and thus be more in control of their lives and others who have secured paid work or occupation they had dreamt of but never believed they would achieve. There are learners, who thanks to the right combination of care and therapy, have become less reliant on medication.

National Star only succeeds through partnership working – young adults, families, local authorities and health bodies working together. The trustees and governors play a key role, supporting the leadership team and scrutinising the charity's high-quality services to ensure they are maintained, are cost-effective and, most importantly, have lasting impact.

Another set of important partners are the individuals and organisations who support us through donations and grants. National Star has not had capital project funding from the government for more than a decade. It is only thanks to generous donations that we have the incredible specialist equipment and facilities which enable us to change lives.

There is always much more to do. There are more young adults who need our services. We are clear in our ambitions to enable young people with disabilities to be their best selves and become active members of their communities.



Nick Grinham

Nick Grinham
Chair of Trustees



Who we are

National Star enables young people and adults with disabilities to realise their potential through education and personalised learning opportunities, accommodation, care and support services.

Every year, we work with hundreds of young people and adults from across the UK. We work with those who have some of the most complex needs. We also provide a range of work-based learning programmes.

The charity started in 1967 with just 10 learners at its campus in Ullenwood, Cheltenham. Since then, we have grown with a national base at Ullenwood that provides day and residential education. We also provide local services in Hereford, where we expanded our provision in 2025, Wales and, for the first time, in Worcester where our partnership programme with The Heart of Worcestershire College opened in September 2024.

And to support individuals who move on, National Star offers long-term accommodation services in both independent living and residential care facilities in Cheltenham, Gloucester, Malvern and Hereford.

As a community resource, the national centre at Ullenwood and Bradbury Gardens, our residence in Cheltenham, are able to offer short break respite opportunities, and other health and wellbeing services such as activity and therapeutic breaks; and as a recognised centre of excellence, National Star uses its expertise to offer training and development programmes for professionals.

The constant thread is National Star's belief in realising the aspirations of people with disabilities.



Our clear aim

Everything National Star achieves is through collaboration. Our multi-disciplinary teams work with students, residents and their families and carers to empower young adults to achieve their goals. Education and therapy teams work with their care and nursing colleagues to find innovative approaches that suit the individual. After all, no two people are alike.

National Star's leadership team, governors and trustees, and employees bring their individual expertise, experience and energy.

We work with people with disabilities and their supporters to challenge stereotypes, raise aspirations and change attitudes.

The charity is passionate about sharing best practice. We collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders from local authorities, national government, influencers and key opinion leaders, regulatory organisations, such as Ofsted, Estyn and the Care Quality Commission, and other national bodies, such as Natspec (the membership organisation for specialist providers).

We're a diverse group brought together with a common belief and vision. Our aim is to realise the vision and mission set out in our strategy.

Our aim

Our aim is to realise the vision and mission set out in our strategy.

Our vision

A world in which people with disabilities are able to realise their potential as equal and active citizens in control of their lives.

Our mission

To realise the aspirations of people with disabilities through personalised learning, transition, support and care and accommodation services.

Learner voice

Learner voice plays an integral part of daily life at National Star. It involves everything from how care is delivered and meal choices, to discussions and activities in the classroom and beyond.

Following lobbying by National Star, students were permitted to submit video evidence to the government consultation on the 'Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and support to Get Britain Working' Green Paper. They were also involved in National Star's evidence for various government inquiries.

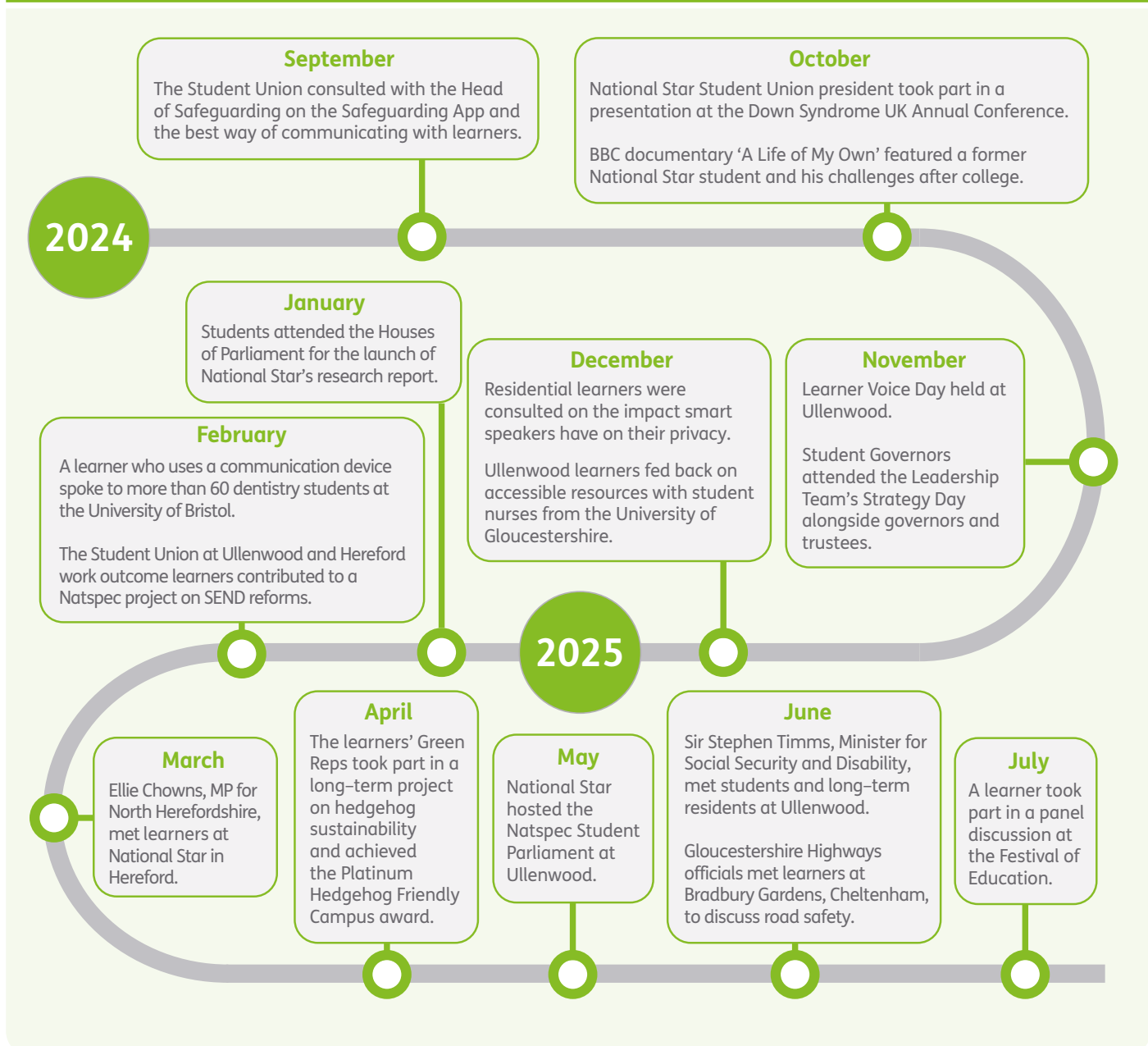
Throughout the year MPs visited Hereford and Ullenwood, meeting and talking to learners. Sir Stephen Timms, Minister for Social Security and Disability, met learners and long-term residents in June during his visit to Ullenwood.

Learners meet weekly in Ullenwood, Hereford and Wales through their own Student Union or Student Parliament. These meetings enable them to share views about college life and feed into topics that directly affect them. For example, in Wales, learners had an active role in the planning of their Leavers' Ceremony and college trips.

Members of the Student Union at Ullenwood give updates to governors and trustees and regularly attend Governors' Committee meetings. Current and former learners sit on the Advisory Committee, as well as assisting at staff interviews.

Students also took part in a wide range of activities with the media and worked with National Star employees to share best practice with other organisations (See 'Driving change', Pages 20–21).

Learner voice timeline



Our impact



866,845

Hours of services provided by National Star during the year to support learners and residents to achieve their goals, develop their skills and lead fulfilling lives.



556

The total number of professionals, families and young adults who have benefitted from National Star's programmes, including apprenticeships, respite, adult community learning and training.



55

Local authorities worked with National Star to deliver education, health and social care.



18

Different local NHS health boards worked with National Star to deliver long-term care.



Supporting young people and families year round

67,121

Hours of respite care support delivered in the past year.



IMPACT

84%

Of our respite service ran at occupancy in 2024 – 2025.

1,473

Hours of additional therapy provided by National Star.



IMPACT

The quality of our additional therapy services means we have a growing waiting list for people wanting to access our support.

546

Hours of community enrichment and adult community learning provided by National Star.



IMPACT

Classes enable young adults to build confidence and mix with peers.

Enabling young people to develop and learn

63,208

Hours of personal development, life skills and employability training delivered in the past year.



IMPACT

94%

Of students leaving National Star achieved their learning goals.

284

Young adults with disabilities and learning difficulties accessed education and personal development programmes in 2024 – 2025.



IMPACT

92%

Achievement rate of primary learning goals for all learners.

43,637

Hours of therapy provided by National Star's multi-disciplinary teams. This includes physiotherapy and aquatic therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, drama therapy and emotional wellbeing services.



IMPACT

89%

Of students achieved or made progress towards their therapy – related goals.*

497,753

Hours of care provided to National Star students.



IMPACT

94%

Of residential learners achieved or made progress in their self care / independence goals.*

*Outcomes as stated in their Education, Health and Care Plans

Creating a forever home

32

Adults with disabilities living permanently with National Star.



IMPACT

All of National Star's long-term residential accommodation are rated Good or Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission.

193,653

Hours of care and support provided to long-term residents.



IMPACT

All the young adults are able to lead meaningful lives by receiving support to access community activities, volunteering and work.

Our learners' contribution

Making a difference

Every year National Star learners and residents donate more than 12,000 hours of their time to their communities. That practice of giving back goes beyond college and many former students continue with volunteering roles after they leave National Star. Employment and / or meaningful occupation is a core element of preparing for adulthood and is at the heart of our education programmes.



Alisha

Student Alisha received the royal seal of approval for her dedication to keeping Hereford spick and span. She took part in weekly litter picks in the town as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Gold award. She completed all three DoE awards while attending National Star. Alisha also volunteered at National Star's charity shop in St Peter's Street, Hereford.



Peter

Long-term resident Peter graduated from the Emerging Leaders programme with the music charity Soundabout. He led warm-ups and music sessions, helped at events and worked behind the scenes on artwork or marketing. 'Peter blows us away with his singing voice,' says the team at Soundabout. 'His confidence has grown in leaps and bounds.'



Leo

Former learner Leo is on a mission to make society more accessible for people with disabilities. Working with company Astor Bannerman, Leo visits Changing Places (disability toilets) to review accessibility.

'By sharing his experiences, Leo is helping venues understand what inclusion really looks like in practice,' says Evie Bradshaw, Senior Marketing Executive at Astor Bannerman.



Daisy

Former student Daisy volunteers three days a week with charity Lilian Faithfull Care. She helps with activities and serves drinks to senior residents at two of the charity's care homes.

'Daisy makes a huge difference for our guests and our guests' wellbeing. Daisy helps at both our day centres, and our guests see Daisy as a part of the team,' says Hannah Landon-Hammond from Lilian Faithfull Care.



Ben

Long-term resident Ben was a guest of His Majesty, The King at Windsor Castle at a reception to recognise those involved in community music. He was invited by UK learning disability music charity Soundabout, just one of several charities he volunteers with.

Holly Radford-James, Chief Executive Officer for Soundabout, says 'Ben's passion, enthusiasm and talent have inspired the young musicians he supports.'



Chesca

Former learner Chesca has been a member of National Star's Advisory Committee since 2020 and has fed back to the leadership team. She also presented at the 2024 Student 'Life after College' Transition event and took part in our Learner Voice Day.

'Chesca's willingness to share her time and her experiences has had a huge impact on learners and their families and has helped us further develop our transition support,' says Andrew Evans, Learner Voice Lead.



Nathan

Former student Nathan qualified as a referee in 2013 and is responsible for the National Referees' Association's digital and social media platforms. Nathan also organises online presentations from experts and high-level referees, maintains the website and emails members about news and events.

'Nathan has become a valued member of the Referees' Association Board,' says Steve Oakey, Chair of the association.



Abdi, Chris, Connor, George, George and Elijah

Six learners received the Heritage Heroes award for their volunteering on the Stroud Canal Restoration Project. They completed various tasks including tree planting, clearing public pathways, building bug houses, cutting back bushes and litter picking. The project has helped the students develop their confidence and communication skills and taught them the importance of checking the quality of their work.



National Star provided 63,208 hours of personal development and education in the year

Education and therapy

National Star provides a wide range of education and therapy services for young people with disabilities to enable them to become equal and engaged citizens.

Our learning programmes are all about preparation for adulthood with focus on community inclusion, employment or meaningful occupation, good health and independent or interdependent living skills.

What we achieved

Every learning experience is unique at National Star to ensure it meets the needs and aspirations of the individual. Our multi-disciplinary approach means education, therapy, residential and nursing teams work together to support each student.

The main education sites are Ullenwood, Bradbury Gardens and Greensteps, all in Cheltenham, Hereford, and Mamhilad in Wales, as well as partnerships with mainstream colleges and local authorities across England, providing work-based programmes into employment and independent travel training. During the year, 284 young adults benefitted from our education and personal development programmes.

In September 2024, National Star, in partnership with The Heart of Worcestershire College, launched a new education centre in Worcester with its initial five learners (See 'Specialist education on your doorstep', Page 15). It is one of the first such partnerships in England and was praised by Baroness Smith of Malvern at a national conference for its innovative approach.

The completion of a major extension at The Eveson Centre, our education centre in Hereford, was completed in March 2025 with

Strategic Intent

To deliver education and therapy services for young people with disabilities and medical needs, to enable them to access the most appropriate support in the right place, at the right time.

learners moving into the space in September 2025 (See 'Focus on The Eveson Centre', Page 40). The new space will enable the charity to further support the Herefordshire area.

Estyn, the Welsh equivalent of Ofsted, inspected National Star's Welsh education centre at Mamhilad in February 2025. They praised college staff for providing a calm, happy and nurturing environment. This was the first full inspection for National Star in Wales since it was set up in 2016. Inspectors reported that staff know their learners well and, through nurturing positive attitudes, enable students to develop skills and potential.

We believe that residential learning is an important part of our education offering because of the life skills students master, alongside greater independence and confidence. In 2024 – 2025 we supported 107 residential learners from across the UK. We also supported day learners at Ullenwood, as well as learners focussing on work outcomes, based at Greensteps in Cheltenham. Of the 20 leavers at Greensteps, 75 per cent gained paid work with the other 25 per cent securing regular voluntary hours.

At the heart of all we do is the importance of learner voice – to put those who receive our services at the centre of everything (See ‘Learner voice’, Page 9).

Good health – Therapy services

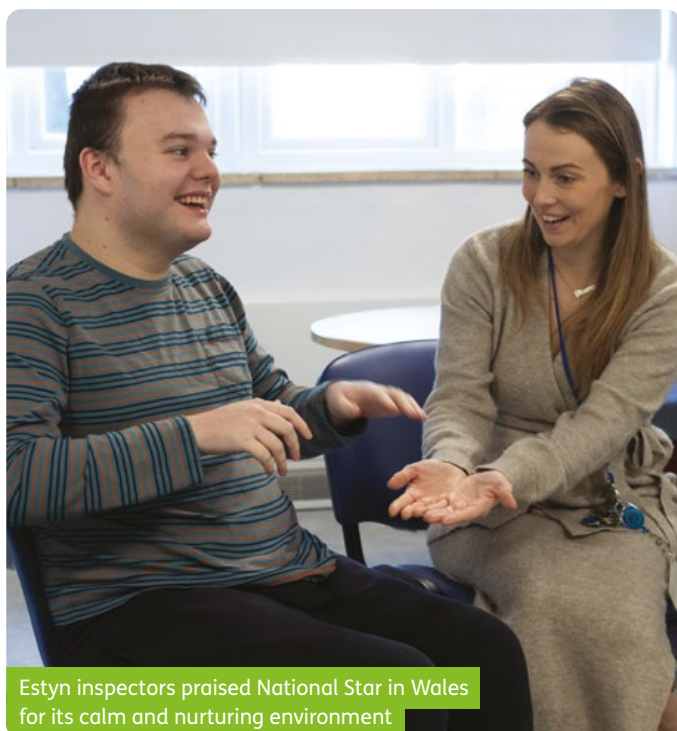
Good mental and physical health are crucial for all of us, and at National Star, we offer diverse therapies tailored to enhance lives. Students can access aquatic therapy, explore emotions through dramatherapy and emotional health and wellbeing services, access comprehensive medical services, find harmony with music therapy, enhance function through occupational therapy and physiotherapy, and empower communication via speech and language therapy.

National Star’s therapy teams work closely with their education, care and medical colleagues to ensure students receive the professional support they need to maintain good health at college and beyond.

The impact therapies have on learners can be life-changing, from developing strategies to self-manage anxiety and communicating choices for the first time, to being able to drive their wheelchairs independently and being able to go out with their family for a meal (See ‘Max’s story’, Page 2).

Families and learners work directly with therapy teams to ensure learners are put at the centre of all we do.

As a charity, it is important for us to share our facilities and expertise with former learners and the wider community. We do that through offering additional therapy services. Last year we provided more than 1,473 hours (2023: 1,834 hours) of additional therapy. This has enhanced individual progress or helped to maintain quality of life for people in the community and has contributed to strengthening National Star’s reputation as an excellent setting for meeting the needs of those living with complex needs and disabilities beyond being enrolled on a residential or day student programme.



Estyn inspectors praised National Star in Wales for its calm and nurturing environment



National Star runs a range of community inclusion activities

Community inclusion

National Star is passionate about breaking down barriers around disability and enabling learners to be active members of their community. Community inclusion is critical as many young people with disabilities experience loneliness and isolation in adulthood.

A core part of learners’ education is community access as part of their life skills training. It may include budgeting, shopping for ingredients to make a healthy meal or exploring activities they might want to do after they leave college.

In 2024 – 2025, 49 people accessed our range of adult community learning classes at Ullenwood. We also ran several community arts projects including Apt Dance, Ad-Apt Youth Dance and Apt OrcheStar. The dance groups performed at Gloucester Guildhall and in celebrations at Ullenwood. National Star learners worked with their peers at the University of Gloucestershire in a project which culminated in a public performance in April.

Volunteering is also an important way for young people to be active members of their community. In 2024 – 2025, learners and residents completed more than 12,000 hours of volunteering and work experience (See ‘Making a difference’, Pages 10–11).

Community engagement

Employment, either paid or voluntary, brings many benefits to young people with disabilities. It helps them build social networks, reduces social isolation and gives everyone a sense of self-worth.

Our teams work hard to ensure learners with work-based outcomes gain valuable work experience with external businesses and organisations. Our social enterprises also provide real work-related opportunities for students. **StarBistro**, based at Ullenwood, is open to the public. **StarPrint** produces a range of mugs, canvasses and coasters, **StarGlamping** offers glamping pods and **StarGolf** is a pay-as-you-go course and membership.

Learners at Greensteps produced seasonal gifts and held pop-up shops, gaining budgeting and sales experience. Students created a range of crafts in the Art Factory project sessions, which were sold at our charity shops. The young adults also worked in customer services and in our onsite shop at Ullenwood.

At Mamhilad, students ran a tuck shop trolley service in partnership with a local cafe. Hereford learners ran a student cafe, a clothes swap and a lending library.

Paid work or volunteering is often unsuitable for some young adults with more complex needs. It is vital for their wellbeing that they can access regular social and community activities to lead fulfilling lives. We enable young people to explore and experience a wide range of activities so that they and their families can better plan for life after college.

In May 2025, we staged our first Community Taster month at Ullenwood, with students trying a range of activities in the community such as rugby matches, music workshops, farm visits, discos and live music.

Independent / interdependent living skills

Everything National Star does is focussed on preparing young people for adulthood and life after college. Our professional teams work together to enable young adults to achieve a range of outcomes such as being able to travel independently on public transport, be in charge of taking their own medication and how to simply be with others and to learn to take turns and be patient.

An example of how we do this is our ski experience. Last year 10 students, many of whom have never been away without their families, put their newly acquired skills into action on a week-long ski experience to Andorra.

Our Lift travel training programme helps people learn the skills to travel independently. During 2024 – 2025, we worked with 24 learners in East Sussex.

Our teams work with young adults and families to help them think about all those decisions around life after college and what they need to do in preparation. We run annual transition fairs that provide opportunities for families and learners to meet long-term accommodation providers as well as representatives from community groups and sports clubs.

The Transition Support team works with students and families as they plan for life after college. The team works with local authority and health care officials to support funding applications and identify appropriate services to meet complex care needs. They also use their expertise to complete bespoke 'life after college' research.



What we achieved last year

- Successfully established a new pilot satellite education provision in Worcester, in partnership with The Heart of Worcestershire College and Worcestershire County Council.
- Expanded the learning and therapy provision at the Eveson Centre in Hereford, which was one of our key objectives in our five-year strategy.



Plans for the future

For the year ahead

- Develop further partnerships with mainstream further education colleges to create a wider reach.
- Secure a new location for our work-based learning currently based at Greensteps in Cheltenham.
- Develop our charity shops to enable us to provide more work-related experience for learners.
- Review our transition services to ensure students and families have the right information to successfully plan for life after college.
- Work with stakeholders to enable young adults to access the right resources to ensure a sustainable transition after education.

Our long-term ambitions

Growing our education and therapy services is one of our priorities that we are focussing on in our five-year strategy (up to 2028). We aim to:

- Review our high-quality education and therapy services across National Star, ensuring positive outcomes for learners and cost effectiveness. This work was started in 2024 – 2025 and will continue in 2025 – 2026.
- Introduce a simpler funding model for our services which reflects the flexibility of our multi-disciplinary approach and the high quality of our curriculum.
- Start the next phase of creating further specialist environments at Ullenwood.
- Increase learners' use of technology to facilitate learning and independence.

“

National Star provides the perfect combination of meeting our son's medical needs, his therapy needs and his educational needs inside and outside the classroom that enables him to become a perfectly rounded adult.

”

Parent

Focus:

Specialist education on your doorstep



Students can receive specialist education in a mainstream college

The Heart of Worcestershire College, in partnership with National Star, offers specialist education to support young adults with disabilities in building independence and life skills.

Launched in September 2024, the project was recognised nationally for its collaboration and innovation. It won the innovation category in the Natspec (the membership organisation for specialist education providers) awards. The category judge said: 'This is a genuinely innovative three-way partnership between a local authority, a specialist further education (FE) college, and a general FE college. This partnership is beneficial to its own students and it also represents a proof of concept that should be learned from nationally.'

It is one of the first partnerships in the country to see a specialist provider deliver support and education in a mainstream college. Worcestershire County Council supported the project thanks to a grant to carry out the work needed to make the building in Worcester suitable for young adults with complex needs.

The partnership means local young people can access specialist support without travelling long distances. Five young adults completed the first year. The provision has capacity for approximately 18 young adults over three years.

The feedback received has been overwhelmingly positive, with educators, parents, and students celebrating the immediate impact the college has had on these young adults.

One family said: 'For the first time in a long time, it feels like we have educators on board who want to work together with us to achieve the best outcome for our young person, something that we have been striving for, for a long time.'



National Star is working in partnership with The Heart of Worcestershire College

“ Ellie is now very happy and loves going to college. To have this on our doorstep is incredible. ”

**Ellie's parents
Andy and Caroline**



National Star is the permanent home for 32 adults

Care services

National Star is committed to providing high-quality care for young people and adults.

We do that through residential learning at our campus in Cheltenham and our residence in the centre of town, Bradbury Gardens, offering much needed respite care during college holidays. We also provide long-term accommodation.

Residential learning

National Star provides residential specialist college places for young people with a range of disabilities and medical conditions. Our residential care and nursing teams are experts at supporting students, who are often leaving home for the first time in their lives.

Working closely with their colleagues in learning programmes and therapies enables learning to continue beyond the classroom and is a vital part of preparing for adulthood. The residential care teams provide continuity and the important link to home, ensuring families and carers keep in touch with what is happening at college.

In 2024 – 2025, National Star had 107 residential students based in accommodation at Ullenwood and Bradbury Gardens in Cheltenham. Many of those students lived with us beyond term time, with National Star supporting them during breaks and holidays.

Strategic Intent

To grow our long-term living, respite and care services.

All the student houses have large communal areas for socialising, studying and developing life skills. Learners play an active role in their residences, choosing the extra-curricular activities and what they would like to make National Star feel like home.

The residential college provision at Ullenwood is rated Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission and Bradbury Gardens is rated as Good.

Long-term accommodation

There is an incredible unmet need for person-centred long-term accommodation for young adults with disabilities. National Star developed long-term accommodation in response to former National Star learners struggling to find suitable homes. Young adults want to live with their peers and to continue their personal development.

National Star is the permanent home to 32 adults with disabilities in four locations: Foundation House in Gloucester,

Matrixcare in Malvern, Bradbury Gardens in Cheltenham and Ledbury Road in Hereford. Foundation House is rated Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission and the other three are rated as Good.

The National Star teams work hard to ensure individuals can access meaningful activities to have happy and fulfilling lives. Residents have a say in residential activities and are involved in the planning.

With the challenges in the health and social care sector, the demand for our long-term accommodation services continues to grow. In 2025, we progressed a joint collaborative project to provide additional accommodation at our provision in Malvern with the ambitions of providing more places for young adults in the future.

Respite services

National Star understands how the shortage of accessible and suitable care in the community impacts not only young adults but also their families and carers. That is why we are expanding our respite services. Last year we provided 67,121

hours of respite care (2024: 61,744) and operated at an 84 per cent capacity. We know we can do more. That's why next year we are aiming to achieve 90 per cent respite occupancy, meaning we will deliver more hours of care and support. Our respite services ensure continuity for learners and additional support for families and provides desperately needed breaks for families and carers.



National Star provides respite care for young adults



What we achieved last year

- Expanded capacity for our respite provision, increasing the number of beds available by 20 per cent.
- Worked with other providers to ensure a wide range of accommodation options for learners leaving college.
- Focussed on recruiting and retaining skilled and professional care staff within a competitive market.



Plans for the future

For the year ahead

- Continue to maximise capacity for respite in Gloucestershire with the aim of achieving 90 per cent occupancy.
- Explore opportunities to develop day services in Gloucestershire.

Our long-term ambitions

Growing our care services is one of our priorities in our five-year strategy (up to 2028). We aim to:

- Expanding our residential care provision in Malvern with the completion of a collaborative project to establish additional new facilities.
- Working with other providers to increase the housing and care opportunities for young adults leaving college.
- Technology transforms the lives of learners. One of our priorities in our strategy is increasing residents' use of technology to facilitate independence.

“

I loved it! All the staff were excellent, and I could not fault them at all. I am booking for next year and I'm going to stay at Bradbury Gardens again.

”

Hayden, a former National Star student and regular respite guest



Without National Star...

“Daisy would never get the opportunity to be independent.”

Daisy's mum Sharon

National Star's respite service is critical for the wellbeing of Daisy and her family. For Daisy, it is the opportunity to be independent and to enjoy a wide variety of activities with her peers.

For her parents Sharon and Carl, who are Daisy's primary carers, it provides a much-needed break.

'The team at National Star's Bradbury Gardens have been exceptional in their care of Daisy,' says Sharon. 'Their thoughtfulness in putting her in the same bedroom and giving her an ID card for her stays there, providing for her dietary likes and the various outings she has been on, has been amazing.'

'By doing these little things, such as giving her the same room, they have given her a sense of confidence so that she can enjoy her independence.'

For Sharon and Carl, it provides an opportunity for them to have a much-needed rest.

'As a parent your biggest worry is who can you trust. If you can trust Daisy is being taken care of, emotionally and physically, then you can rest easy and have a break. Daisy gets her independence, and we get ours and that is so important for all of us.'

Focus:

What comes after education



Claire Young (MP for Thornbury and Yate) with a student at the Houses of Parliament

Major research carried out by National Star revealed that young people with disabilities are being abandoned without access to services or support once they leave school or college.

The survey, carried out in partnership with the Together Trust charity, showed that 55 per cent of young people are not living where they want to while 55 per cent said they felt worried about leaving school or college.

More than 500 parents, carers and young people took part in the research project.

The findings were launched at a Houses of Parliament reception, sponsored by Cheltenham MP Max Wilkinson. Among those who attended included Sir Stephen Timms, Minister of State for Social Security and Disability, and Stephen Kinnock, Minister of State for Care.

‘The findings of this survey tell the stories of hundreds of young people who deserve better than the uncertain futures they’re being offered by a system that is failing,’ said Mr Wilkinson. ‘And those hundreds will speak for so many more young people and families whose wishes are nothing more than access to the support they need to live their lives.’

‘It’s critically important that different parts of government work together properly to address the findings of this report. It’s not fair to expect disabled young people and their families to go on like this.’

Despite what young adults achieve at college, many will not be able to sustain those outcomes due to lack of suitable housing and appropriate social care. National Star is committed to working with all levels of government and partners in the social care sector to ensure young people can lead meaningful lives.



Former students spoke at the event

“ I just feel frustrated, unsupported and like I am forgotten. ”

Young person, aged 21



Sir Stephen Timms, Minister of State for Social Security and Disability, chatting to National Star students

Driving change

We believe that people with disabilities have a right to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives and have an important contribution to make to our society. That belief drives National Star to be a leader in the sector and to ensure the voices of learners, residents, carers and families are heard.

Young people achieve so much while at National Star yet, sadly, not all of them achieve great transitions from college. Despite their success, the support they need to maintain an active and meaningful life is not always sustained. This can be due to many reasons, from lack of suitable housing and limited access to appropriate social care to failures in support.

No one organisation can achieve change. National Star is passionate about young adults with disabilities being able to live meaningful lives and the charity works with a wide range of partners to promote change.

Catalyst for change

In the past year we lobbied government and relevant organisations to improve the quality of care and education for young adults with disabilities. In partnership with the Together Trust, we launched at the Houses of Parliament, our national research project 'What comes after education' (See Page 19). The reception was attended by learners from a range of specialist colleges so that Ministers, MPs and other key decision makers could hear firsthand the challenges faced by young adults with disabilities.

Strategic Intent

To share specialist expertise and be a leader in the sector.

We contributed to government consultations on SEND, further education and skills, social care and reforms to disability benefits. We successfully lobbied the Department for Work and Pensions to accept video evidence from students concerning the disability benefit reforms.

In June, the Minister for Social Security and Disability, Sir Stephen Timms, visited our campus at Ullenwood where he met students, employees and residents to hear their concerns about the proposed changes to disability benefits.

National Star has strong relationships with its local MPs and in the past year hosted visits at Ullenwood, Hereford and Wales so that learners could share their lived experiences and discuss issues important to them.

Our National Lead for Sustainability took part in a Department for Education roundtable on SEND and sustainability in education to raise awareness of the lack of inclusive and appropriate teaching resources for SEND learners. We are investigating how we can help develop resources for students across the UK.

National Star's Chief Executive, Lynette Barrett, as the Chair of Natspec (until June 2025), ensured we were at the forefront of national discussions about specialist education. She is also a member of The Education and Training Foundation's Sector Leaders' Steering Group.

Sharing expertise

We shared best practice through a range of activities over the past year. National Star's team shared best practice with colleagues from across the specialist college sector at the Natspec conference. Learners and members of the National Star team spoke at the Communication Matters conference, TechAbility, the Festival of Education and the annual Down Syndrome UK conference.

We provided a range of training in the UK for The Education and Training Foundation (ETF). National Star held Reverse Jobs Fairs at Ullenwood and Hereford, in partnership with the ETF, as part of their Universal SEND programme funded by the Department for Education.

National Star offered teacher education with participants from a range of specialist and mainstream further education colleges. We delivered qualifications to: Activate College in Kirkby, Sense Colleges, Hartpury College and the Royal National College for the Blind.

We welcomed a range of visitors throughout the year and worked collaboratively with other charities and organisations to improve support and services in the sector.

Amplifying voices

We are passionate about enabling students to have a voice in the media. Learners, former learners, residents and families have featured on local, regional and national media on a huge range of topics including sustainability, proposed benefit reforms, receiving a new voice for their electronic communication device, and the 10th anniversary of the opening of our first long-term residence.

The BBC, followed for five years the life of a learner as he completed his education at National Star and his challenges to find a home and a job. The online documentary was released in October 2024 and received widespread attention. It highlighted the challenges young adults face when they leave education.



What we achieved last year

- *Launched at the Houses of Parliament, in partnership with the Together Trust, our findings from a national research project to drive change for life after education.*
- *Worked with The Education and Training Foundation's Universal SEND Services Programme to deliver events and networking activities to support people with SEND into employment and support businesses to make this happen.*
- *Contributed to government consultations and enabled learners and their families to be involved with all proposals that will personally impact them.*
- *Hosted a Ministerial visit at Ullenwood.*



Plans for the future

For the year ahead

- *Contribute to government consultations and enable learners and their families to be involved with all proposals that will personally impact them.*
- *Continue to work with The Education and Training Foundation's Sector, Sector Leaders' Steering Group, to drive professionalism in further education and skills through effective and inspiring leadership.*

Our long-term ambitions

Sharing our specialist expertise is one of our priorities in our five-year strategy (up to 2028). We aim to do that by:

- *Further develop a training and consultancy service to share National Star's expertise.*
- *Work in partnership with government and other organisations to drive change that enables all young adults with disabilities to lead meaningful lives.*

“

National Star College is an excellent example of how employment support is more than just finding a job – it's about helping people discover what they're capable of and giving them the tools and confidence they need to thrive.

”

Minister for Social Security and Disability, Sir Stephen Timms

Financial review 2024 – 2025

National Star has continued to operate on a sound financial basis despite continued financial pressures and a competitive fundraising environment.

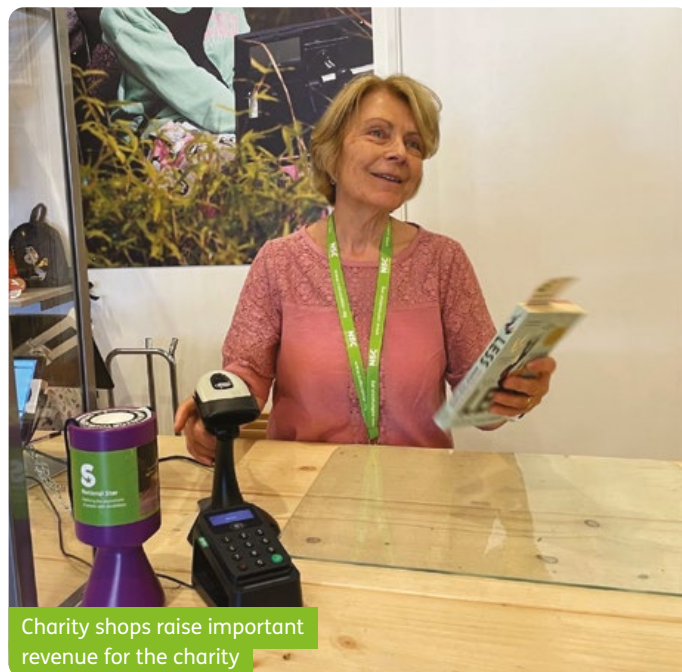
The trustees consider the key performance indicators for the sustainability of the charity to be the cash flow generated from operating activities and the operating surplus. These together with the other movements in income and costs are considered below:

- The group's overall income at £49.6m represented £6.5m growth on the previous year.
- There has been no fundamental change to the principal funding sources of the charity this year. Income from delivery of charitable activities accounted for £46.4m (2024: £40.8m) of total income, comprising primarily of education and therapy, long-term accommodation and respite services. Fee levels are reflecting the increased complexity and needs of learners' disabilities alongside obtaining modest fee increases to cover rising staffing costs for returning learners.
- While the provision of most of the charity's services are funded by fees, it does not adequately cover the full underlying operational costs of the charity. The charity is highly reliant on other income generation activities, including fundraising, to maintain the charity's high level of services and facilities. This is highlighted by our key performance indicator of underlying operating surplus, reported at £334k this year, less than one per cent of our total income (as per our internal management accounts data). The operating surplus has been impacted by rising inflationary costs along with higher staffing costs from April 2025, following increased employer's National Insurance contributions as announced in the 2024 Autumn budget.
- Donation and legacy income for the year was £1.55m, of which £485k was restricted income for our capital appeal to extend the facilities of The Eveson Centre in Hereford and a further £220k restricted for other purposes. Unrestricted legacy income is reported at £458k. The net unrestricted surplus generated from fundraising has been designated by the trustees for future development.



National Star in Hereford opened its new extension

- Charity retail continues to expand and plays a critical role in generating income for National Star. Our shops generated sales of £1,036,421 (2024: £727,449) following further phased shop openings. The net surplus generated by our shops has been designated by the trustees for future development.



Charity shops raise important revenue for the charity

- Total expenditure is reported at £47m (2024: £41.7m), a 12.8 per cent increase year on year. Staffing costs accounted for 80.7 per cent (2024: 79.9 per cent) of the total cost base. For an organisation such as ourselves, the impact of pay awards and National Insurance contribution increases are significant and will continue to be into 2025 – 2026 and beyond.
- Overall, the group has reported an unrestricted surplus (before net gains on investments) of £1.88m, reflecting the essential contribution from fundraising, legacy and charity retail income.
- The group has a positive cash flow movement of £1.43m (2024: £1.46m) generated from operating activities less investing activities. At 31 August 2025, the group is reporting cash at bank and in hand of £7.96m (2024: £6.52m).
- We continued to invest in our facilities and offering, reporting £3.46m (2024: £1.76m) of fixed asset additions this year; £2.52m of which related to freehold land and buildings.
- The group's total value of net assets at the end of the reporting period was £40.6m (2024: £37.8m), of which £32.1m (2024: £30.5m) was represented as tangible fixed assets and a further £4.1m (2024: £3.8m) as readily accessible investments.

The financial instruments, being the financial assets and financial liabilities of the charity, comprise cash and other items such as trade debtors, trade creditors, which arise directly from its operations. The main purpose of these financial instruments is to finance the operations of the charity. Their nature means that they are not subject to price risk or liquidity risk.

Investment policy

The charity held investments during the year in Schroder Unit Trusts Charity Equity Fund, CCLA Investment Management Ltd COIF Charities Investment Fund, and investment funds with St James's Place Wealth Management. These investments are subject to price risk arising on the underlying investment portfolio. The trustees maintain a finance, audit, investment and risk committee (FAIR) to oversee its investment policy and monitor performance against relevant industry benchmarks including the ARC Balanced Asset Charity index, UK RPI and deposit rates.

The investment policy objectives in furtherance of the charity's objectives include obtaining an optimum financial return on investments in accordance with the charity's investment powers and attitude to risk, maintaining a responsible approach to investments and protecting capital in real terms.

The charity's trustees have agreed a 'medium' attitude towards risk, with a target total return in the range of 5.5 per cent to 7.8 per cent growth per annum (five-year average). The overall investment portfolio on a period-end value to value basis saw total gains of £326k, or 8.6 per cent (2024: gains of £492k, or 14.9 per cent).

Reserves policy

The trustees consider that reserves are needed to enable the charity to operate effectively and responsibly; representing the funds that might be needed to support expenditure in the event of reduced income or changes in circumstances. Accordingly, the charity maintains a reserves policy and the trustees monitor the finances of the organisation through regular management accounts.

The trustees recognise that strategic and financial planning along with risk management policy informs the development of our reserves policy. The reserves policy accounts for anticipated future income and its volatility, the needs of current and future beneficiaries and the levels of known liabilities. Its reserves enable the charity to fund unexpected expenditure or shortfalls in income, to support working capital requirements, to mitigate for risks and to be able to take advantage of change and opportunities.

The reserves policy states that these free reserves should equate to a value of not less than £5m. A review of policy was completed in 2024 – 2025; increasing the required level of free reserves from that previously reported of £3.3m.

At 31 August 2025, the group is reporting total unrestricted funds of £40.2m. Of this, £3.4m has been earmarked as designated funds for future development towards the phase 2 estates development plan. After allowing for designated funds, along with £32m of unrestricted funds tied up and represented as fixed assets, the group is reporting £4.8m of freely and readily realisable reserves. Our financial forecasts indicate that we are forecast to reach our policy target of £5m by 31 August 2026.

At 31 August 2025 the charity is reporting restricted funds of £395k, a significantly lower sum than that previously reported of £2.17m. A number of property-related restricted funds had derived from donations given and the associated asset being required to be held for a specified number of years. As a result of timeline restrictions having been fulfilled in 2024 – 2025 and

no further restrictions applying, fund transfers of £1.78m have been made from restricted to unrestricted funds this year.

Taking into context that the group's expenditure in 2024 – 2025 was £47m, the policy of £5m is a small percentage – just 10.6 per cent of what the charity spends on delivering services, or just over one month's operating costs.

The trustees are satisfied that the overall level of available reserves, taking account of the committed and designated funds identified and described above, is appropriate at this time.

The policy will remain under regular review.

Subsidiary undertakings

Two subsidiary undertakings operated during the year. NSF Trading Limited (company number: 01168043) operated as the organisation's trading subsidiary for non-charitable purpose trading. NSF Design & Build Limited (company number 08628807) was established in 2013 and undertakes accommodation development projects on behalf of the charity. Both subsidiaries generated surpluses in the year after direct costs, administrative costs and audit fees (as detailed in notes 2a and 2b) which resulted in Gift Aiding a total of £93,860 (2024: £66,547) to the charity. Shareholdings are disclosed in note 11 to the Financial Statements.

Related parties

The charity has related party transactions with its two wholly owned subsidiaries. Please see note 21 to the Financial Statements for details.

Going concern statement

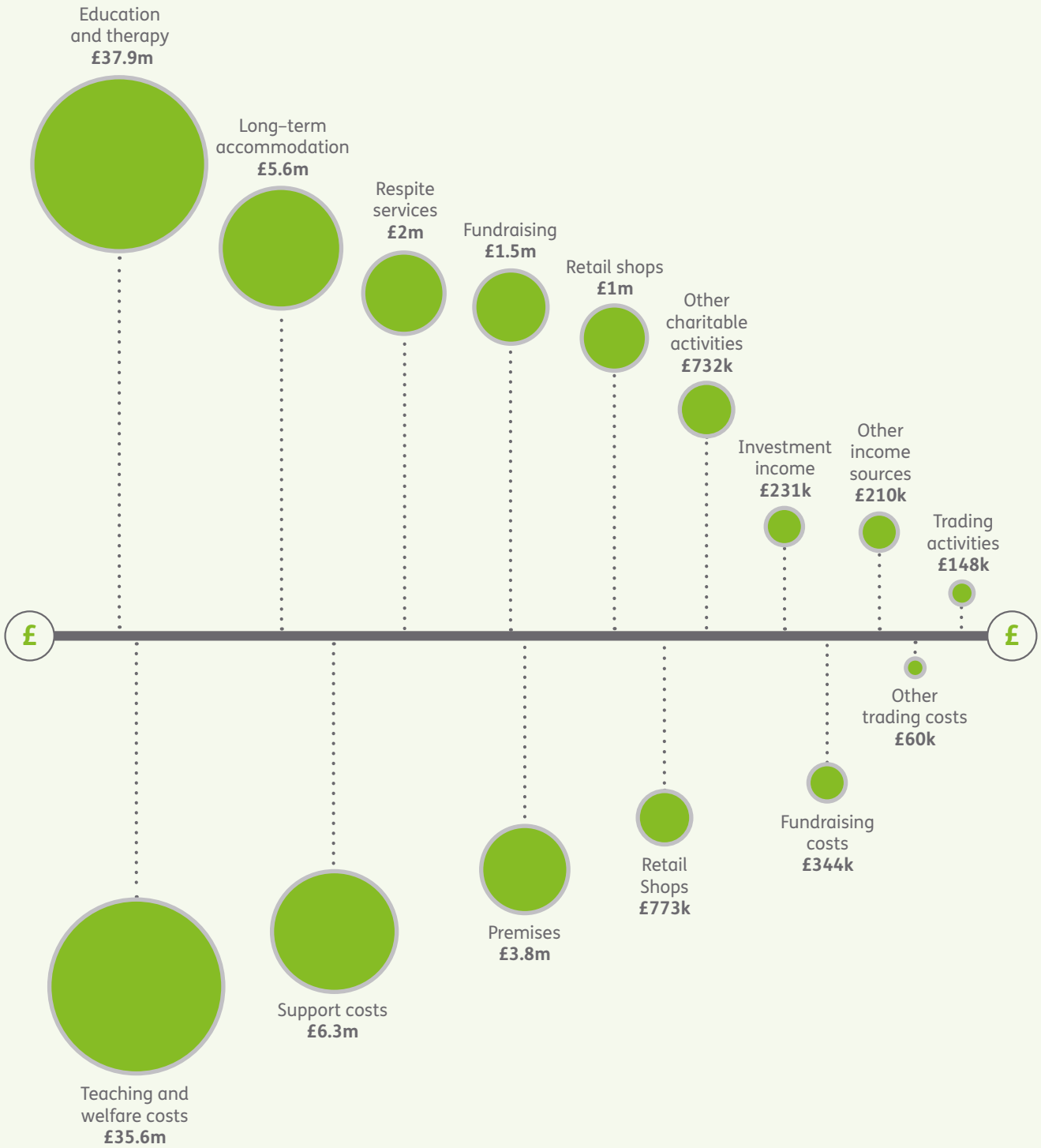
The trustees have reviewed the group and the charity's financial position, taking into account the satisfactory levels of reserves, amounts receivable, the annual plan and the financial plan, together with its systems of financial and risk management. We have prepared a number of scenarios that consider our position, sources of income, and planned expenditure. This includes ongoing understanding of the impact of inflationary and cost of living increases on operational costs and increased financial pressures faced by local authorities for SEND education and ongoing social care.

These scenarios consider fee increases which do not cover inflationary costs, delayed fee payments and potential bad debts involving local authorities which issue Section 114 notices (being unable to meet their expenditure). Sensitivity around these assumptions has also been considered in our forecasting. Results of this cash flow and sensitivity analysis indicate that the cash reserves of the charity are adequate to meet the charity's obligations as they fall due.

As a result of its review, the trustees believe that the group and the charity is well placed to manage operational and financial risk successfully. Accordingly, the trustees are satisfied that they have a reasonable expectation that sufficient resources are available to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and therefore continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual consolidated Financial Statements.

£ How we raise and spend our funds

How we raise our funds

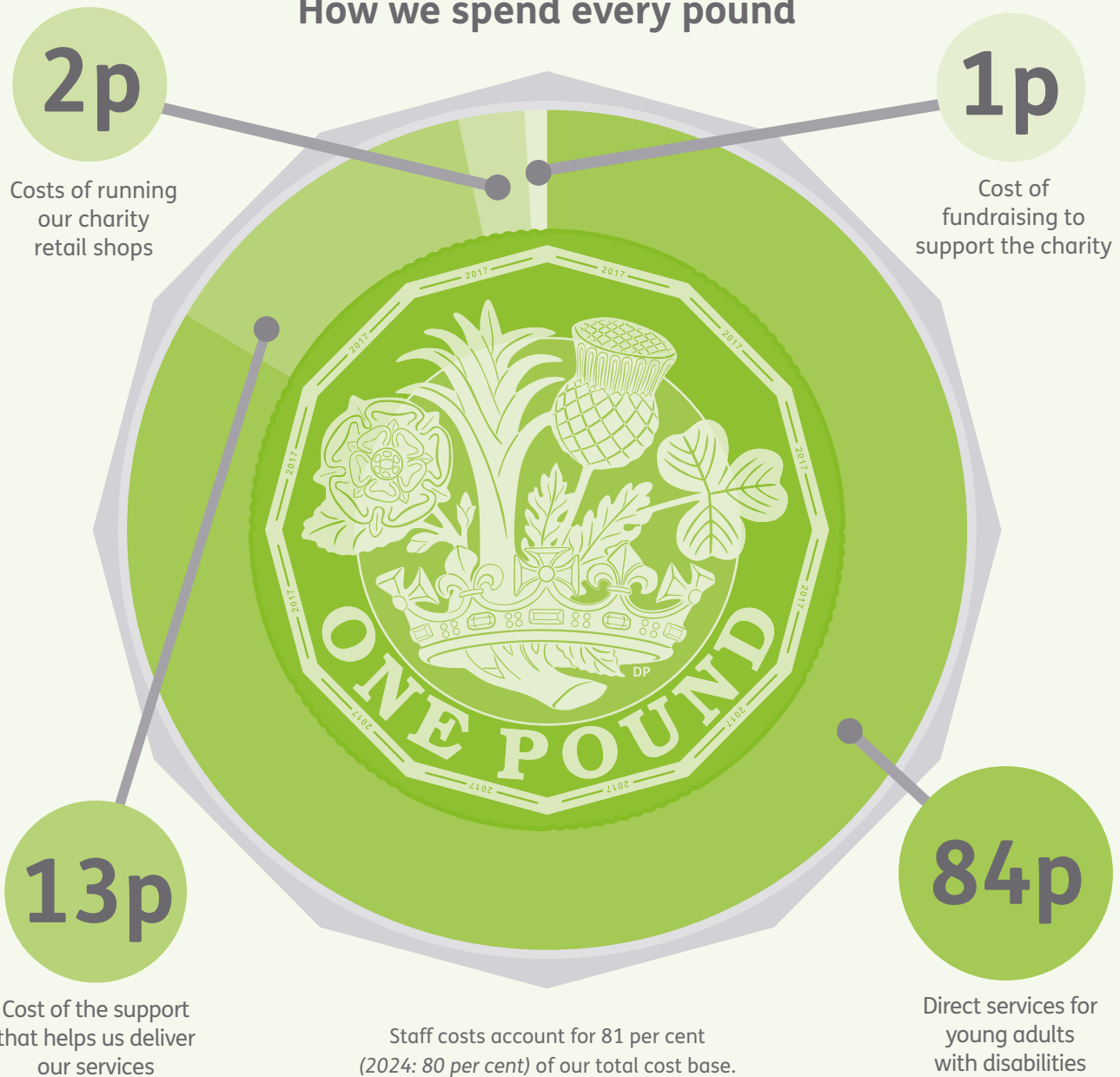


How we spend our funds

£ How we raise and spend our funds

- The key ways we raise our funds is unchanged from that of the previous reporting period.
- Our three key charitable activities of education and therapy, long-term accommodation and respite services continue to generate the vast majority of our income at 92 per cent (2024: 93 per cent) of total income.
- Whilst most of the charity’s services are largely funded through statutory fees, we remain highly dependent on our fundraising and charity retail income to generate additional funds to fulfill delivery and to maintain the charity’s high levels of services and facilities.
- The incredible generosity of our supporters is vital to National Star, as demonstrated in detail on our Income generation pages (See ‘Income generation’, Pages 26–27).
- This year we were humbled to receive unrestricted legacy income of £458,101 – a source by nature inherently unpredictable to budget.
- The phased opening of two further charity retail shops this year along with considered development and monitoring of existing shop performances, has bolstered gross income from retail to just over £1m for this year (2024: £727k).
- Our trading subsidiary, NSF Trading Limited generated trading activity sales of £148,764 (2024: £134,610).
- Other income sources comprises largely of a gain on disposal of fixed assets of £141k.

How we spend every pound





National Star opened two new charity shops in the past year

Income generation

The charity retail and fundraising teams raised vital funds in 2024 – 2025 to support the charity and increase awareness of what we do.

National Star has not received government funding for capital development projects for more than a decade. Whilst most of the charity’s services are largely funded through statutory sources, we are dependent on our fundraising and other income generation activities to help pay for our specialist facilities and to enhance the resources and experiences for those who depend on what we provide.

Charity retail

Charity retail plays a critical role in generating income for National Star. We opened two new shops in 2024 – 2025: one in Abbeydale Gloucester (December 2024) and one in Brockworth (May 2025). We acquired two further shops which we plan to open in 2025 – 2026.

Thank you for your support

National Star is grateful to all the people and organisations that have supported the charity. Together we have made a huge difference to the lives of young people with complex disabilities. The challenge is to meet the growing demand for National Star’s specialist support.

By raising awareness of the impact of our work, by working closely with supporters and by engaging new ones, National Star will strive to meet that demand.

Strategic Intent

To grow and strengthen our fundraising to enhance the resources and experience for those who depend on our services.

Our seven shops generated total sales of £1,036,421 (2024: £727,449) including £50,208 (2024: £33,302) of Gift Aid from Gift Aided sales.

We couldn’t operate these shops without the incredible support of our volunteers. The number of volunteers increased to 161 who donated 23,065 hours of their time. (See ‘Our people’, Page 29)

The shops also play an important role in the organisation’s sustainability strategy, saving thousands of tonnes of good quality goods from landfill. This year National Star, Hartpury University and Hartpury College launched a partnership which resulted in a large van full of donations. Hartpury students leaving campus accommodation at the end of term were encouraged to donate unwanted plates, mugs, pans and other homeware items, clothing, and accessories to National Star.

In 2025 – 2026, the charity retail team plan to launch a student led project which will help generate more income from book sales and reduce the amount that goes to recycling.

Our charity shops play a vital role in increasing our profile within our communities. They enable us to promote the charity, our services and events and help raise needed funds. Charity retail also provides meaningful work experience for students and other placements.

Fundraising

The generosity of supporters is vital, and this past year National Star raised £1,548,621 (2024:£821,858) in voluntary income. Donations come from a range of trusts, foundations, groups, organisations and individual supporters as well as legacies.

A major success in 2024 – 2025 was the completion of the much-needed expansion of The Eveson Centre, our education and therapy centre in Hereford. The Building a Brighter Future appeal exceeded its fundraising target of £486,811 (See 'Focus on The Eveson Centre', Page 40). Twenty trusts and foundations supported the charity in the year, with nine trusts providing funds for our capital appeal for the Eveson Centre development, including grants from The Eveson Trust, The Brailsford Charity and St James's Place Charitable Foundation, while 11 others (including unrestricted) supported several projects and equipment needs.

National Star's support from the community came from an extensive range of groups, businesses, schools and individuals doing a variety of different activities, for which we are incredibly grateful.

Events staged by the charity included the Sunrise Walk, a golf day and a Wingwalk. Individuals support us through donations, taking part in the National Star Lottery, Gifts in Wills and gifts in memory of a loved one.

Throughout the year corporate partners and community groups provided invaluable support with some naming us as their charities of the year. The Twin Arrows Golf Society raised £50,315 for National Star in the past year, an incredible achievement for a small community group.

Through regular communications, such as mailing appeals, twice-yearly **StarNews**, and an annual supporter Thank You event, donors see the incredible difference their support has made whilst appreciating the charity's continued need to raise funds to support the much-needed specialist equipment and facilities. (See 'Fundraising practices', Page 41)



The Sunrise Walk was one of the charity's most popular events



What we achieved last year

- Opened two further charity shops in Gloucestershire, bringing our total to seven in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. Acquired two further shops to open in 2025 – 2026.
- Successfully held a supporter event and three fundraising events.
- Completed the expansion of the Eveson Centre, Hereford.

87,696

Bags and boxes of donations for our charity shops in 2024 – 2025

140,000+

Transactions in our charity shops in the past year



Plans for the future

For the year ahead

- Continue the phased opening of further charity shops in 2025 – 2026.
- Upgrade the supporter database to further support the work we do.
- Continually review our fundraising activities.
- Continue to hold face-to-face supporters and fundraising events.
- Implement new Legacy Giving and Regular Giving programmes.

Our long-term ambitions

Strengthening our fundraising to enhance the resources and experience for those who depend on our services is one of our priorities in our five-year strategy (up to 2028). We aim to do that by:

- Increase our network of charity shops and their net income.
- Grow our fundraising community and donor base.
- Strengthen the levels of legacy and regular giving fundraising activity.
- Maintain high levels of donor stewardship and individual donor support.
- Develop the Capital Fundraising programme to support future phases of capital development projects.

Our approach to being a responsible organisation

We exist to support young adults with disabilities to achieve their aspirations and to be equal and active citizens in control of their own lives.

We are in it for the long game, so we need those foundations for sustainable long-term progress. Caring for the environment and National Star's long-term future is one of our charity's core values.

We are continuously striving to become a more sustainable charity – environmentally, financially and operationally – and an inclusive and diverse organisation that reflects the people who work for us and those we support.

We're also working to improve our environmental, social and governance performance.



Our people

We recognise and are grateful for everyone's contribution. We are compassionate and promote a community where everyone can feel welcome and success is celebrated.



[Read about how safeguarding is central to all we do, Page 32](#)

[Read about how our colleagues and volunteers make a difference, Page 29](#)



Our governance

We are open, honest, accountable and transparent in all that we do, including our structure and governance.



[Read about our structure, governance and management, Page 35](#)



Our planet

We aim to reduce our environmental footprint and play our part in slowing down climate change and protecting nature.



[Read about how our colleagues, learners and residents are doing their bit, Page 33](#)

Learner voice

Isabella is a green champion



Isabella
Student Green Rep

Student Isabella used her passion for biodiversity to develop her confidence, teamwork and communication skills while actively participating in National Star's Student Green Rep group.

When Isabella, who communicates using an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device, first arrived at National Star, she was shy and lacking in confidence. Her curiosity and thirst for knowledge meant Isabella made the most of the opportunity to be a Green Rep.

Isabella helped with recycling activities, building bug houses and taking part in National Star's bioblitz, a 24-hour nature survey of the campus at Ullenwood.

With support she programmed her AAC device with interesting facts about hedgehog preservation. She faced her fear of presenting to large groups of people when she attended a local Brownie group and educated them about hedgehogs. She also addressed Planet Cheltenham's Youth Climate Action Group and a team of corporate volunteers when they helped to plant saplings at Ullenwood.

Isabella's hard work and progress was recognised publicly when she was presented with a highly commended Student Values Champion award at the Student Leavers' ceremony 2025.



Our people

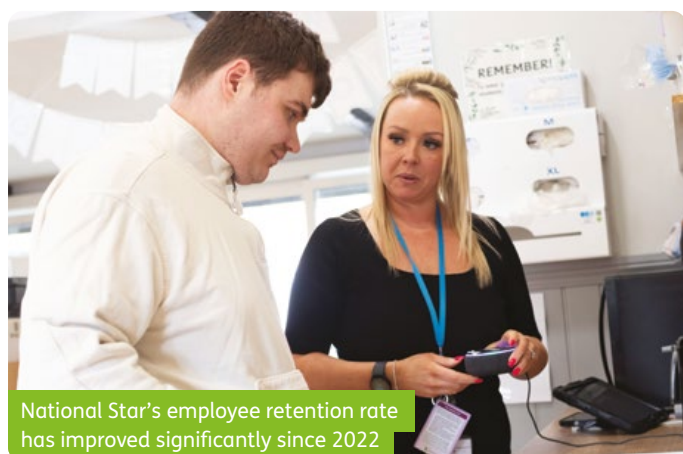
National Star's long-service awards for colleagues

Our highly skilled and committed employees are the reason why National Star is outstanding. Without their hard work, expertise and dedication, our charity couldn't exist. Recruiting and retaining talented colleagues is essential to maintaining the quality and future growth of the charity.

Recruitment and retention

The shortage of skilled workers in the care and health sector and changes to UK visa sponsorships continued to impact the charity in 2024 – 2025. We have developed a range of benefits and career opportunities to ensure National Star is seen as an employer of choice.

Our pay is positioned appropriately in the market so that we can remain competitive in attracting and retaining the best people to help us achieve our goals. Since 2022, our attrition rate has fallen from 23 per cent to 12 per cent, proof that our strategy is working, and people are staying with National Star.



National Star's employee retention rate has improved significantly since 2022

Strategic Intent

To sustain and grow a highly skilled workforce and to share specialist expertise.

Right employee, right time, right place

We work hard to ensure we have the right employees in the right place, at the right time, providing the right service. We do that in many ways including an in-depth induction programme and ongoing training.

The charity's professional development and training team provided more than 12,442 hours of training through face-to-face sessions and eLearning in 2024 – 2025. There are currently 91 people working on a range of apprenticeships, degrees and management qualifications through the assessment team.

Reward and recognition

Recognising the contributions of our colleagues is done in many ways. We awarded eligible employees a 5 per cent pay award in April 2025, while some staff saw other increases aligned to the higher uplift in the National Living Wage. This increase reflected the higher cost of living and inflation rate. We undertook pay reviews for specific roles and offered a range of rewards and benefits to support existing colleagues and help recruit new ones.

It is important to celebrate colleagues' achievements. We hold annual long-service awards, and colleague recognition awards where people are nominated by their peers.

Engaging with employees

National Star has an open policy in seeking and encouraging employee views. Feedback, positive and negative, helps us build on our good working environment.

We use a mix of channels, including face-to-face communications, digital channels, offline resources and events. We tailor our communications to different colleague audiences.

Our leadership team, including the Chief Executive, communicate regularly with employees through our digital channels and face-to-face events. Managers and directors deliver their own engagement activities, including team meetings.

Trustees and governors engage with employees through the governance structure (See Page 35). The Governors' Committee has delegated oversight responsibility for the operational aspects of National Star's service delivery.

We also engage employees through our staff representatives' group (LINK). The LINK group raises suggestions and concerns with the leadership team and seeks feedback from colleagues on key issues.

Culture and values

Our values, which were selected and defined by our employees, are clearly articulated, commonly accepted, visible in both words and actions across the organisation and lived out daily by all. Each of us bring our values to life through demonstration of our individual and collective behaviours.

The charity has 1,363 employees (as of 31 August 2025), many of whom work part-time or term-time. They are representative of, and drawn from, the surrounding local communities, with 5.9 per cent declaring a disability and 18.1 per cent declared as ethnic minorities, which was in line with the charity's Equality and Diversity targets. The gender split is 73 per cent female and 27 per cent male.

We have done much to strengthen our wellbeing support. We appointed an Employee Wellbeing Advisor, launched a Wellbeing Strategy and enhanced our support for long-term sick and health conditions and family friendly support.

We held a range of monthly events including wellbeing workshops, monthly drop-in coffee and chat sessions and staged a celebration of culture, faith and religion. We are all encouraged to be champions of our culture.

National Star continues to strengthen and promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). All training, which has been reviewed in the past year, includes aspects of EDI. We are a Disability Confident Employer and continuously review our processes and support.

Our values

As we work, we are led by our values:



Ambition

(Having goals)

We support students, colleagues and residents to be the best they can be. We aim for excellence in everything we do. We look for ways to improve society so people with disabilities can live full and active lives.



Collaboration

(Working together)

We work with others to achieve more for people. We develop strong partnerships to grow and be sustainable. We encourage everyone to be passionate and enthusiastic, sharing what they know to improve their own life and that of others.



Integrity

(Open and honest)

We are open, honest, accountable, and transparent. What we do is central to our belief that people with disabilities should be in control of their own lives.



Respect

(Listening and understanding each other)

We recognise and are grateful for everyone's contribution. We are compassionate and promote a community where everyone can feel welcome, and success is celebrated.



Sustainability

(Caring for the environment and National Star's long-term future)

We aim to reduce our environmental footprint. We will follow a strategy of growth to secure the future of the charity and our work with people with disabilities.

Our volunteers

Our volunteers bring a rich variety of skills and experiences to National Star. Last year 177 people gave their time across charity retail, fundraising, events, learning programmes, transition support and occupational therapy. Our 19 trustees and governors are also much valued volunteers.

Volunteers are a vital part of our charity retail operations and the funds it provides National Star. Last year the charity retail volunteers gave 23,065 hours of their time. (See 'Income generation', Page 26).

Charity retail volunteers receive full induction and training with National Star including a tour so that they can understand their role in the charity and our impact.

An annual thank you event is held at Ullenwood to celebrate their incredible contribution. The charity retail team were named team of the year at the annual colleague recognition awards in 2025.



What we achieved last year

- Reviewed and improved the People Strategy so that National Star continues to attract, retain and motivate the right talent.
- Implemented a new resource management system.
- Reviewed how we listen to employees and get feedback.
- Dayforce, the new resource management system, was opened to employees.



Plans for the future

For the year ahead

- Continuously review how we listen to employees and get feedback.
- Ensure we have the right employees, in the right place, at the right time, providing the right service.
- Continue to roll out further functions of Dayforce, our new resource management system.
- Create an organisational pathway that supports career development in all areas.
- Review current benefits and the engagement of our colleagues.

Our long-term ambitions

Sustaining and growing a highly skilled workforce is one of our priorities in our five-year strategy (up to 2028). We aim to do that by:

- Continuous improvement that attracts, retains and motivates the right talent.
- Further development of sector leading training programmes.
- Technology is critical to National Star as it enables us to be as efficient as possible so that we can focus our time, resources and energy on those we support. That is why we are developing and implementing a range of technical infrastructures and management systems to improve our efficiency.

Thea

Without National Star...

“ I would not have had so many opportunities to develop my career. ”

Thea

When Thea started in a care role in 2013 at National Star she had a dream – to become a physiotherapist. She had completed her degree in sports therapy and had a young family so returning to full-time education wasn't possible.

When a physiotherapy assistant role became available, Thea applied for it and was successful. In 2019 she became National Star's first physiotherapist apprentice. She completed her degree in 2023 and is now a senior physiotherapist.

'Thanks to National Star I have had so many opportunities to develop my career and my skills. I absolutely love my job. I enjoy working with the students and seeing their confidence grow when they realise what they are capable of with the right support,' says Thea.

'We have access, thanks to fundraising, to incredible facilities and equipment that can be life changing for the students. And working as a team, everyone in physiotherapy learns from each other.'



Chair of Governors' Statement

Safeguarding those in our care

Safeguarding is at the heart of every activity at National Star and it is everyone's responsibility to keep safe the young people and adults using our services.

Safeguarding concerns are received from employees, students, residents, families and carers and members of the public. We reviewed 663 concerns in 2024 – 2025 with the majority of these raised by employees. Last year (2023 – 2024) 425 concerns were raised. The figure reflects how everyone at National Star feels confident to raise anything that would be a concern, knowing that it will be investigated.

Every concern, regardless of the level, is recorded confidentially and investigated by the charity's safeguarding team and appropriate action taken. It may be a discussion with a manager, providing further refresher training or reviewing how care is carried out. This proactive approach ensures that incidents or issues are resolved before they can become serious safeguarding concerns where someone is put at risk.



National Star delivers regular safeguarding refresher training

Of those concerns raised, only 5 per cent (33) were deemed at a level where they needed to be reported to the relevant external agency such as the Care Quality Commission, home area local authority and Gloucestershire Safeguarding. National Star will also liaise with regulatory bodies outside of the referral process, for the purpose of openness and transparency.

Our Head of Safeguarding, managers, directors, governors and trustees regularly review the log of concerns for themes and trends so that we can identify any action we need to take to further improve our safeguarding practices.

Our safeguarding team works closely with colleagues, learners, residents and families to ensure there is appropriate and accessible training in the Prevent agenda, Fundamental British Values, Safe, Healthy Relationships and, from September 2025, the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education.



What we achieved last year

- Launched new training materials for team meetings aimed at helping colleagues understand their responsibility in safeguarding.
- Launched new initiatives to promote safeguarding to learners, including recorded messages on switches for those who cannot read posters.
- Carried out a safeguarding review to understand how training and reporting can be improved. The results have led to updated training that will be rolled out in 2025 – 2026.



Plans for the future

For the year ahead

- Launch new face-to-face refresher safeguarding and boundaries training.
- Annual Prevent updates to be shared with all employees each September to refresh their knowledge on current threats and signs to look out for.
- Safeguarding awareness days to be added into the curriculum calendar.

We work with students and residents to help them stay safe. In the 2024 –2025 Student Perception of College survey, 92 per cent of learners who completed the survey felt safe at college, all or most of the time, during the year.

The wellbeing of learners and residents is our highest priority, and we are constantly reviewing our safeguarding training and processes to ensure their safety.



Nikki Richardson
Chair of Governors

Environment

Sustainability is one of National Star's core values which has gained greater traction across the charity in 2024 – 2025.

Our effort to reduce the charity's carbon footprint is emerging and we are committed to playing our part in helping the United Nations achieve its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

During the year colleagues secured specialist status in education for sustainable development and became certified in carbon literacy and water literacy, with a view to cascading knowledge to peers and learners.

Sustainability was more effectively embedded into the curriculum across all pathways to prepare learners for life after college. National Star has an active Student Green Rep group that cascades information to their peers about sustainability. A group of committed students took it upon themselves to reinforce the need to improve our recycling rates by collecting recycling from offices and classrooms and talking to colleagues about the importance of effective waste management.

In Wales learners worked in partnership with a local business Frog Bikes, to repurpose the company's unwanted glass coffee jars to create terrariums to sell as part of an enterprise project.

A strong working relationship between the Head of Sustainability and the Procurement Manager ensured that suppliers' sustainability credentials were given greater weight when purchasing goods and services. Wherever possible, colleagues were encouraged to reduce consumption and share and reuse resources. When the former caretaker's residence at Ullenwood was converted into a suite of meeting rooms, 90 per cent of all fixtures and fittings, were repurposed from other parts of the charity, saving vital funds and the environment.



A student installs a hedgehog house as part of the charity's commitment to the environment



Learners helped with the charity's first biodiversity audit at Ullenwood

A developing partnership between National Star, Hartpury University and Hartpury College diverted kilos of kitchenware and clothing from landfill (See 'Income generation', Page 26) when students donated unwanted items to our charity retail team at the end of term. Work-based learners also ran a pop-up charity retail stall at Hartpury's freshers' fair.

We worked in conjunction with Planet Cheltenham's Youth Climate Action Group, The Woodland Trust, Gloucestershire County Council and civil service volunteers to plant 4,500 saplings across the Ullenwood and Hereford campuses, creating much-needed wildlife corridors for hedgehogs and other wildlife. Students and colleagues came out in force to support the tree planting, with learners labelling saplings with their names to promote the part they played in improving campus biodiversity.

National Star was one of only 16 education institutions nationally to be invited to join national Nature Friendly Grounds, a two-year pilot study exploring how colleges and universities can improve the biodiversity of their estates.

National Star was also invited to participate in a Department for Education round table to share views on how sustainability support programmes can become more accessible and inclusive. Off the shelf resources are often inappropriate and rarely feature images of learners with disabilities, aged 16 – 25 years old. Ensuring national sustainability support programmes better meet the needs of young adults with disabilities in general and specialist further education settings is vital.

At our long-term living residence in Hereford, the new solar panel systems have the capacity to generate 25 per cent of the energy needed for the long-term living accommodation and nearby day college. A storage barn at Ullenwood was also fitted with solar panels.

Our learner-led clothes swaps, held in Ullenwood, Hereford and Wales, provided opportunities for colleagues and learners to find out about the impact that fast fashion has on the environment and encourage them to wear 'pre-loved' clothes.

Plans for the future

What we achieved last year

- Installed solar panel systems at 1 Ledbury Road, Hereford.
- Achieved Platinum Hedgehog Friendly Campus status.
- Won the BBC Radio Gloucestershire 'Make a Difference' Green Award.
- Decreased our carbon emission per employee by 9.5% from 0.84 tonnes of CO₂e to 0.76.
- Joined forces with the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust to stage our first bioblitz, a 24-hour audit of biodiversity at National Star, Ullenwood.

For the year ahead

- Plant a further 4,500 saplings across the Ullenwood campus to increase overall biodiversity.
- Maximise our involvement in the national Nature Friendly Grounds project, sharing best practice with other educational institutions.
- Finalise a waste management audit with a view to installing more user-friendly, accessible bins to increase our recycling rate.
- Continue to roll out solar panels across the National Star estate to increase the proportion of self-generated renewable energy utilised by the charity.

Our long-term ambitions

- Develop a green transport strategy to explore ways in which the charity can reduce our Scope 1 emissions.
- Roll out carbon literacy / sustainability training for all colleagues and continue to improve learners' understanding of sustainability.
- Work in partnership with other organisations to ensure national sustainability support programmes can better meet the needs of SEND learners, providers and professionals.

Playing our part – the environment

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

Type of Emission	Scope	Activity	Unit	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
				Quantity	kWh Energy	tCO ₂ e	% of total	Quantity	kWh Energy	tCO ₂ e	% of total
Direct	1	Services – Biomass	kWh	2,626,200	2,626,200	30	4%	2,500,900	2,500,900	28	4%
		Services – Gas	kWh	552,526	552,526	101	13%	533,665	533,665	98	13%
		Services – Oil	litres	32,784	388,190	104	14%	28,447	336,836	90	12%
		Services – LPG	litres	10,810	78,475	17	2%	9,212	66,874	14	2%
		Owned Vehicles	litres – diesel	71,703	771,033	184	24%	62,363	655,460	157	21%
		Owned Vehicles	litres – petrol	2,529	23,607	5	1%	975	9,165	2	0%
Energy Indirect	2	Services – Electricity	kWh	1,555,887	1,555,887	275	36%	1,593,278	1,593,278	330	43%
Other Indirect	3	Personal Vehicles	miles	166,700	201,723	46	6%	153,611	185,657	43	6%
Total Gross Emissions (tCO₂e)						764		762			
Total Energy Consumed (kWh)					6,197,642			5,881,836			

Intensity Metric Ratio:	2024/25	2023/24
Number of Employees (FTEs)	1,006	902
Tonnes of CO ₂ e Per Employee	0.76	0.84

This report is provided in accordance with The Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018, which came into force from 1st April 2019. As a large charitable company, National Star is required to provide the following information for the group in relation to its UK energy use, associated greenhouse gas emissions, intensity ratio and energy efficiency actions.

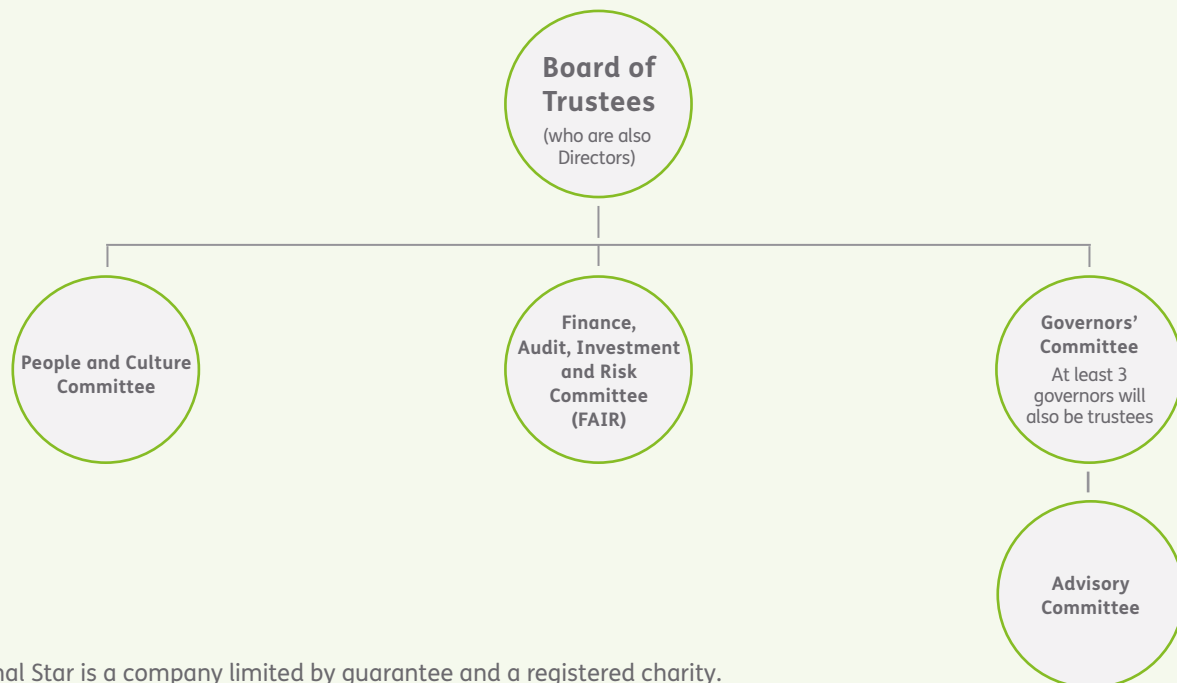
Methodology

Our reporting methodology was based on the UK Government's 2019 Environmental reporting guidance. Our calculations were based on the UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting (2025). All emissions calculations are derived from activity data representing the group, including its subsidiary undertakings. Parameters include those emissions for which National Star has operational control. The reporting period is 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025. Our emissions are reported as metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e), which incorporates all six gases regulated by the Kyoto Protocol.

Our structure, governance and management



Governance structure



National Star is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

Our board

We're governed by our Board of Trustees. The board approves our values, strategy, business plans and budget. The board oversees the day-to-day delivery of our strategy by our Chief Executive and the leadership team. During the year the Board of Trustees held four formal meetings. The board also met for a strategic away day, held in November, and several deep dive sessions on topics ranging from management of risk and the learner voice to Governance legal updates and safeguarding.

Our trustees and governors

Our People and Culture Committee leads on the recruitment of new trustees and governors and the reappointment of current trustees and governors. They follow inclusive, transparent recruitment principles that have been formally approved by the board. New trustees and directors are selected based on their relevant skills and experience, as identified through our populated skills matrix. Trustees are appointed for a term of three years up to a maximum of three terms, on an exceptional basis trustees and governors may serve a final additional term. On appointment, trustees are also admitted as directors of the charitable company.

New trustees receive a comprehensive induction, including written information about our organisational strategies, governance framework and key policies. They also meet individually with key internal stakeholders to gain a deeper understanding of the charity's operations. They are invited to visit our education centres, long-term residences, and charity shops with opportunities to engage directly with learners, residents, employees, supporters and carers and families. Our trustees and governors participate in a continuing programme of training and awareness sessions throughout the year.

Our trustees are unpaid, but they're reimbursed for any reasonable expenses (see note 8 to the Financial Statements). The expenses policy was this year updated to ensure potential candidates are not excluded due to financial constraints.

In accordance with our Articles of Association and section 234 of the Companies Act 2006, the charity indemnifies its directors and officers against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part through an indemnity insurance policy. The trustees have considered the guidance set out in the Charity Governance Code and conducted a review of the organisation's governance structures and board membership. This included a comprehensive revision of the committees' work plan. A Governance Secretary was appointed in January 2025 to support these developments.

As of 31 August 2025, there were 11 trustees on the board from diverse backgrounds bringing a range of care, charity and commercial knowledge and experience. During the year, we appointed two new trustees and one governor following a recruitment process in November 2024. A further recruitment campaign in August 2025 resulted in a further four trustees being appointed.

The board delegates certain powers in connection with the charity's governance and administration through its committee structure. This delegation is controlled by requiring the committees to report back regularly to the board, ensuring that all decisions made under delegated powers are ratified by the full board. A number of board members serve on the committees within the governance structure in order to provide expertise, scrutiny and governance oversight of each committee.

All committees operate under agreed terms of reference, provide meeting minutes and report to the board on key areas of work undertaken. They are also responsible for key areas of the risk register. Other working project groups are ad hoc as required.

Our Board of Trustees

Chair: Nick Grinham (from 1 September 2024)

Members:

Peter Barefoot

Liz Cadman (retired October 2024)

Chris Hallam

Robert Haymon–Collins (retired November 2025)

Chas Howes (retired November 2025)

Jane Matheson

Stephen Leslie (from November 2025)

Sarah Limb (from November 2025)

Martin Mellors (from February 2025)

Sara–Jane Perera (from November 2025)

Helen Price (from February 2025)

Nikki Richardson

Matt Shayle (retired May 2025)

Margaret Sheather

Toby Yap (from November 2025)

Board of Trustees' committee structure

The Board of Trustees delegates certain responsibilities to four committees. These committees are primarily composed of trustees, except for the Governors' Committee, which consists of governors who are not trustees, although three governors also serve as trustees. A review of the committee structure was carried out at the beginning of 2025.

The Risk and Assurance Committee was disbanded with its responsibilities transferred to the new Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee (FAIR). The Nominations and Remuneration Committee was disbanded with its responsibilities transferred across the committees within the newly-formed structure.

The four committees now are: Governors' Committee, People and Culture Committee, Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee and the Advisory Committee.

Governors' Committee

Chair: Nikki Richardson (Trustee)

Members:

Kim Anderson (Parent Governor)

Sean Dunne (Governor from January 2025)

Margaret Goldie (Governor)

Chris Harber (Governor)

Robert Haymon–Collins (Governor / Trustee)

Jane Matheson (Governor / Trustee)

Lara Rowlands (Governor)

Attendees:

Jack Reeve (Student Governor, retired July 2025)

Jak Ryding (Student Governor, retired July 2025)

Sophie Stevens (Student Governor, from September 2025)

Poppy Evans (Student Governor, from September 2025)

Megan Rogers (Director of Services)

Main responsibility

Delegated responsibility for overseeing, approving, and monitoring National Star's service delivery, with a particular focus on education, care, and support services.

Main activities for 2024 – 2025

- Met four times.
- Held two development sessions covering the learner voice and risk management.
- Received and scrutinised reports on service delivery, including health and safety and safeguarding.
- Carried out 25 link governor visits.
- Discussed concerns identified through reports and link governor visits.
- Reviewed and approved policies relating to service delivery.
- Monitored student attendance and progress data and reviewed the curriculum.
- Considered relevant risks from the risk register and sought assurance on key areas of concern.



Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee (FAIR)

Chair: Chris Hallam (Trustee)

Members:

Peter Barefoot (Trustee)
 Chas Howes (Trustee, retired November 2025)
 Frances Allcock (Trustee, until January 2025)
 Stephen Leslie (Trustee, from November 2025)
 Martin Mellors (Trustee, from February 2025)
 Sara-Jane Perera (Trustee, from November 2025)
 Matt Shayle (Trustee, retired May 2025)

Attendees:

Peter Horne (Deputy Chief Executive)
 Claire Paine (Director of Finance)

Main responsibility

Delegated responsibility for overseeing the financial management and investment strategy and ensuring the risk management of the charity.

Main activities for 2024 – 2025

- Met four times.
- Received a presentation on the charity's retail operations.
- Received regular reports on financial risks affecting the charity.
- Reviewed, amended and recommended the 2025 – 2026 budget, monitored the 2024 – 2025 budget.
- Received the audited Annual Accounts, oversaw the production of the charity's Annual Report.
- Oversaw the work of the financial auditor and received the Audit Findings Report.
- Received reports on the charity's management of information security and identified associated risks.
- Recommended the implementation of an internal audit programme.
- Received reports on property management, pensions, investments, reserves and salary sacrifice benefits.
- Scrutinised the cost of living award and made a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.
- Reviewed financial and accounting policies.



Advisory Committee

Chair: Andrew Evans (Learning Programmes Co-ordinator)

Members:

Elliot Caswell	Andrea Lewis	Andrea Riga
Mike Cooke	Poppy Jones (from September 2025)	Jak Ryding (retired July 2025)
Jason Felce	Ben Matheson (from February 2025)	Sophie Stevens (from September 2025)
Robert Haymon-Collins (Governor / Trustee)	Katie Peacock (from February 2025)	Francesca Vismara
	Ben Pollard (from May 2025)	One Director of Services attends each meeting.
	Jack Reeve (retired July 2025)	

Main responsibility

This committee works in partnership with trustees and governors to quality assure services, advise on new service provision, and recommend solutions to address needs and overcome barriers. They also act as critical friends while promoting the positive profile of people with disabilities and advancing equality and opportunity.

Main activities for 2024 – 2025

- Met 10 times for an hour via Teams.
- Considered and provided feedback on topics ranging from transition, extension requests, funding, Student Union elections, the curriculum and the learner voice.

People and Culture Committee

Chair: Frances Allcock (Trustee)

Members:

Nick Grinham (Chair of Trustees)
 Lisa Devine (Link Group Chair – employee representative)
 Helen Price (Trustee, from February 2025)
 Nikki Richardson (Trustee)
 Margaret Sheather (Trustee)

Attendees:

Lynette Barrett (Chief Executive Officer)
 Rachel Harber (Chief People Officer)

Main responsibility

Delegated responsibility for overseeing the composition and effectiveness of the Board of Trustees and Governors' Committee, leadership team matters — including recruitment, succession planning, remuneration, and recognition — and the identification and mitigation of strategic risks linked to the charity's People Strategy.

Main activities for 2024 – 2025

- Met three times.
- Maintained a skills matrix to identify gaps in board and committee skills and experience, leading to two recruitment campaigns and the appointment of a Governance Secretary, two trustees and one governor.
- Reviewed the leadership team structure, seeking updates on its effectiveness, succession planning and progress.
- Redefined the committee's scope.
- Received reports from the Chief People Officer and reviewed employee cases, staff and member training and development, governor and trustee visits and salary sacrifice arrangements.
- Compiled a terms of office proposal.
- Reviewed the Link Group report, which included employee feedback provided by the Chair of the Staff Representatives. Consultations conducted on the Living Wage award and term dates.
- Considered relevant risks from the risk register and sought assurance on any areas of concern.

NSF Design & Build Limited

Directors:

Chris Hallam, Chas Howes, Peter Horne and Lynette Barrett. Met annually.

NSF Trading Limited

Directors:

Chris Hallam, Chas Howes, Peter Horne and Lynette Barrett. Met annually.

Public benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements and duty under Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit; 'Charities and Public Benefit' and that the extensive charitable purposes and provision of the charity, particularly in the areas of education and disability services (as detailed in pages 12–17), are for the public benefit.

Subsidiary undertakings

Two subsidiary undertakings operated during the year. NSF Trading Limited (company number 01168043) operated as the organisation's trading subsidiary for non-charitable purpose trading. NSF Design and Build Limited (company number 08628807) undertakes accommodation and facilities development projects on behalf of the charity. Both subsidiaries generated surpluses in the year after direct costs, administrative costs and audit fees (as detailed in notes 2a and 2b to the Financial Statements) which resulted in Gift Aiding a total of £ 93,860 (2024: £66,547) to the charity. Shareholdings are disclosed in note 11 to the Financial Statements.

Chief Executive

Day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive, supported by the Deputy Chief Executive, Chief People Officer and a leadership team. The board set the pay for key management personnel (as detailed in note 8) by relation to industry standards and organisations of a similar size and activity.

Trustees' duty to promote the success of the charity (Section 172 statement)

Our trustees are committed to our charitable purposes and act in good faith and with integrity.

By monitoring and overseeing the performance of management against our organisational strategy and resulting plans, the trustees obtain assurance that in promoting our success, due regard is given to the following factors set out in section 172 (1) of the Companies Act 2006:

1. The likely consequences of decisions in the long-term

Our trustees approve our organisational strategy which takes a long-term view of our work and sets out our ambitions to deliver and further develop high-quality, relevant education, care and support services for people with disabilities.

Trustees and management continued to review the long-term strategic plan and areas of potential development of the charity's learning, education and care services. Our trustees oversee the implementation of our strategy and their decisions are informed by regular engagement with our stakeholders, including our employees, learners, residents, families and carers and our organisational partners.

Trustees keep under review the charity's principal risks and its risk appetite, considering emerging risks and regularly reviewing changes in the charity's risk profile and responses. By ensuring that management act in accordance with the strategy and in compliance with specific policies, the board and its committees obtain assurance that in promoting the success of the charity, due regard is given to the factors set out in Section 172.

2. The interests of employees

Our trustees and governors listen to the voices of our employees and consider the future impact of decisions on them through regular engagement with staff.

The leadership team, with the support of the trustees, provide employees with information on matters of concern to them through various channels of communications, including National Star's intranet, the employee consultation group (LINK) and regular updates from the Chief Executive, the Chair of Trustees, the Chair of Governors and other senior managers.

The People and Culture Committee is kept informed about employee relations and regularly review employee feedback and employment policies.

3. The need to foster relationships with third party stakeholders including service users, local authorities and other funding bodies, SEND education and care communities, key opinion leaders and supporters.

Our service users

These are the young people and adults who use our services and their families. There is an active elected Student Union which was consulted over the year about a range of issues. Members provide updates to the Governors' Committee and are involved in employee recruitment and training. Feedback from learners and service users informs organisational improvements. Learners and parent governors have a voice on the Governors' Committee and take part in governors' and trustees' strategy days. Parents, learners and former learners are involved with the Advisory Committee. The care and education teams continuously review students' progress and residents' support to ensure they, and their families and carers, are kept informed and that the service users have an active say in their lives. Regular virtual Family and Carer Forums are held throughout the year.

Local authorities and other funding bodies

Our core income comes from fees paid by local authorities, the NHS and the Department for Education. We work closely with these bodies to ensure we are meeting the needs of the young people in our care. We also work closely with local authorities to provide local provision. The board receives regular updates on our work to build strong relationships with funding bodies.

SEND education and care communities

We are committed to sharing best practice and expertise and trustees are kept informed of our work and of emerging trends and concerns. We consult and work closely with a range of professional bodies and specialist organisations to develop resources and share knowledge in the UK. National Star continued to work with The Education and Training Foundation to support the development of high-quality programmes and practice across the further education sector. The charity contributes to Natspec (the membership association for organisations which offers specialist further education and training) Practitioner Network.

Key policymakers and other influencers

Our trustees have a pivotal role in our work with key policymakers and influencers – both Parliamentarians and national bodies. For example, we work closely with NHS England, NHS Wales, Public Health England, Ofsted, VODG, Estyn, the Association of Colleges, Natspec and the Care Quality Commission to help shape and inform policy to secure the best outcomes for young people with complex disabilities and learning difficulties. We strive to work in partnership with other SEND bodies in pursuing shared policy outcomes and trustees receive regular updates.

Supporters

We want to build lasting relationships with our supporters and make sure we are providing them with opportunities to support us in ways that work for them. Our trustees are directly involved in our activities to foster supporter relationships and oversee our fundraising strategy. We engage with supporters on a regular basis through tailored communications to specific audiences. This includes face-to-face visits, telephone and virtual conversations, and written communications. National Star's fundraising practices are discussed on page 41.

4. The impact of the organisation's operations on the community and the environment.

We have a policy in place to address key aspects of sustainability, including ethical supply chains, energy and carbon reduction management, responsible water usage, travel, reuses of resources and reduction of waste. We also have processes in place to monitor and manage our carbon emissions and environmental impact (See 'Environment', Page 34).

5. The desirability of the organisation maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct.

Our trustees have responsibility for setting the charity's culture, values and standards, and ensuring that its obligations to its stakeholders are met. We have a range of policies and process that promote corporate responsibility and ethical behaviour. Areas covered include fundraising practices, safeguarding, whistleblowing and equal opportunities. All policies are reviewed periodically and updated as necessary.

The Board of Trustees and its committees regularly review guidance from the Charity Commission and other regulatory authorities and take on board any recommendations regarding good practice. The charity's core activities support vulnerable young adults and maintaining very high safeguarding processes is central to its operations.

It is essential that public trust in the charity is maintained and not damaged because of accepting donations from inappropriate sources. The board has approved a policy that enables trustees to refuse a donation which may be considered unethical.

6. The need to act fairly as between members of the company.

National Star has fair and transparent pay and reward structures, with opportunities to share ideas and make a difference. We respect colleagues' diversity and foster an inclusive workplace where all are treated fairly.

Focus:

The Eveson Centre

National Star can support more local young people with disabilities in Hereford, thanks to the successful expansion and refurbishment of The Eveson Centre.

The new two-storey addition in Hereford means National Star can now provide specialist education, therapy and support for up to 45 students. National Star thanks the individuals, businesses, organisations, trusts and foundation that have enabled us to carry out this vital expansion.

The Mayor of Hereford, Cllr Dan Powell, officially opened the extension during a special ceremony to thank those who supported the appeal.

The charity opened The Eveson Centre in 2020 and in just four years the number of young people attending National Star has doubled.

'Our growth shows the incredible need in Hereford. This additional space will be life-changing for the local young people who we believe have so much to offer the community,' says Sasha Narey, Head of Learning at Hereford.

The new extension will provide needed space including two new classrooms, two new personal care rooms, a multi-skills kitchen and communal space. For the students the most important change in the college is the extra space.

'Having the extra space helps students be more independent because we have more choices about where we want to go during our breaks,' says student Heather.



Fundraising practices

National Star is committed to fundraising in an open and transparent way. We rely on the goodwill and generosity of our supporters to help fund our work with people with disabilities.

Fundraising standards

We subscribe to the Fundraising Regulator and apply its Code of Fundraising Practice standards to all our fundraising activities. We display the Fundraising Regulator badge on our fundraising material to show we are committed to good practice.

Registered with



FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

Our complaints process is clear and easily accessible. All complaints are recorded and investigated in line with our complaints policy. In 2024 – 2025 we received no complaints about our fundraising activities carried out by the charity or someone on behalf of the charity.

We are also signed up to the Fundraising Preference Service, which allows people to opt out of receiving fundraising communications from us. We received and actioned one request from the service in the past 12 months.

We regularly update relevant supporter records to make sure the information we hold is comprehensive enough to enable us to stay in touch while remaining respectful of people's privacy.

We also adhere to the rules and best practice guidance set out by the Charity Commission, Chartered Institute of Fundraising, Gambling Commission and the Information Commissioner's Office.

Working with our own and third-party fundraisers

We raise funds through gifts left to us in Wills, one-off and regular donations from individuals and the community, corporate fundraising, grants and donations from trusts and foundations, events and our charity shops.

To ensure volunteers and third parties uphold these standards when undertaking fundraising on our behalf, we make sure they have the information and tools needed to be compliant. We monitor fundraisers, volunteers and third parties working with us to raise funds, to ensure that they comply with the Code of Fundraising Practice and with our Supporter Promise.

We had a Commercial Participation Agreement with the Gloucestershire Beer Week Committee from 18 – 29 September 2024. Profits from the event were donated to National Star and another local charity.

Protecting vulnerable people

Our fundraisers are aware of the need to be sensitive and careful when engaging with vulnerable people, and our approach reflects this. We never put pressure on anyone to make a gift, and if people do not want to give or wish to stop giving, we respect their decision. We do not engage in doorstep fundraising and we don't use services of external call centres or sales canvassing companies to support our fundraising activities. We never sell or pass on supporter details to other organisations.

Read more about our supporter promise and our process for handling complaints on our website.

Lana, age 23

Without National Star...

“I would not be living the life I have now.”
Lana
Former student

From day one, Lana a former National Star learner, made a strong impression as a supported intern. So much so that Lana secured a six-month paid contract.

Lana, who completed a work-based programme at National Star, had a very clear ambition about what she wanted to do when she left college. She wanted to live independently with support and get a paid job.

'Lana brings a can-do attitude, exceptional attention to detail, and a warm, positive energy that has quickly made her a much-loved member of the team,' says Reynaldo Plua Intriago, Rapport Team Leader.

Following college, Lana completed her internship with Rapport Services in London, a company which provides guests services for a range of high-profile companies. Lana has cerebral palsy, which can affect fine motor skills and coordination. She uses an electronic communication device to speak.

'At National Star College I learned how to live independently,' says Lana. 'I was able to grow my confidence and communication skills with customers through the work placements I completed at college.'



Principal risks and uncertainties

Our Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that effective and adequate risk management and internal control systems are in place to identify and manage the key risks to the charity.

Risk management process

The Board of Trustees is responsible for overseeing the risk management process through a consistent approach to identifying, assessing and mitigating the risks facing our charity. The aim is to manage, rather than eliminate, risks to our charitable objectives and to provide reasonable assurance against material risks.

The processes in place include:

- A comprehensive risk management framework that considers the key strategic risks and their inherent level of risk, together with the relevant internal controls and assurances, as well as sources of external assurance. This enables the current level of residual risk to be assessed and actions to be established to achieve a desired target level of risk. The risks are regularly reviewed by the leadership team, other risk 'owners' and the Head of Risk and Compliance and are documented in a risk register.
- The Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Committee (FAIR) review the framework and receives regular reports from the Head of Risk and Compliance and the Chief Executive on the effectiveness of controls.
- A programme of detailed reviews of key strategic risks is delegated to governance sub-committees and to trustees and governors.

Managing key strategic risks

National Star considers the following as areas of key organisational and strategic risk with the development and implementation of several mitigating actions:

- Sustain high quality student programmes and appropriate recruitment of learners: Following an overall formal review of curriculum across all five pathways, the first phase of changes to the curriculum was rolled out in September 2024 and the second in January 2025. Further changes were made in September 2025 to ensure content and delivery meet the needs of learners and is cost effective. A robust learner recruitment programme was launched. A review was carried out of work-based learning to ensure the programmes provides learners with necessary qualifications.
- Sustain standards of medical and personal care and the ability to meet therapy needs: There is a weekly review of mandatory employee training, regular compliance visits and quarterly performance management. New staff have an assigned mentor. There have been operational difficulties with a new care management system and work is being done to identify a better system that provides timely care management, reporting and compliance.
- Ensure acceptable safeguarding standards: To mitigate risk of unacceptable safeguarding standards, the organisation ensures learner / resident voice is at the centre of all activities

and is monitored through regular surveys and interviews. Safeguarding is embedded into the curriculum. Safeguarding training data is reviewed quarterly, and training is audited for quality. 'Prevent' training for employees has been reviewed and will now be offered as a refresher as well as delivered during induction from September 2025. 'Prevent' is embedded in the curriculum and this is currently under review.

- Ensure security of core IT against breaches and failure: There is an ongoing assessment of resilience and performance of technology and its security and a review of ongoing safeguards and controls to ensure our IT systems and information is protected from breaches. Mandatory data protection training for employees was maintained and monitored. Further projects and new systems are assessed to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- Ensure accommodation and facilities are fit for purpose: The organisation recognises the need for accommodation and facilities to be appropriate for the changing cohort of learners and their complex disabilities. To mitigate that risk an updated review of our existing estate is underway to assess current and future needs to best support the needs of students and residents. The findings will inform long-term planned maintenance and improvement programmes, including capital projects.
- Ensure sufficient funding to deliver services: The organisation recognised the importance of maintaining a range of income streams across service delivery and charitable fundraising to mitigate risk. It endeavours to manage finances responsibly and ensure effectiveness and efficiency. The organisation focussed on securing appropriate increases in fees where required and to maintain good working relationships with funders.

Our risk profile going forward

The uncertainties of public funding and policy direction of a new government and increased cyber security threats are among the key potential risks to be managed by the charity. These are detailed below and include:

- The potential impact on our income from the financial instability of local authorities and available public funding to match inflationary cost increases in existing student placements in the short-term and to fund future placements in the long-term.
- The potential impact on the recruitment and funding of learners, as a potential result of implementation of both the Additional Learning Needs system and devolution of funding to local authorities in Wales, as well as reforms and changes to funding anticipated for High Needs and SEND by the English government.
- The importance of maintaining information security with the increased risks of cyber attacks. This continues to be an organisational priority with ongoing improvements and rigorous security testing.
- The impact on our future capital development programme and maintaining the quality of facilities, due to continuing lack of local authority / government capital funding support, the pressures on fundraising and other income generation activities.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are directors of National Star Foundation for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report (including the Strategic Report) and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and regulation.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare Financial Statements for each financial year. Under that 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 the group and of the incoming resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable group for that period.

In preparing these Financial Statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2019).
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards, comprising FRS 102, have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements.
- Prepare the Financial Statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show the charitable company's

transactions, 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 the group and for taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud, and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charitable company's website.

In so far as each of the trustees of the charity at the date of approval of this report is aware, there is no relevant audit information needed by the charity's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report of which the charity's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the necessary steps in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The trustees confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and report on the charity's objectives and achievements on pages 12 to 21. The reference and administrative details on page 67 form part of the Trustees' Report.

By order of the Board of Trustees, the Annual Report (incorporating the Strategic Report) has been approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Nick Grinham
Chair of Trustees

24 February 2026

Teisha, age 20

Without National Star...

“Teisha would not have received the best educational experience of her life.”

”
Katherine
Teisha's mum

The progress that Teisha has made while learning at National Star in Hereford has opened a world of opportunities for her.

Teisha, who is blind and has profound and multiple learning disabilities, found it difficult to access any room other than her own classroom when she first started with National Star.

She would get anxious when she went out in the community. Now, thanks to National Star's support, Teisha accesses Hereford city centre on a weekly basis, visiting coffee shops, Hereford Cathedral and local parks with other learners.

Her family has seen a huge change in Teisha during her time at National Star. She is much more patient and better regulates her behaviour. Teisha is completing her final year at college.

'There has been a massive improvement in Teisha,' says her mum Katherine. 'Her understanding has improved, and she makes much better choices.'



Independent auditor's report

Opinion

We have audited the Financial Statements of National Star Foundation ('the charitable company') and its subsidiaries ('the group') for the year ended 31 August 2025 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Consolidated Balance Sheet, Charity Balance Sheet, Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the Financial Statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the Financial Statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2025 and of the group's 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 group 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 or the group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the Financial Statements are authorised for issue.

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

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the Financial Statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the Financial Statements does not cover the other

information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- The information given in the Trustees' Report, which includes the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the Financial Statements are prepared is consistent with the Financial Statements; and
- The Strategic Report and the Directors' Report included within the Trustees' Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

- Adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept; or
- The Financial Statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 43, 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.

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

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

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

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

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company and group operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the Financial Statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, together with the Charities SORP (FRS 102). We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

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

managers, Ofsted, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), taxation legislation and employment legislation.

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

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the Financial Statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management and the finance, audit, investment and risk committee (FAIR) about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases, reviewing regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission and Ofsted, and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. 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.



Tara Westcott

Partner, Social Purpose and Non Profits
For and on behalf of
Crowe U.K. LLP
Statutory Auditor
4th Floor
St James House
St James' Square
Cheltenham
GL50 3PR

Date: 26 February 2026

National Star Foundation

Consolidated statement of financial activities

(Incorporating an income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 August 2025)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	844,026	704,595	1,548,621	821,858
Charitable activities	4				
Education and therapy		37,917,891	–	37,917,891	33,642,613
Long-term accommodation		5,681,581	–	5,681,581	4,609,559
Respite services		2,088,467	–	2,088,467	1,734,979
Other charitable activities		732,268	–	732,268	808,405
Other trading activities					
NSF Trading Limited – Trading activities	2a	148,764	–	148,764	134,610
Retail income – Charity shops		1,036,421	–	1,036,421	727,449
Investment income		231,127	–	231,127	275,073
Other income	5	210,572	–	210,572	289,738
Total income		48,891,117	704,595	49,595,712	43,044,284
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds – Fundraising	6	344,440	–	344,440	321,768
Raising Funds – Charity shops	6	773,095	–	773,095	532,533
Charitable activities	6	45,826,326	55,491	45,881,817	40,792,260
Other trading activities					
NSF Trading Limited	6	56,618	–	56,618	59,145
NSF Design and Build Limited	6	4,285	–	4,285	8,431
Total expenditure		47,004,764	55,491	47,060,255	41,714,137
Net income before gains on investments		1,886,353	649,104	2,535,457	1,330,147
Net gains on investments	11	326,524	–	326,524	492,027
Net income		2,212,877	649,104	2,861,981	1,822,174
Transfer between funds	15	2,425,606	(2,425,606)	–	–
Net movement in funds		4,638,483	(1,776,502)	2,861,981	1,822,174
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds at 1 September 2024	15/16	35,608,788	2,172,184	37,780,972	35,958,798
Total funds at 31 August 2025	15/16	40,247,271	395,682	40,642,953	37,780,972

The notes on pages 50 to 66 form part of these Financial Statements.

National Star Foundation

Consolidated balance sheet

As at 31 August 2025

Company Number: 00522846

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10a	32,151,960	30,548,073
Investments	11	4,116,140	3,789,616
		36,268,100	34,337,689
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	12	2,002,871	2,322,737
Cash at bank and in hand		7,957,837	6,524,786
		9,960,708	8,847,523
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(5,585,855)	(5,404,240)
		4,374,853	3,443,283
Net current assets			
		40,642,953	37,780,972
Total net assets			
The funds of the group			
Restricted funds	15	395,682	2,172,184
Unrestricted funds	16	40,247,271	35,608,788
Total group funds		40,642,953	37,780,972

The Financial Statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 24th February 2026 and were signed on its behalf by:



Nick Grinham
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 50 to 66 form part of these Financial Statements.

National Star Foundation

Charity balance sheet

As at 31 August 2025

Company Number: 00522846

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10b	32,636,508	31,010,619
Investments	11	4,116,241	3,789,717
		36,752,749	34,800,336
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	12	2,274,565	2,408,050
Cash at bank and in hand		7,649,160	6,321,472
		9,923,725	8,729,522
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(5,548,973)	(5,286,340)
		4,374,752	3,443,182
Net current assets			
		41,127,501	38,243,518
Total net assets			
The funds of the charity			
Restricted funds	15	395,682	2,172,184
Unrestricted funds	16	40,731,819	36,071,334
Total charity funds		41,127,501	38,243,518

These Financial Statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 24th February 2026 and were signed on its behalf by:



Nick Grinham
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 50 to 66 form part of these Financial Statements.

National Star Foundation

Consolidated statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 August 2025

Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities	2025 £	2024 £
Net income for the reporting period	2,861,981	1,822,174
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	1,857,485	1,591,988
Bank interest received	(231,127)	(275,073)
Unrealised gain on investments	(326,524)	(492,027)
Gain on sale of tangible fixed assets	(141,546)	(275,362)
Decrease / (Increase) in debtors	319,866	(564,046)
Increase in creditors	181,615	163,561
Net cash provided by operating activities	4,521,750	1,971,215
Cash flows from investing activities		
Bank interest received	231,127	275,073
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets	143,416	978,506
Purchase of fixed assets	(3,463,242)	(1,763,147)
Net cash used in investing activities	(3,088,699)	(509,568)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	1,433,051	1,461,647
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	6,524,786	5,063,139
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	7,957,837	6,524,786
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	7,957,837	6,524,786
	7,957,837	6,524,786

The notes on pages 50 to 66 form part of these Financial Statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies

Statutory Information

National Star Foundation is a registered charity (charity number: 220239) and private company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales (company number: 00522846) on 20 August 1953. The address of its registered office is Ullenwood Manor, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9QU. This is also the registered address of NSF Trading Limited and NSF Design & Build Limited.

The Financial Statements are presented in Sterling (£), the group's functional currency, and rounded to the nearest pound.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these Financial Statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

Basis of preparing the Financial Statements

The consolidated 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 UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The Financial Statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

National Star Foundation meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

There have been no material departures from Financial Reporting Standard 102.

Going concern

The trustees have reviewed the position carefully with a view to ensuring the ongoing provision of care for the students and residents as well as employment of staff. The charity currently holds significant cash balances and demand for places remains strong for the academic year 2025 – 2026 and beyond. Conservative cash flow modelling with sensitivity analysis indicates that the cash reserves of the charity are adequate to meet the charity's obligations as they fall due. Accordingly, the trustees believe that

financial resources are sufficient to ensure the charity will continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future, being at least 12 months from the date of approval of the Financial Statements and are therefore satisfied that it is appropriate for the Financial Statements to be prepared on a going concern basis.

Consolidated Financial Statements

The Financial Statements consolidate the charity and its subsidiary undertakings NSF Design & Build Limited and NSF Trading Limited to 31 August 2025. The results of each subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption available to a qualifying entity in FRS 102 from the requirement to present a charity only Statement of Cash Flows and certain disclosures about the charity's financial instruments within the consolidated Financial Statements.

No separate Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) has been prepared for the charity alone as permitted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

Fund accounting

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

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the Financial Statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors. The aims of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the Financial Statements.

Income

All income is included in the SOFA when the group has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations and gifts represent amounts receivable during the year, together with any associated tax refund and do not include the value of any pledges secured for future donations.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

Income from charitable activities are accounted for in the SOFA in the year in which the service is provided. Where income is received in advance of the charity having entitlement to the fund the income is deferred.

Grants (including government grants) are included in the Financial Statements on an entitlement basis. The balance of income received for a specific purpose but not expended in the year is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

All capital grants received are recognised in the SOFA and credited to a separate restricted fund where there are restrictions on the future use of the fund. Any depreciation charged on that element of the cost of assets funded by grants is charged to restricted funds.

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis.

Expenditure

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. Expenditure on raising funds include all fundraising, financing and trading costs of the subsidiaries.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Overheads and other costs not directly attributable to particular functional activity categories are apportioned over the relevant categories on the basis of management estimates of the amount attributable to that activity in the year on a basis consistent with use of the resources. The irrecoverable element of VAT is included with the item of expense to which it relates.

Governance costs are included within support costs and include strategic planning costs for the charity's future development, external audit and all costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements, such as costs of Board and Committee meetings and for preparing statutory Financial Statements and satisfying public accountability.

Pension costs

The group contributes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme at the advised rates. As it is not possible to separately identify the assets and liabilities of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, it is accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The charity's contributions to the scheme are charged in the Financial Statements as they accrue.

With regard to non-teaching employees, contributions are made to the charity's defined contribution pension scheme. All contributions are charged to the SOFA as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the schemes.

Tangible fixed assets

All expenditure above £500 for ICT and £1,000 for all other assets for the acquisition, enhancement, production and installation of fixed assets and all fixed assets received by way of donation are capitalised. Tangible fixed assets are stated in the Balance Sheet at cost less depreciation and impairment, or at estimated value at date of donation less depreciation in respect of donated assets.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost or valuation less estimated residual value of tangible assets over their estimated useful lives at the following rates:

Freehold land	Not depreciated
Freehold buildings	2% – 10%
Leasehold property improvements	20% (or over the lease term)
Fixtures and equipment	10% – 20%
ICT	10% – 25%
Motor vehicles	10% – 25%

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the Balance Sheet date. All gains and losses relating to investments are accounted for in the SOFA. Investments in subsidiaries are held at cost.

Debtors

Short-term debtors are initially measured at the settlement price, less any impairment. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions with a short maturity of three months or less.

Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Short-term creditors are initially measured at the settlement amount.

Financial instruments

National Star Foundation only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the SOFA on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Taxation

National Star Foundation is a registered charity, and as such is entitled to tax exemptions on all its income and gains, properly applied for its charitable purposes.

Judgements in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The items in the Financial Statements where these estimates and judgements have been made include the following:

Useful economic lives of tangible assets

The annual depreciation charges for the tangible assets are sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets.

Useful economic lives of intangible assets

Intangible assets are stated at their historical cost and amortised on a straight-line basis over their expected useful economic lives. The useful economic lives and residual values are reassessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on economic utilisation associated with the specific asset. Intangible assets are derecognised on disposal or when no future economic benefits are expected from their use. Intangible assets include software purchased from third parties and related software implementation costs.

Impairment of debtors

The group makes an estimate of the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. When assessing impairment of trade and other debtors, management considers factors including the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtors and historical experience.

Income provision

The charity has a provision for some elements of income in relation to learners and service users who left through the year or were absent for part of the year. When assessing the level of provision required, the charity has considered levels of fee income, services provided, availability of placement and pattern of attendance, as well as relevant funding guidance.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

2. Results of subsidiaries

a) NSF Trading Limited

The charity owns 100% of NSF Trading Limited (company registration number: 01168043), which predominantly lets out the National Star Foundation facilities and undertakes the charity's trading activities. It has a signed ordinary resolution to Gift Aid its taxable profits to the charity. Its trading results, extracted from its audited Financial Statements, were:

	2025 £	2024 £
Turnover	148,764	134,610
Cost of sales	(50,177)	(55,414)
Gross profit	98,587	79,196
Administrative expenses	(17,887)	(13,614)
Operating profit	80,700	65,582
Taxation	-	-
Profit after taxation	80,700	65,582
Retained earnings at start of period	-	-
Gift Aid donation to National Star Foundation	(80,700)	(65,582)
Retained earnings at end of period	-	-
Reserves		
Profit and loss reserves	-	-
Share capital	100	100
Shareholder's funds	100	100

The trading company made a Gift Aid donation of £80,700 (2024: £65,582) to the charity within nine months of the year end, with the result that it has a £nil annual corporation tax liability.

b) NSF Design and Build Limited

The charity owns 100% of NSF Design & Build Limited (company registration number: 08628807), which was set up to manage capital projects on behalf of National Star Foundation. It has a signed ordinary resolution to Gift Aid its taxable profits to the charity. Its trading results, extracted from its audited Financial Statements, were:

	2025 £	2024 £
Turnover	776,006	322,611
Cost of sales	(754,004)	(313,215)
Gross profit	22,002	9,396
Administrative expenses	(8,842)	(8,431)
Operating profit	13,160	965
Taxation	-	-
Profit after taxation	13,160	965
Retained earnings at start of period	-	-
Gift Aid donation to National Star Foundation	(13,160)	(965)
Retained earnings at end of period	-	-
Reserves		
Profit and loss reserves	-	-
Share capital	1	1
Shareholder's funds	1	1

The trading company made a Gift Aid donation of £13,160 (2024: £965) to the charity within nine months of the year end, with the result that it has a £nil annual corporation tax liability.

All turnover of NSF Design & Build Limited represents group-based sales, eliminated on consolidation.

3. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
Donations	361,448	704,595	1,066,043	731,329
Legacies	458,101	-	458,101	68,598
Other voluntary income	24,477	-	24,477	21,931
	844,026	704,595	1,548,621	821,858

£474,104 of income from donations in the prior year related to restricted funds. All other income from donations and legacies in the prior year related to unrestricted funds.

Included within donations is an amount of £120,780 (2024: £108,796) relating to gifts in kind, comprising advertising credits to increase online visibility, a motor vehicle and various ITC equipment supplies.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

4. Income from charitable activities

The following grants from The Department for Education (DfE) are included within education and therapy income:

	2025 £	2024 £
School Condition Allocations (SCA)	165,409	156,094
Teachers' Pension employer contribution grant	305,362	201,317

There were no unfulfilled conditions or other contingencies attached to these grants.

Other Charitable activities income of £732,268 (2024: £808,405) arises from a range of activities undertaken during the year, key sources are as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
LiftTraining	75,000	82,125
StarBistro – social enterprise	140,135	126,359
StarShop and student shops	37,443	40,499
Teacher Education	111,053	80,255
Re-education / additional therapy services	176,010	175,388

During this financial year, a presentational change has been made to the income and expenditure reported in the Statement of Financial Activities. The change has improved clarity and transparency of the charitable activities undertaken by the organisation.

5. Other income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	141,546	–	141,546	275,362
Other income	69,026	–	69,026	14,376
	210,572	–	210,572	289,738

All other income in the prior year related to unrestricted funds.

6. Analysis of expenditure

	Staff costs £	Other costs £	Depreciation £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Charitable activities					
Teaching and welfare	32,771,617	1,419,344	1,442,337	35,633,298	31,637,837
Premises	991,946	2,708,996	156,140	3,857,082	3,902,355
Support costs	3,565,818	2,566,611	259,008	6,391,437	5,252,068
	37,329,381	6,694,951	1,857,485	45,881,817	40,792,260
Raising funds					
Fundraising	171,697	172,743	–	344,440	321,768
Retail shops	447,579	325,516	–	773,095	532,533
Other trading activities	40,890	20,013	–	60,903	67,576
	37,989,547	7,213,223	1,857,485	47,060,255	41,714,137

Included within support costs are the following governance costs:

	2025 £	2024 £
Auditor's remuneration (gross)		
– Statutory Audit	44,030	41,400
– ITC controls review	7,200	–
– Other non-audit services	11,948	6,318
Trustees' / directors' meeting costs	2,831	3,272
	66,009	50,990

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

7. Net income

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income is stated after charging / (crediting) the following:		
Depreciation	1,857,485	1,591,988
Auditor's remuneration (net)		
– audit	37,650	34,500
– Other non-audit services	10,723	5,265
– ITC controls review	6,000	–
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(141,546)	(275,362)
Operating lease payments		
– land and buildings	234,858	236,630
– Other	53,710	77,825

8. Employee costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	33,322,634	29,799,551
Social security costs	3,223,719	2,329,252
Other pension costs	1,443,194	1,193,050
	37,989,547	33,321,853

Included in the above are agency and subcontractor costs of £1,559,335 (2024: £2,189,516).

During the year, the trustees received £nil (2024: £nil) remuneration and no retirement benefits were accruing. No trustees received reimbursed expenses during the year (2024: £nil).

The average headcount of employees was:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Charitable activities	1,265	1,222
Cost of generating funds		
– fundraising office	4	4
	1,269	1,226

After taking account of part-time employees the annual full-time equivalent number was 980 (2024: 902).

During the year, the charity made redundancy / termination payments of £61,218 (2024: £10,299).

The number of employees who received annual equivalent emoluments (including benefits in kind of between £1,251 and £2,185 per person) in excess of £60,000 during the year were in the following bands:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£60,000 – £69,999	–	1
£70,000 – £79,999	5	6
£80,000 – £89,999	2	1
£90,000 – £99,999	1	1
£120,000 – £129,999	–	1
£130,000 – £139,999	1	1
£150,000 – £159,999	1	–

Three of the above employees participated in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. During the year ended 31 August 2025 employer contributions for these staff members amounted to £66,579 (2024: Four employees £78,904). The other seven employees participated in the defined contribution pension scheme – total employer contributions for these staff members amounted to £65,054 (2024: Seven employees £58,823).

The remuneration of key management personnel for the group was:

	2025 £	2024 £
Total key management personnel remuneration	485,446	536,069

Key management personnel are defined as the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Operations Officer / Principal (until October 2024) and Chief People Officer. The remuneration figure includes gross salary, employer's National Insurance, employer's pension and benefits in kind.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

9. Individual profit and loss account

As permitted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006, the profit and loss account of the parent company is not presented as part of these Financial Statements.

The total income of the parent charitable company was £49,556,811 and net income, after accounting for a gain on investments of £326,524, was £2,883,983.

10a. Tangible fixed assets – group

	Freehold land and buildings £	Assets under construction £	Leasehold property improvements £	Motor vehicles £	Fixtures and equipment £	Total £
Cost						
At 1 September 2024	42,058,394	305,462	356,545	1,198,321	4,536,897	48,455,619
Additions	2,522,947	–	204,967	143,532	591,796	3,463,242
Disposals	(40,469)	–	–	(164,682)	(21,264)	(226,415)
Transfers	305,462	(305,462)	–	–	–	–
At 31 August 2025	44,846,334	–	561,512	1,177,171	5,107,429	51,692,446
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2024	13,759,665	–	232,716	869,083	3,046,082	17,907,546
Disposals	(40,382)	–	–	(163,388)	(20,775)	(224,545)
Charge for the period	1,257,262	–	49,849	74,638	475,736	1,857,485
At 31 August 2025	14,976,545	–	282,565	780,333	3,501,043	19,540,486
Net Book Value						
At 31 August 2025	29,869,789	–	278,947	396,838	1,606,386	32,151,960
At 31 August 2024	28,298,729	305,462	123,829	329,238	1,490,815	30,548,073

Included in the above within Fixtures and Equipment at cost is £443,036 (2024: £315,652) of Intangible software assets with depreciation charged on these assets during the year of £46,771 (2024: £18,761).

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

10b. Tangible fixed assets – charity

	Freehold land and buildings £	Assets under construction £	Leasehold property improvements £	Motor vehicles £	Fixtures and equipment £	Total £
Cost						
At 1 September 2024	42,519,025	305,462	356,545	1,198,321	4,538,812	48,918,165
Additions	2,544,949	–	204,967	143,532	591,796	3,485,244
Disposals	(40,469)	–	–	(164,682)	(21,264)	(226,415)
Transfers	305,462	(305,462)	–	–	–	–
At 31 August 2025	45,328,967	–	561,512	1,177,171	5,109,344	52,176,994
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2024	13,759,665	–	232,716	869,083	3,046,082	17,907,546
Disposals	(40,382)	–	–	(163,388)	(20,775)	(224,545)
Charge for the period	1,257,262	–	49,849	74,638	475,736	1,857,485
At 31 August 2025	14,976,545	–	282,565	780,333	3,501,043	19,540,486
Net Book Value						
At 31 August 2025	30,352,422	–	278,947	396,838	1,608,301	32,636,508
At 31 August 2024	28,759,360	305,462	123,829	329,238	1,492,730	31,010,619

Included in the above within Fixtures and Equipment at cost is £443,036 (2024: £315,652) of Intangible software assets with depreciation charged on these assets during the year of £46,771 (2024: £18,761).

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

11. Investments – group and charity

Cost or valuation	Group listed investments £	Charity investment in subsidiary £	Charity total £
At 1 September 2024	3,789,616	101	3,789,717
Additions	–	–	–
Disposals	–	–	–
Unrealised gain	326,524	–	326,524
Net Book Value			
At 31 August 2025	4,116,140	101	4,116,241

The historical cost of listed investments at 31 August 2025 was £1,817,250 (2024: £1,817,250).

At 31 August 2025 the investments comprise accumulation units in CCLA COIF Charities Investment Fund of £1,182,098 (2024: £1,191,720), Schroder Charity Equity Value Fund of £1,620,217 (2024: £1,389,444), and St James's Place Wealth Management split into three separate investment funds; Diversified Bond £461,198 (2024: £435,380), Global Equity £326,599 (2024: £288,822) and Strategic Income £526,028 (2024: £484,250).

Such investments are primarily held to provide a return where monies are not required immediately for the charity's activities and form part of the charity's reserves policy.

Shares in Subsidiary

The charity holds 101 ordinary shares of £1 each representing 100% of the allocated share capital of NSF Trading Limited (100 shares) and NSF Design and Build Limited (1 share), both entities are incorporated in England and Wales. The value of the investments is the cost of £101.

12. Debtors – amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	1,131,244	1,459,511	1,127,815	1,457,651
VAT	13,896	24,476	14,867	8,451
Amount owed by subsidiary undertaking	–	–	276,084	105,172
Prepayments and accrued income	799,279	798,378	797,347	796,404
Other debtors	58,452	40,372	58,452	40,372
	2,002,871	2,322,737	2,274,565	2,408,050

Trade debtors are stated after impairment provision totalling £14,611 (2024: £15,621).

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

13. Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	1,242,727	1,478,144	1,242,727	1,374,766
Taxes and social security costs	790,734	585,595	790,734	585,595
Amount owed to subsidiary undertaking	–	–	–	156,815
Accruals	1,046,676	1,074,990	1,021,589	912,435
Deferred income	1,641,975	1,429,518	1,630,494	1,420,794
Pension	223,562	200,134	223,562	200,134
Other creditors	640,181	635,859	639,867	635,801
	5,585,855	5,404,240	5,548,973	5,286,340

Deferred income	£
Deferred income at 1 September 2024	1,429,518
Resources deferred in the year	1,641,975
Amounts released from previous years	(1,429,518)
Deferred income at 31 August 2025	1,641,975

Deferred income relates to monies received in advance of the period or events to which they relate, the vast majority of which relates to student funding for fees / equipment for 2025–2026 financial year.

14. Share capital

The charity does not have a share capital as it is limited by guarantee. Each of the members is a guarantor to the extent of £1 in the event of the charity being wound up whilst they are members, or within one year of them ceasing to be members in respect of debts and liabilities contracted before they ceased to be a member.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

15. Restricted funds

	<i>Balance at 1 September 2024 £</i>	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2025 £
Therapies Centre Star Appeal Development (Schroder Foundation – £50,000 September 2009)	34,917	–	–	(34,917)	–
Star Appeal / Development (The Henry Smith Charity – £125,000 May 2008 / £125,000 May 2011)	177,083	–	–	(177,083)	–
Cleeve Bungalow Residential Accommodation Project (Big Lottery Fund – £250,000 July 2006)	154,583	–	(5,000)	–	149,583
Education & Skills Funding Agency – Building Improvement Fund Capital Grant – Pittville Project (£2,209,746 2014–2015)	1,602,334	–	(28,620)	(1,573,714)	–
Committed Funds – various restricted gifts	103,267	219,804	(21,871)	(55,101)	246,099
Ledbury Road Hereford – various restricted gifts	100,000	484,791	–	(584,791)	–
	2,172,184	704,595	(55,491)	(2,425,606)	395,682

A number of the restricted funds detailed above relate to fundraised capital projects where the specified funder has required that the fund is separately noted and recorded.

Where a donation has been given and the asset is required to be held for a number of years, the fund has remained restricted and the appropriate depreciation has been charged against it accordingly.

As a result of timeline restrictions having been fulfilled and no further restrictions applying, the following fund transfers have been made to unrestricted funds this year:

- Therapies Centre Star Appeal Development £34,917
- Star Appeal / Development £177,083
- Education & Skills Funding Agency – Building Improvement Fund Pittville Project £1,573,714

In addition, the following transfers have also been made to unrestricted funds, representing restricted funding expensed on capital fixed asset purchases during the financial year:

- Committed funds £55,101
- Ledbury Road, Hereford £584,791

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

15. Restricted funds (continued)

Comparative disclosure for year ended 31 August 2024	<i>Balance at 1 September 2023</i> £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Therapies Centre Star Appeal Development (Schroder Foundation – £50,000 September 2009)	35,917	–	(1,000)	–	34,917
Star Appeal / Development (The Henry Smith Charity – £125,000 May 2008 / £125,000 May 2011)	182,083	–	(5,000)	–	177,083
Elizabeth House Residential Accommodation Project (Big Lottery Fund – £300,000 January 2000)	158,500	–	(158,500)	–	–
Cleeve Bungalow Residential Accommodation Project (Big Lottery Fund – £250,000 July 2006)	159,583	–	(5,000)	–	154,583
Education & Skills Funding Agency – Building Improvement Fund Capital Grant – Pittville Project (£2,209,746 2014–2015). The restriction ends in 2025.	1,661,525	–	(59,191)	–	1,602,334
Committed Funds – various restricted gifts	68,429	250,491	(111,850)	(103,803)	103,267
Ledbury Road Hereford – various other restricted gifts	5,000	223,000	–	(128,000)	100,000
Development Fund	–	613	–	(613)	–
	2,271,037	474,104	(340,541)	(232,416)	2,172,184

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

16. Unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 September 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and investment gains £	Balance at 31 August 2025 £
General unrestricted funds	31,878,893	48,742,353	(46,943,861)	3,666,545	37,343,930
Designated funds – future development	4,192,441	–	–	(804,552)	3,387,889
Charity funds	36,071,334	48,742,353	(46,943,861)	2,861,993	40,731,819
Non-charitable trading funds	–	148,764	(60,903)	(87,861)	–
Group Consolidation adjustments	(462,546)	–	–	(22,002)	(484,548)
Group funds	35,608,788	48,891,117	(47,004,764)	2,752,130	40,247,271

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and investment gains £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Comparative 2024					
General unrestricted funds	31,941,881	42,435,570	(41,306,020)	(1,192,537)	31,878,893
Designated Funds	2,201,147	–	–	1,991,294	4,192,441
Charity	34,143,028	42,435,570	(41,306,020)	798,756	36,071,334
Non-charitable trading funds	–	134,610	(67,576)	(67,034)	–
Consolidation adjustments	(455,267)	–	–	(7,279)	(462,546)
Group	33,687,761	42,570,180	(41,373,596)	724,443	35,608,788

Designated funds

The trustees have designated funds of £3,387,889 (2024: £4,192,441), representing:

	2025 £	2024 £
Future development at Ullenwood	3,387,889	2,605,228
Development at The Eveson Centre Hereford	–	499,034
369 Worcester Road, Malvern	–	8,179
Purchase of two properties adjoining the Ullenwood estate	–	1,080,000
	3,387,889	4,192,441

All designated funds, excluding the Future development at Ullenwood fund, were fully utilised during the financial year.

A transfer of £782,661 has been made to the Future development at Ullenwood fund, representing the trustees' decision to designate net unrestricted fundraising and net charity retail income for the 2024–2025 financial year towards the Phase 2 estates development plan.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

17. Analysis of net assets between funds of the group and charity

	Fixed Assets £	Investments £	Net Current Assets £	Long Term Liabilities £	Fund Balance £
Restricted funds	149,583	–	246,099	–	395,682
Designated funds	–	–	3,387,889	–	3,387,889
Unrestricted funds	32,486,925	4,116,241	740,764	–	37,343,930
Charity	32,636,508	4,116,241	4,374,752	–	41,127,501
Subsidiary's Reserves – NSF Trading Limited	–	(100)	100	–	–
Subsidiary's Reserves – NSF Design & Build Limited	–	(1)	1	–	–
Group consolidation adjustment	(484,548)	–	–	–	(484,548)
Group	32,151,960	4,116,140	4,374,853	–	40,642,953

Comparative 2024	Fixed assets £	Investments £	Net current Assets £	Long term liabilities £	Fund balances £
Restricted funds	1,968,917	–	203,267	–	2,172,184
Designated funds	–	–	4,192,441	–	4,192,441
Unrestricted funds	29,041,702	3,789,717	(952,526)	–	31,878,893
Charity	31,010,619	3,789,717	3,443,182	–	38,243,518
Subsidiary's Reserves – NSF Trading Limited	–	(100)	100	–	–
Subsidiary's Reserves – NSF Design and Build Limited	–	(1)	1	–	–
Consolidation	(462,546)	–	–	–	(462,546)
Group	30,548,073	3,789,616	3,443,283	–	37,780,972

18. Other financial commitments

At 31 August 2025 the group had future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

Commitment expiring:	Property £	Other £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Within one year	290,486	122,473	412,959	232,253
One to five years inclusive	635,992	260,267	896,259	370,500
More than 5 years	45,000	–	45,000	–
	971,478	382,740	1,354,218	602,753

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

19. Pension commitments

Defined contribution:

The group operates defined contribution schemes for its non-teaching employees. The assets are held separately from those of the charity in independently administered funds, and the amount charged to the SOFA was £693,122 (2024: £597,650). At the year-end there were outstanding contributions of £139,568 (2024: £124,033).

Defined benefit:

The group participates in the Teachers' Pension Scheme ("the TPS") for its teaching staff. The pension charge for the year includes contributions payable to the TPS of £750,072 (2024: £595,400) and at the year-end £83,994 (2024: £76,101) was accrued in respect of contributions to this scheme.

The TPS is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefits pension scheme governed by The Teachers' Pensions Regulations 2010 (as amended) and The Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014 (as amended). Members contribute on a 'pay as you go' basis with contributions from members and the employer being credited to the Exchequer. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

The employer contribution rate is set by the Secretary of State following scheme valuations undertaken by the Government Actuary's Department. The most recent actuarial valuation of the TPS was prepared as at 31 March 2020 and the Valuation Report was published in October 2023. The Valuation Report shows notional assets of £222.2bn and liabilities of £262bn, resulting in a scheme deficit of £39.8bn.

The employer contribution rate for the TPS is 28.6%, and employers are also required to pay a scheme administration levy of 0.08% giving a total employer contribution rate of 28.68%.

20. Capital commitments

At 31 August 2025 the group had capital commitments as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Land and buildings:		
Authorised not yet contracted for purchase of property – West Lodge	–	620,000
Purchase of property – 1 Ullenwood Farm Cottages	–	450,000
Authorised and contracted for – Dayforce HR System project	19,800	153,900
Authorised and contracted for – Eveson Centre, Hereford development	–	644,113

21. Related party transactions

The charity has two wholly owned subsidiary companies – NSF Trading Limited and NSF Design & Build Limited.

During the year a management charge was made by National Star Foundation to NSF Trading Limited of £11,446 (2024: £9,884). At the end of the year Gift Aid of £80,700 (2024: £65,582) was payable by NSF Trading Limited to National Star Foundation. The total year-end balance owed to National Star Foundation was £168,826 (2024: £105,172).

During the year income was received by NSF Design & Build Limited from National Star Foundation of £776,006 (2024: £322,611), this related to recharged building costs plus fees. During the year loan interest was charged by National Star Foundation to NSF Design & Build Limited of £4,558 (2024: £5,243) in respect of an intercompany loan agreement. At the year-end Gift Aid of £13,160 (2024: £965) was payable by NSF Design & Build Limited to National Star Foundation. The total year-end balance owed to National Star Foundation was £107,259 (2024: owed from National Star Foundation £156,815).

During the prior year, January 2024, the charity purchased the freehold interest of 369 Worcester Road, Malvern at a value of £550,000, where it operates long-term residential care provision. The property had previously been occupied under a leasehold agreement. The Chair of Trustees, Paul Styles (until resignation April 2024) declared a related party interest in this transaction, as the property landlord and owner was a family relation. Mr Styles withdrew from all discussions and decisions in relation to the property acquisition.

Up until 30 June 2025 (and all of the prior year) the charity's Chief Executive Officer, Lynette Barrett, served on the board of Natspec (the membership association for organisations which offers specialist further education and training for learners with learning difficulties and / or disabilities aged 16 to 25) as its Chair, and also served on the board of The Education & Training Foundation (in her capacity as Chair of Natspec). National Star is a member organisation of Natspec and also provides services on behalf of The Education and Training Foundation.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

21. Related party transactions (continued)

The Heart of Worcestershire College, in partnership with National Star, offers specialist education to support young adults with disabilities in building independence and life skills. Launched in September 2024, under a partnership agreement, the project was recognised nationally for its collaboration and innovation. A trustee of National Star is also a governor of The Heart of Worcestershire College.

During the year, National Star received student fee income of £279,753 (2024: £Nil) from The Heart of Worcestershire College. The trustee withdrew from all discussions and decisions in relation to the partnership arrangement and decision making.

During the year, National Star incurred refreshment cost charges of £129 (2024: £Nil) payable to The Heart of Worcestershire College.

22. Agency arrangements

The parent charity acts as an agent in distributing 16–19 year olds bursary funds from the Department for Education (DfE). Payments received and subsequent disbursements are excluded from the Statement of Financial Activities as the charity does not have control over the charitable application of funds.

Summary of Bursary Account	2025 £	2024 £
At 1 September 2024	57,820	42,339
Bursary receipt for distribution	31,542	32,097
Bursary payments / clawbacks	(29,629)	(16,616)
At 31 August 2025	59,733	57,820

The year end balance is included within Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year – other creditors.

23. Financial instruments – group

	2025 £	2024 £
Financial assets		
Financial assets measured at fair value	4,116,140	3,789,616

Financial assets measured at fair value consist of investments.

24. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2024 £	Cash-flows £	New operating leases £	Other non-cash changes £	At 31 August 2025 £
Cash	6,524,786	1,433,051	–	–	7,957,837
Cash equivalents	–	–	–	–	–
Overdrafts	–	–	–	–	–
	6,524,786	1,433,051	–	–	7,957,837
Loans falling due within one year	–	–	–	–	–
Loans falling due after more than one year	–	–	–	–	–
Total	6,524,786	1,433,051	–	–	7,957,837

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2025

25. Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2024 (as originally reported)

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds £	Total Funds 2024 £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	347,754	474,104	821,858
Charitable activities			
Student fees	30,708,548	–	30,708,548
Other charitable activities	9,702,284	–	9,702,284
ESFA capital grants	156,094	–	156,094
Teachers' Pension grant	201,317	–	201,317
Other trading activities			
Trading turnover – NSF Trading Limited	134,610	–	134,610
Investments	275,073	–	275,073
Other			
Other income	1,044,500	–	1,044,500
Total income	42,570,180	474,104	43,044,284
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	321,768	–	321,768
Charitable activities	40,984,252	340,541	41,324,793
Other expenditure:			
NSF Trading Limited	59,145	–	59,145
NSF Design and Build Limited	8,431	–	8,431
Total expenditure	41,373,596	340,541	41,714,137
Net income before gains on investments	1,196,584	133,563	1,330,147
Net gains on investments	492,027	–	492,027
Net income	1,688,611	133,563	1,822,174
Transfer between funds	232,416	(232,416)	–
Net movement in funds	1,921,027	(98,853)	1,822,174
Reconciliation of funds:			
Total funds at 1 September 2023	33,687,761	2,271,037	35,958,798
Total funds at 31 August 2024	35,608,788	2,172,184	37,780,972

Note: the presentational change completed in 2025 has not impacted the presentational split of restricted and unrestricted funds.

Administrative and legal details

National Star Foundation is a company ('the Company') limited by guarantee and a registered charity ('the Charity'). National Star Foundation is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association (as Incorporated 20 August 1953 and last amended 9 February 2023). It operates a wide range of activities and programmes in pursuance of its charitable purposes, the largest of which is the operation of National Star College ('the College'). It uses National Star as a working name and operates two subsidiary companies; NSF Trading Limited (company number 01168043) and NSF Design and Build Limited (company number 08628807), which form the group ('the Group').

Company number

00522846 in England and Wales

Charity number

220239

Registered office

Ullenwood Manor, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, GL53 9QU.

Auditor

Crowe U.K. LLP, 4th Floor, St. James House, St. James' Square, Cheltenham, GL50 3PR.

Bankers

HSBC Bank, 2 The Promenade, Cheltenham, GL50 1LR.

Solicitors

Veale Wasbrough Vizards, Narrow Quay House, Narrow Quay, Bristol.

Investment managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd, Cazenove Capital and St. James's Place Wealth Management.

John, age 40

Without National Star...

“John would never have been able to come to the wedding without the help of the Matrixcare team.”

John's brother Mark

When long-term resident John was invited to be part of his brother's wedding, the National Star team was determined to ensure it happened.

John, who lives at Matrixcare in Malvern, one of National Star's long-term care residences, sometimes struggles with transitioning to new environments and getting out of the house can be a challenge. He often responds well to a fresh face so one of the care team who is popular with John 'popped in' on the morning of the wedding to get John off the sofa and out the door.

The National Star team helped John travel to the venue and get ready, then supported him during the ceremony and stayed overnight in the hotel before returning back to Matrixcare.

The wedding was the first time that John had met members of his sister-in-law's wider family. He loved the party after the wedding and danced the night away with his brother Mark.

'It was touch and go whether John would come to the wedding but with help from the Matrixcare team, it happened! It made the day so special to have him there,' said John's brother Mark.

The bride and groom, Leanne and Mark, who live in Nottinghamshire, were keen to have John attend their wedding as a Groomsman so they organised their wedding breakfast to take place in Ledbury.

John's mum Maria said: 'It was extra-special for me especially as John and Mark lost their dad during Covid. Mark and I cannot thank the Matrixcare team enough.'



Together we can build a brighter future

At National Star we passionately believe that young people with disabilities have a right to live meaningful and fulfilling lives. Our teams of specialist experts work hard to ensure these young people have the best preparation for adulthood.

We can't do that without your help. National Star has not received government funding for capital development projects for more than a decade. Whilst most of our services are largely funded through statutory sources, we are dependent on our fundraising and other income generation activities to help pay for our specialist facilities and to enhance the experiences of the young adults with us.

Thanks to your support, in September 2025 we opened the new extension of The Eveson Centre, our education and therapy centre in Hereford. Now we will be able to support more young people in Herefordshire and beyond.

There is so much more to do. Help us ensure young adults with disabilities get the support and opportunities to develop their potential.



Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9QU

Email enquiries@nationalstar.org

Tel 01242 527631



www.nationalstar.org



National Star

Realising the aspirations
of people with disabilities

National Star is a working name of National Star Foundation which is registered in England and Wales, company number 00522846, charity number 220239. Registered office Ullenwood Manor, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9QU