

ANNUAL REVIEW 2005



## Our mission

Charities Evaluation Services exists to increase the effectiveness of the voluntary and community sector by developing its use of evaluation and quality systems.

## With thanks to our funders

We would like to thank our funders for their support and encouragement:

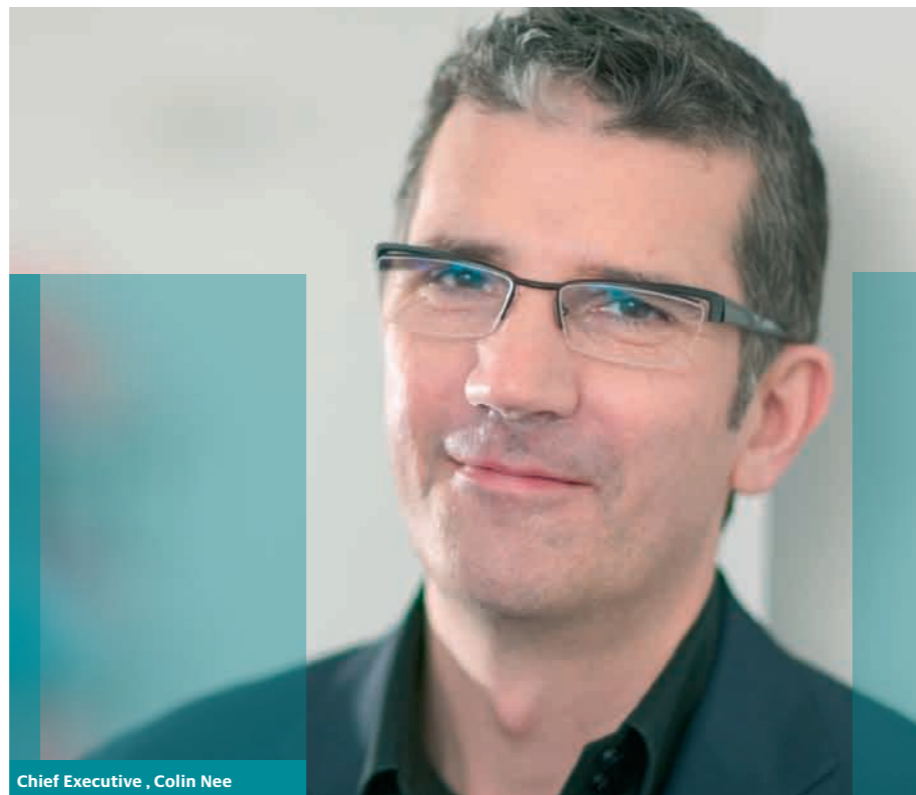
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The Lloyds TSB Foundation for England & Wales  
The Office of the Third Sector, the Cabinet Office  
The Wates Foundation

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“Your guides are fantastic! First Steps in Monitoring and Evaluation in particular is pitched at exactly the right level of understanding.”

A New Zealand-based funder



Chief Executive, Colin Nee

# Helping to shape the new landscape

## 2005 was a critical year for the voluntary and community sector.

Government policy continued to promote the sector as a key partner in enhancing the quality of public services – challenging historical demarcations about who provides what. Legislation to modernise the legal framework for charities was reintroduced to Parliament, and new organisational structures and services began to be established under the ChangeUp programme to improve the infrastructure support available to the sector’s frontline.

For CES, responding strategically to this new environment meant drawing on 15 years’ experience of supporting performance improvement to help shape the new landscape. We needed not only to adjust to new challenges but also to look beyond them – to foresee how the sector would change over the coming years and how our services needed to evolve in response.

## Looking back... meeting objectives

Virtually all our strategic objectives set for the three-year period to the end of 2005 have been carried through. Some achievements include:

- training 4,000 individuals from a hugely diverse range of voluntary organisations, helping them to improve their effectiveness and quality – our feedback and outcomes data regularly confirmed this
- carrying out scores of external evaluations and other consultancies – many of these brought important new learning into CES which could be re-purposed as tools and approaches for the sector at large
- distributing 10,000 publications on evaluation and quality and 4,000 copies of PQASSO, the quality system created specifically for small organisations and projects

- exceeding all targets in our national outcomes programme. According to independent evaluators: “Feedback from participants indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the programme overall”
- playing a leading role within ChangeUp and especially the national performance hub which we co-lead
- enhancing CES’ financial strength and sustainability.

## Looking forward... consolidation, continuity, challenge and change

Over the next three years, the challenge for CES is to find affordable ways to respond to a growing diversity of need, disseminating our learning more effectively while maintaining our reach within key target groups. Such target audiences include voluntary and community organisations and support networks and the policy-makers who influence the environment within which these agencies operate.

Our environmental analysis and stakeholder input confirm that questions of whether and how service standards and effectiveness can be guaranteed are set to become increasingly dominant over the next few years. The sector is likely to face scrutiny as never before – from the public, from the media, from service users and funders but, most of all, from itself. Moreover it is clear that the sector is changing rapidly and its support needs on performance improvement approaches are diversifying as a result.

In light of this changing environment, we agreed a strategy to consolidate CES’ position as the sector’s lead expert body on evaluation and quality. Our intention is to embed quality assurance and outcomes-focused evaluation within the voluntary and community sector. We plan to undertake interlocking programmes targeted at:

- frontline voluntary and community organisations
- sector infrastructure organisations and support networks
- policy-makers, regulators and funders.

## Our partners and supporters... endorsing the value of our work

We hope the following pages illustrate the value of CES’ work, all of which would be so much harder without the committed support of our trustees and associates, our project partners such as the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action, and the generosity of our funders. We look forward to your continued support over the coming years as CES’ unique range of services are needed more than ever before – helping voluntary and community organisations justify daily the unrivalled esteem in which they are held by communities across the country.

## Our strategy 2006 – 2008

### Frontline voluntary and community organisations

We aim to strengthen the sector by carrying out external evaluations, by developing new approaches to evaluation and by disseminating our learning through a range of different methods. These include training at basic and advanced levels, consultancy (such as developing evaluation frameworks and bespoke quality systems), and information in print and online.

### Sector infrastructure organisations and support networks

We aim to build the capacity of infrastructure support networks in monitoring and evaluation, quality and other performance improvement approaches.

We aim to work with a wide range of infrastructure organisations – both generic and specialist – at national, regional and local levels. Within these organisations, we will continue to target people who already deliver development work, training and support to frontline voluntary and community organisations.

We aim to provide them with:

- training
- resource materials
- ongoing mentoring
- opportunities for peer learning and support.

This package will help them increase the support that they offer to frontline organisations on organisational diagnosis, supporting performance improvement, monitoring outcomes and implementing PQASSO.

### Policy-makers, regulators and funders

We aim to stimulate a positive environment by influencing a range of policy-makers at all levels. The environment within which frontline organisations and infrastructure networks operate has a huge influence on the degree to which they can assimilate and share learning about how to improve effectiveness and quality.

We aim to use our policy ‘voice’ in two ways: to broaden policy-makers’ understanding of practical methods to improve quality and effectiveness and, through our dissemination activities, to convert policy objectives into lasting changes in practice.

### New services... blueprint for innovation and expansion

We aim to develop new services which will include:

- a ‘kite mark’ for PQASSO assessed through peer review
- a third edition of PQASSO in 2008
- a managed national network of outcomes champions
- a managed national network of local performance mentors through the national performance hub partnership
- enhanced information and a policy voice.

## Creating powerful tools for change

### Our services in 2005

As a medium-sized charity, Charities Evaluation Services understands the needs of, and demands on, the organisations we work with.

CES offers unbiased, pragmatic and practical advice and support on evaluation and quality. These services help voluntary and community organisations of all sizes to increase their effectiveness in meeting the needs of their users. Our work is carefully tailored to reflect this approach.

We offer a wide range of services:

- training in self-evaluation and quality assurance
- consultancy, research and external evaluations
- PQASSO, our practical quality system for small voluntary organisations – the leading quality system in use in the sector
- mentoring programmes for infrastructure organisations
- a wide variety of publications
- free advice, customised information packages, assessment and referral
- free technical coaching for small organisations
- occasional free customised training programmes for small community organisations which serve marginalised communities
- a range of services through the ChangeUp national performance hub in partnership with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
- promoting and disseminating research and good practice.

Organisations often need support to find out not only what is working well but also to identify areas which may benefit from change or improvement. Facing

these challenges can be daunting. However, if done well, organisations are left with powerful tools to:

- review and assess progress
- negotiate and communicate with funders
- motivate and engage staff and volunteers.

The training and support which CES offers voluntary agencies enables them to put the right systems in place and to demonstrate that they are healthy, developing and learning organisations.

#### Training

Training is one of our core activities. All courses are designed to enable organisations to develop key skills in an environment that nurtures learning and information sharing. During 2005 we trained 1,345 participants from 803 organisations.

“The feedback from the event has been positive, and I wanted to comment to you directly on your training style, which was superb!”

Monitoring and evaluation course participant

“I was not sure what to expect but felt that the course was practical and challenging in equal measure.”

Monitoring and evaluation course participant

#### Outcomes interviews... assessing benefits and barriers to change

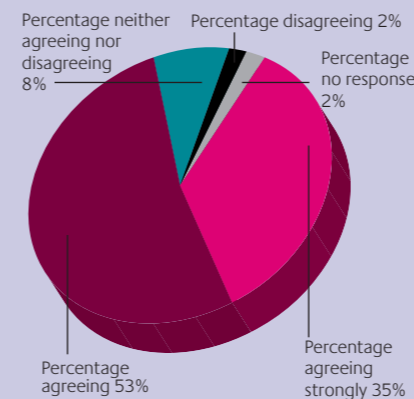
We carry out outcomes interviews with a sample of trainees about six months after they have received training to try and gauge whether and how our courses are making a difference. Our questions aim to assess changes – at both individual and organisational levels – in participants’ knowledge and understanding, and their confidence and ability to implement evaluation or quality systems. We are also interested in any factors, other than our training, that contributed to these changes or acted as barriers to implementation. Key findings include:

#### Benefits:

- 81% of trainees had already begun utilising their learning from the course to improve their evaluation or quality systems, or create new ones
- 79% of trainees were planning to share their learning from the course with colleagues in their own or other agencies
- 70% were re-thinking their service delivery and felt clearer about what they were doing, and why
- 33% felt that their services had already improved as a result of putting the course learning into practice.

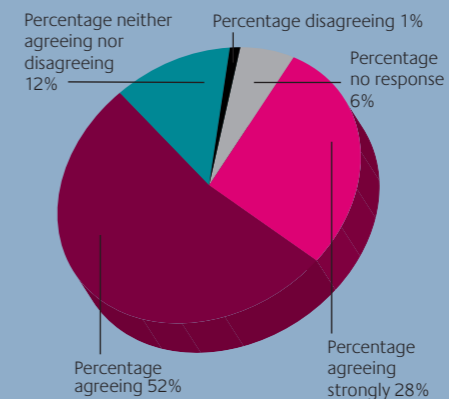
#### Confidence

Trainees were more confident about implementing an evaluation or quality system after training.



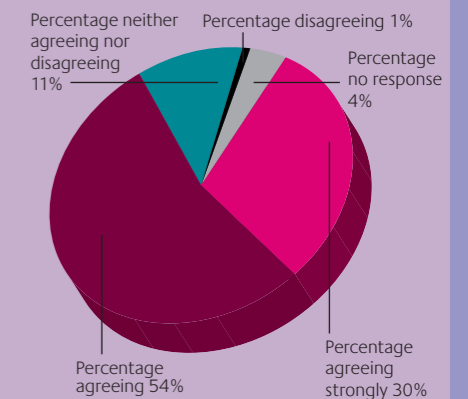
#### Effectiveness

Trainees felt the training would help their organisation to be even more effective in meeting users’ needs.



#### Service improvement

Trainees believed that the training would help them to improve their services.



#### Consultancy

Our consultancy work and external evaluations for voluntary organisations again brought benefits not just to those commissioning the work but increased our own capacity by bringing fresh learning and innovative methodologies into the organisation. We completed 12 external evaluations and consultancy projects, including an evaluation of the capacity building programme for organisations working with black and minority ethnic communities; the extensive piloting throughout the UK of a new quality assurance framework for the Home-Start network; and projects to develop outcomes evaluation frameworks for the Association of London Government, the

Citizenship Foundation, the British Heart Foundation, Coram Parents’ Centre and others.

#### Publications

Publications continue to be a vital tool for making information widely available. Over 3,000 copies of CES publications were sold or provided free of charge. In addition, there were over 10,000 free downloads of publications from the CES website.

## Building a stronger voluntary sector... the power of evaluation

### Improving services... evidence-based decision making

Every year, CES supports hundreds of organisations with evaluation. Our clients range from tiny frontline voluntary and community organisations to large charities, as well as sector funders and policy-makers.

Evaluation support is in two main areas: helping people with internal systems and carrying out external evaluations.

Our work on internal systems is supported by training and consultancy.

**Training**, open to all, is offered on a range of evaluation topics. Most of our courses can also be delivered at our clients' workplaces, a service always much in demand. Training ranges from basic, introductory courses, to more in-depth courses for people wanting to get a deeper understanding of the subject. To increase capacity and sustainability within the sector, we have run several national 'cascade' programmes, where we train sector trainers in evaluation and quality who, in turn, support grassroots organisations.



Trainer/Evaluator, Shehnaaz Latif

"I have found this course immensely useful in terms of developing project planning tools and frameworks – it will really help in presenting proposals to funders."

Monitoring and evaluation course participant

**Consultancy on internal systems** may involve a small amount of technical assistance. One example is support given over the phone to someone in the field who needs expert advice quickly on putting together a questionnaire. Consultancy on systems can also involve many days' work over a year or more. For example, we have recently helped a large charity in the Midlands to develop an outcomes monitoring system. This involved in-depth consultation with staff and users on outcomes and indicators, as well as developing and piloting tools.

Our **external evaluations** continue to provide our consultants with stimulating work. These are often for larger organisations, from a wide range of fields. An organisation may come to us with some evaluation questions, for example: "What are our outcomes?" or "What do our users think of our work?". We will then collect data from a range of sources to enable us to answer these questions.

Evaluation, whether internal or external, enables our clients to make decisions about how to provide the best services for clients, based on evidence. It also provides valuable data for reporting to funders.

"The space to apply our learning to our own projects was brilliant. All too often we have to work on case studies in training but this was a refreshing change."

Monitoring and evaluation course participant

### Monitoring and evaluation... the important role of IT

Much of our current work in helping organisations set up monitoring and evaluation systems now touches on information technology. Capacity building in monitoring and evaluation inevitably raises capacity issues in other related areas, such as strategic planning. Perhaps the biggest stumbling block for many of our clients is IT.

Learning how to collect useful outcomes data regularly is relatively straightforward. However, managing and using the data usually requires IT and is more of a challenge. IT is particularly important in outcomes work, which often involves tracking change over time, and is usually linked to presenting needs and services offered.

Our work in this area shows that voluntary and community organisations may need to think strategically about their systems before implementing anything new which may have IT implications, such as an outcomes system. Taking a critical look at the organisation's IT capacity and systems will avoid costly mistakes and make best use of resources. Looking strategically at IT may include assessing:

- whether the relevant people have access to a computer and the internet
- whether staff have the right skills
- whether data are kept securely – this includes issues about access to data and protecting the system from viruses
- whether the organisation has IT support
- whether the organisation has any special reporting requirements
- whether there is a budget available to support new developments.

Because our work on monitoring and evaluation systems now includes reference to IT, we involve technical specialists on the team, when appropriate, to make sure we offer clients a holistic approach. This enables them to make the best use of the monitoring and evaluation data they collect.

### Asthma UK... focusing on outcomes for service users

CES worked with the managers and directors of Asthma UK – a large, national, health charity – as they prepared to enter the second year of their five-year strategic plan.

The work took place over a two-month period and comprised training and support with developing outcome frameworks for the various teams within the organisation – some of whom were concerned with internal issues, for example fundraising, and others on external matters such as exercise events. After the training day in March, attendees were asked to prepare draft outcome frameworks and submit these to the CES Trainer/Evaluator. Feedback on these formed part of the follow-up workshop.

### Understanding outcomes

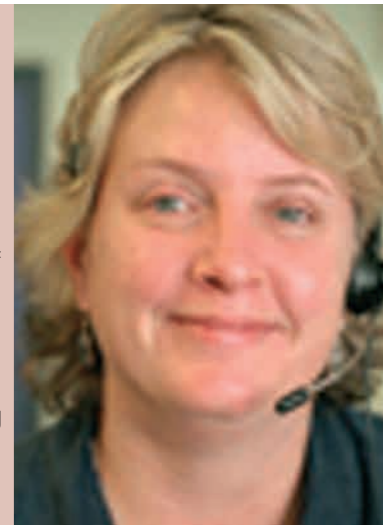
The first step was 'about getting people to understand outcomes – very basic but very important.' Feeding back on the training, the client found that knowledge and understanding about outcomes had 'increased for all'. Most significantly, she said that 'people understand the difference between outputs and outcomes' now and also realise that 'outcome monitoring can reveal unintended outcomes' which was a 'bit alarming!'

This was not an easy process however: 'sometimes people are reticent. The trainer was persistent, clear and confident in her delivery.'

### And beyond...

We have often found in our work at CES that our training and follow-up work are just the beginning of a journey and that, as Asthma UK mentioned: 'it's the momentum afterwards that doesn't happen by itself – you need a champion or clear processes – ideally, both.'

As a result of CES' involvement, Asthma UK said that they 'are in the process of implementing outcome monitoring across the charity with an estimated timeline of October 2006. Much of our work is now articulated in an outcome framework. We focus on outcomes more in how we structure and report on our plans. At our conference last year, we talked about revising our physical activity manifesto which we are doing so that it is more about the person and their quality of life than about asthma'.



## Supporting quality and continuous improvement

### External requirements for validation and accreditation... and motivation from within the sector.

There has been a massive increase in interest in quality across the voluntary sector over the past 10 years. Some of the impetus has come from external bodies but much of the motivation has come from within the sector.

CES provides consultancy, training, advice and information on a range of quality approaches in use within the sector. We have also created our own system – PQASSO – the practical quality assurance system for small organisations. As the leading off-the-shelf approach to quality, we have sold over 10,000 copies of PQASSO to voluntary and community organisations of all sizes.

CES also offers support to develop bespoke standards for membership and umbrella organisations: some examples include Home-Start, YMCA England and the Prison Advice and Care Trust. Our work with these organisations helped

them define an agreed standard of service provision and a method of assessing achievement.

The climate in which voluntary and community organisations find themselves appears to be changing and the requirement for quality to be externally validated or accredited is increasing. More and more funders require a 'kite mark' or badge of some sort from organisations as an assurance that they are providing quality services.

Increasingly, we provide information and guidance on the different options for assessing compliance with quality standards. We work with organisations throughout the whole process from set-up to implementation. Our work with National Relate and Home-Start helped both organisations to establish a sustainable and cost-effective internal quality assessment process for their centres across the UK.

### The PQASSO kite mark... peer review pilot

CES is currently piloting an external certification service for PQASSO through peer review. Following a lengthy consultation phase we are responding to requests from users to establish a 'kite mark' service linked to PQASSO.

Accrediting PQASSO users through peer review is a process in which a small team of people from within the voluntary and community sector carries out an assessment of how well an organisation meets the PQASSO requirements.

As a form of external assessment, a PQASSO peer review has the following distinguishing features:

- there is mutual learning for both parties
- the learning from the process stays within the sector
- it facilitates sharing of good practice.

For the pilot, we trained 13 peer reviewers to carry out reviews of six voluntary and community organisations. Working in teams of two, the reviewers' task was to identify whether the organisation met the requirements of a particular level of PQASSO.

CES still strongly supports the value and benefits of using self-assessment as a tool to identify improvements internally. Having carried out an effective self-assessment, organisations need to decide for themselves whether they feel they would gain added value from the PQASSO peer review process.

### East Kent Cyrenians and the EFQM Excellence Model®

The EFQM Excellence Model is a model of good practice that covers all aspects of an organisation. It has nine criteria covering both what people do (enablers) and what they achieve (results) and good links are made between them.

East Kent Cyrenians provides accommodation and support for single homeless and vulnerable people in East Kent. It currently manages 14 accommodation-based projects and works on the streets directly with homeless people.

### The EFQM Excellence Model... tailored to fit the organisation

Together with its work on Supporting People (a major government-led programme for housing-related support providers) and other quality measures, the organisation decided to introduce the Excellence Model.

With CES' consultancy input, the model was tailored to the work of the organisation and fitted in well with the changing external environment. CES began by providing two days' training to the senior management team. We produced workbooks to help identify strengths and areas for improvement for the group to take away and complete. A quality team was then set up that included a diverse selection of staff from across the organisation and, with our assistance, an improvement plan was developed which grew out of the process to identify areas for improvement. The organisation is currently working on implementing these action points.

### Benefits of the model... encouraging and managing change

The benefits of using the model identified by East Kent Cyrenians have been:

- to enhance the work that the organisation does and to increase its confidence in the work
- to involve everyone in improvements – all staff are free to contribute their ideas and there is a real buzz about quality in the organisation
- to improve staff communication.

The model is used to encourage and manage change. Some of the changes it has triggered so far include:

- social results – a more measured approach to environmental responsibilities
- customer results – offering opening times that are more user-friendly
- partnerships and resource assessment – a thorough review of office space from an ergonomic perspective and the introduction of new office equipment, and a robust health and safety and risk assessment policy.

### Looking to the future... best possible service delivery

East Kent Cyrenians hope the model will continue to guide its work on delivering the best possible service to its users in several areas:

- **people** – a review of staff recognition and rewards
- **key performance results** – a review of these and a better grasp of incremental improvements
- **partnerships** – exploring the potential to benchmark with other organisations
- **fresh thinking** – changing the membership of the quality team to introduce new perspectives.



Staff from Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council celebrate their purchase of the 10,000th copy of PQASSO



A very useful addition to my knowledge of quality assurance systems, helping to strengthen my skills in supporting the implementation of PQASSO as a 'preferred option' for many of the groups I work with."

PQASSO mentors' course participant

## The National outcomes programme... CES' flagship cascade project

**'Highly commended' in the UK charity awards, CES' pioneering cascade project continues to generate excitement in the voluntary sector.**

2005 saw our national outcomes programme enter the final year of its current phase. Using a 'cascade' or 'train the trainer' approach, the programme involves CES training scores of 'outcomes champions' based in local infrastructure networks to enable them to train hundreds of grassroots organisations in tracking the outcomes of their work.

As the programme drew to a close, it continued to receive critical acclaim. It was originally developed as a response to the growing need for voluntary and community organisations to adopt an outcomes approach in the way they planned, monitored and delivered their services.

"I was one of the outcomes champions on the CES project. We found the whole experience extremely positive. The training provided by CES was excellent, as was the material that they provided us with to train others. We now put the course on as fee paying to our members and are getting very good feedback. We found the payment made by CES did not cover our costs, however the learning and development gained far outweighed this. Finally, we found both the project and training staff at CES to be helpful, efficient and professional... a very welcome change!"

Outcomes champion from CES' national outcomes programme

Using the cascade model, the target was to train 60 highly skilled workers in the field of outcomes management. Each of them would then deliver outcomes training to frontline organisations, contributing to a target of 600 organisations receiving training by the end of the programme. These targets have now been exceeded, with 74 trained outcomes champions who have delivered training to 800 organisations.

We now look forward to building on these successes. The programme has achieved much – but there is still a lot more to do!

"Once again, thank you for an excellent, well thought-out course."

Outcomes champion from CES' national outcomes programme

### Delivering outcomes training... tried and tested approach

Bhupendra Solanki is the Community Development Manager at Croydon Voluntary Action. He completed his training as an outcomes champion in September 2005.

"We have a membership of 700 in the Croydon area, ranging from small voluntary and community organisations to branches of larger national organisations like Mencap and Barnardo's. Our main target is the smaller organisation – and I would say that 70% of our work is with these smaller and mostly black and minority ethnic organisations.

For me, the national outcomes programme has complemented my previous learning around business planning, monitoring and evaluation. It's another tool to add to my existing toolbox – easy to adapt, it has certainly given it added value. My own organisation has used the materials to facilitate its last 'awayday' and the review of its strategic plans. We use the outcomes approach for our individual work plans.

The way the programme was delivered to the champions was very good. The course tutors from CES were excellent. The outcomes manual is very easy to use and takes you through everything step by step in a very helpful way.

I am incredibly proud of the voluntary and community organisations I have been working with! They have come such a long way. It helped that they understood that the training was 'tried and tested'. They had greater confidence because of the credibility of CES and the obvious thought that had gone into the development of the programme.

For the future, we will continue to deliver outcomes training to our members as part of our training programme – in particular linking how this will help them in their funding applications."



Bhupendra Solanki

managed network of outcomes champions. The programme will host regular events to encourage networking, skills development and shared learning.

The key driver to this new programme is the need for sustainability. We aim to leave a legacy for the sector – a resource to strengthen its capacity to deliver services that are effective, efficient and user-led.

We will continue our work with funders to capitalise on their interest in outcomes and ensure they are aware of the practical dilemmas facing voluntary organisations wishing to develop an outcomes focus.

The major policy shift towards a greater emphasis on outcomes has continued to gather strength.

The independent evaluation of the current programme tells us that there is still the basic need for training to cover the first principles for many organisations. The sector is better informed but it still needs the technical know-how to implement an outcomes approach to its work and a systematic approach to organisational planning. With the emphasis on embedding the learning – and leaving a lasting legacy of expertise – we hope the new programme will complete the job successfully.

### The Open University, which has carried out a three-year independent evaluation of the programme and will shortly be publishing its final report, notes:

"The programme has been ambitious in scope, complex in delivery and has involved considerable research and development skills in devising its content.

It has faced a number of challenges including an ambition to embed the learning in local contexts among a wide variety of organisational types and in different sub sectors of the voluntary sector... It should be stressed that the programme has been an undoubted success."

### Emphasis on embedding the learning... leaving a lasting legacy of expertise

We are applying for funding for a second national outcomes programme to run from July 2006 for three years.

We aim to increase the pool of skilled outcomes champions and maintain it at 100. This will include a number of existing champions who will be offered incentives to remain at the core of a sustained and

## The ChangeUp national performance hub... at the forefront of performance improvement

The performance hub is one of six national hubs established under the ChangeUp programme to upgrade infrastructure support in the voluntary sector.

The other national hubs cover governance, workforce development, information and communication technology, funding and volunteering. The six hubs are intended to work with and through regional and local infrastructure to improve the support available to frontline voluntary and community organisations throughout England.

“For us, ‘performance’ is the extent to which any voluntary organisation achieves its mission and furthers its cause. Improving performance is therefore about achieving your mission more effectively; it is about improving the quality of your services and achieving better outcomes.”

There are four objectives guiding the work of the performance hub:

1. to provide opportunities for voluntary and community organisations to learn and share their knowledge about effective performance improvement approaches
2. to develop, train and support a network of local mentors offering support on performance improvement
3. to produce clear and simple guidance about what works in performance improvement and to develop new tools and techniques where needed
4. to seek to influence policy and practice around performance improvement by engaging funders, policy-makers and regulators.

Hub staff are based at CES, NCVO and NAVCA, the CES team having a particular focus on objectives 2 and 3.

Throughout 2005, interest in the work of the hub continued to grow. We have made some impressive achievements in a short time, which underlines the value of the hub's role in the sector. Here is a selection of highlights:



Tim Wilson, Helen Field and Sue Rudkin from CES' performance hub team

### Project partnership... who's involved?

Each national hub is a partnership of organisations with expertise in that area of work. CES is the accountable body for the performance hub and we lead it jointly with NCVO. Our partners in the project are:

- Advice UK
- bassac (British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres)
- Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG)
- East of England Development Agency
- Homeless Link
- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action
- New Economics Foundation (nef)
- Norwich and Norfolk Voluntary Services (NVS)
- Quartet Community Foundation

### Building a network of interested practitioners:

- over 1,200 people across England have signed up to be part of our Active Network
- we created a new quarterly newsletter, Achieve More, which is distributed to 4,000 people
- we launched our website – at [www.performancehub.org.uk](http://www.performancehub.org.uk) – for frontline and infrastructure organisations.

### Training and technical support:

- we developed training courses for local development workers covering key performance improvement approaches and have since piloted them in five regions with 51 participants
- we developed a handbook packed with practical tips and advice on performance improvement.

Please visit [www.performancehub.org.uk](http://www.performancehub.org.uk) if you would like to find out more about our work or to sign up for any of the hub's services.

### Knowledge bank and policy voice:

- we commissioned a study on the use of diagnostic tools from the Centre for Voluntary Action Research at Aston University
- we have hosted seminars and are commissioning studies on strategic thinking and planning
- we supported the pilot to examine the feasibility of creating a kite mark for PQASSO users to be assessed through peer review
- we planned events to draw groups of funders and policy-makers together to look at ways they can help organisations demonstrate and improve their performance.

### An expanded programme for 2006... robust plans to bring people together

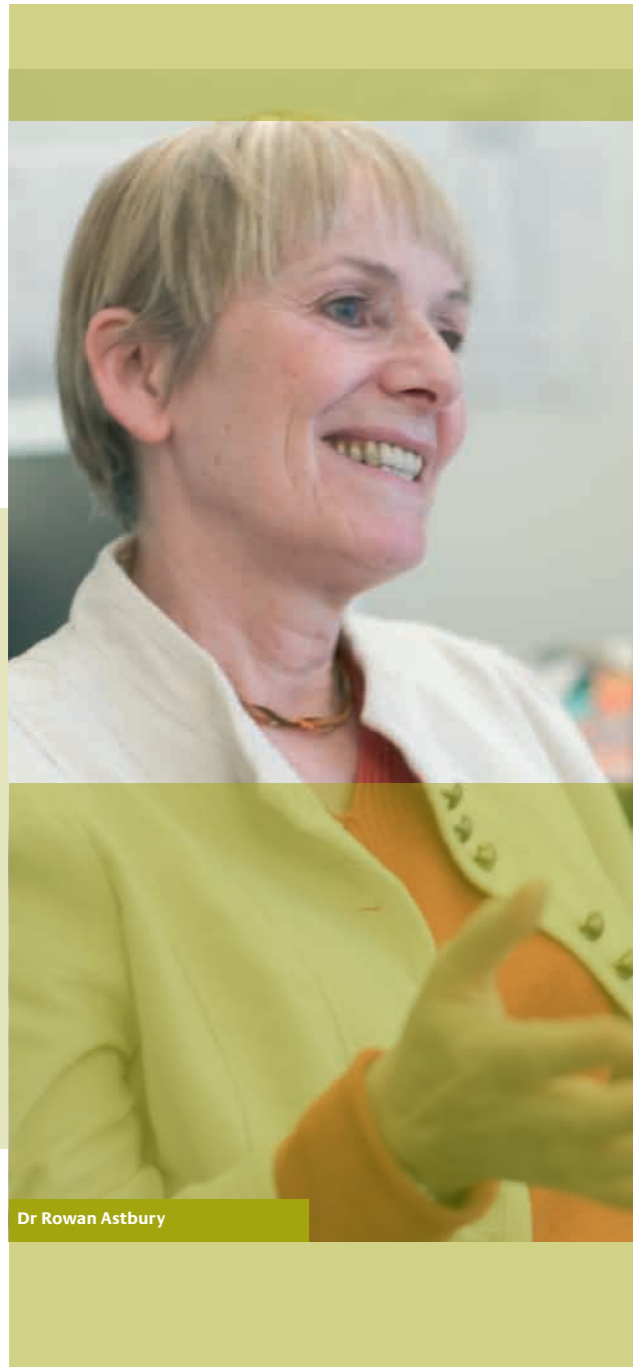
We will work with Birmingham Race Action Partnership to investigate the quality and extent of performance improvement support available to black and minority ethnic

groups and communities. We will also be commissioning practical guidelines to help organisations wishing to benchmark aspects of their work. Our programme of regional training courses for development workers in infrastructure will begin in earnest during 2006. These courses focus on practical steps which infrastructure organisations can take to mentor frontline organisations through diagnosing their strengths and weaknesses, how to approach quality assurance, benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation, and strategic planning.

The hub is committed to creating interactive services which bring people together to discuss their experience of using performance improvement tools. We will host action learning sets, regional conferences, benchmarking clubs and an e-network.

## Personal perspectives

### Setting standards, taking stock



Dr Rowan Astbury

**Between them, Drs Rowan Astbury and Jean Ellis have 25 years' experience as CES senior consultants, and a good deal more experience of the voluntary and public sectors besides. They have set the standards which have helped to establish CES' reputation. We asked them to take stock of some of the lessons from their work over the last decade.**

**Since joining CES, you've carried out scores of independent evaluations of projects of all types. Are there any common reasons which motivate people to seek an evaluation? What, in your experience, do people get from having an independent agency work with them to look at their effectiveness?**

**RA:** Organisations come to us because they value an independent, expert evaluation. Sometimes their funders, even when they are committed to the organisation's work, want a sharper understanding of what the organisation intends and what it achieves. This is the case with two organisations I am working with now: Coram Parents' Centre and Kidscape, which works to stop children being bullied.

If the project is a new one, the organisation is very keen to know whether things are really working out. For example, I am currently evaluating what Arthritis Care is achieving with a major new campaigning project.

Sometimes there is a programme of several small projects, and the organisation wants coordinated assessment, as with the Queen's Nursing Institute.

**JE:** Very often organisations request an external evaluation because it is a grant requirement. Sometimes the prompt may be internal difficulties, and evaluation is seen as one way of looking at issues more clearly. The most helpful context for an external evaluation is when the organisation is looking for learning opportunities, possibly because it is piloting a project, or wanting to disseminate working methods or as part of its drive towards quality.

#### What's new in evaluation these days?

**RA:** I think the main trend is that organisations often ask for 'double value'. First, they like us to help them develop their own evaluation system, especially capturing information on outcomes for service users. Then they will ask CES to use the data they have collected, augmented by more research we do ourselves, to provide them with an independent CES evaluation which will, we hope, provide useful learning to improve services and help the organisation move forward. This way they get the best of both worlds.

**JE:** Possibly what is new is that there may be an increasing trend towards having internal monitoring systems providing systematic management information, rather than depending on external evaluation, and CES' work in helping organisations with their self-evaluation is well placed to support this trend. It's interesting that there's a move in some service areas, such as homelessness, towards defining common outcome areas, and developing similar tools and IT systems, to make it easier to benchmark and share information across organisations.

Organisations are also increasingly being asked to demonstrate their cost-effectiveness and value for money, a direct effect of the increasingly competitive environment in which voluntary and community sector organisations are working.

#### Anything new about the funding of evaluation activity?

**RA:** Funders are getting much more savvy. Some build in an evaluation budget for projects they support, and some want to learn about outcomes achieved by supported projects to help them gauge their own effectiveness as funders, and sometimes they ask for messages in evaluation specifically about the funder.

**JE:** Funders are increasingly telling grant recipients to put a budget line for evaluation into their grant applications. This is a very welcome development, but funders and grantees need to be aware of the likely costs of evaluation, particularly of bringing in external support if this is what's needed or wanted.

Funders frequently require organisations to demonstrate how the outcomes they plan and achieve relate to their own priority outcome areas. For trusts and foundations this may relate to clearer programmatic funding and for local authority funding this may derive from the need to meet government targets. For example, Children's Fund projects will need to show how they meet Every Child Matters outcomes. Similarly, standard outcomes have been introduced across all the sectors funded by the Association of London Government.

#### At CES, we are increasingly interested in how evaluation can affect policy at national level – can you give any examples of this?

**RA:** Sometimes our reports are given a ministerial launch because of their policy relevance (for example, our research report for Fairbridge on youth services, and our work for the Home Office on evaluating the work of charities in prisons). Sometimes outcome evidence is relevant to a national debate (Coram Parents' Centre, for instance). Government and other funders, and policy-makers at all levels, want to know about what works in key policy areas, and especially what innovative methods may be replicated more widely. This will only grow in importance as the voluntary sector becomes a bigger player in delivering public services.



Dr Jean Ellis

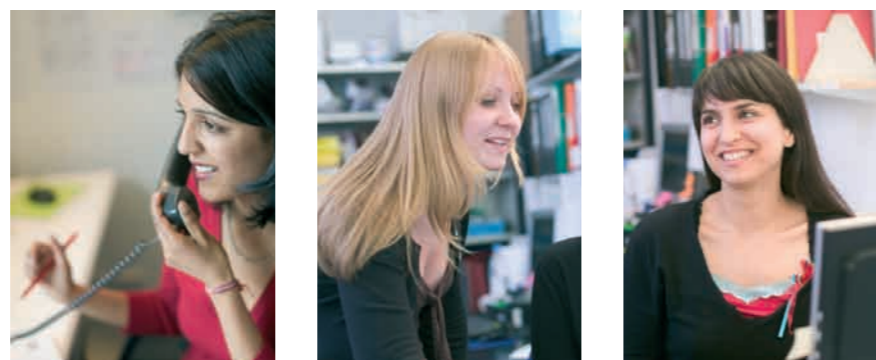
# Policy voice

Through awareness raising, policy interventions and lobbying – both in our own right and with our partners – we seek to influence policy at a national, strategic level. The aim is to create a more supportive policy and funding environment for evaluation and quality activity, linking the requirements of accountability with organisational learning.

We use our voice in two ways: to broaden the understanding of policy-makers concerning the practical implementation of quality improvement and evaluation, and to convert policy objectives into lasting changes in practice through our dissemination activities.

## Examples from 2005:

- Jointly leading the development of the ChangeUp national performance hub
- Supporting the National Consumer Council's continuing research study exploring the distinctive value of voluntary and community organisations engaged in public service delivery
- Following a consultation process, creating national guidance on assessing the effectiveness of voluntary sector work in prisons
- Enabling a leading family support charity to add to the evidence base concerning the most effective way to target services to families in need
- Discussions with the Charity Commission concerning its new mission and strategy, encouraging the Commission to work closely with related sector-led initiatives when developing its programme of work on enhancing charity effectiveness
- Working with colleagues in the Big Lottery Fund and the Association of Charitable Foundations to create a 'Jargon Buster' in order to build consensus and greater consistency among commissioners on the language of project management and evaluation.



Three new members of the CES team, Deena Chauhan, Debbie Smith and Amelia Nallamilli

## CES Board of Trustees in 2005

### Chair

Bill Feinstein (until his retirement from the Board on 20 July 2005)

Jean Barclay (from 20 July 2005, previously Vice Chair and Treasurer)

### Vice Chair

Karl Wilding (from 20 July 2005)

### Treasurer

James Kelly (from 20 July 2005)

### Members

Rodney Buse (retired 20 July 2005), Jim Emerson, Janice Needham, Udeni Salmon, Professor Helen Simons, Roger Sykes, Carl Upsall

### The staff team

#### Chief Executive

Colin Nee

#### Director of Services

Sam Matthews

#### Director of Business Support

Emma Corina

#### Senior Consultants

Dr Rowan Astbury and Dr Jean Ellis

#### Senior Evaluator/Trainer

Sally Cupitt

#### Coordinator, National Outcomes Programme

Richard Piper (until 18 Feb 2005), Jane Kay (from 2 March 2005)

#### Programme Assistant, National Outcomes Programme

Peter Kelly

#### Trainer/Evaluator

Shehnaaz Latif

#### Trainer/Consultant (Quality Systems)

Eleanor Beardsley

#### Trainer/Evaluator

Shahanara Begum

#### Training Coordinator

Talitha Bassett

#### Training Administrative Assistant

Marcia Woods (until 31 Aug 2005), Margo Salamon

(from 3 Oct 2005 until 30 Nov 2005)

#### Administrative Assistants

Tamsin Young (until 1 April 2005), Amelia Nallamilli (from 21 March 2005)

#### Executive Assistants

Mary Loxley (until 11 Oct 2005), Ana Charry

#### Assistant to Chief Executive

Deena Chauhan (from 9 Nov 2005)

#### Performance Hub Coordinator

Tim Wilson (from 17 Oct 2005)

#### Performance Hub Executive Officer

Sam Mason (from 10 Oct 2005)

#### Performance Hub Consultants

Helen Field (from 14 Nov 2005)

Lynne Laidlaw (from 3 Oct 2005)

#### Freelance Accountant

John Googe

#### Volunteers

Kim Perlow (until 28 Feb 2005)

Mareike Harenberg (from 1 April until 31 July 2005)

## CES associates

Our special thanks to the CES associates and independent consultants who worked with us during 2005:

Graham Baker, Sue Baker, Lucy Bishop-Rowe, Margaret Bolton, Neil Gardiner, Kath Gordon, Bernadette Gosden, Rachel Houghton, Alison Lamb, Elizabeth Martindale, Aileen McKenzie, Eileen Murphy, Diana Parkinson, Keith Phillips, Avan Wadia and Peter Williams.

## Our clients in 2005

- Action for Prisoners' Families ■ AED Croatia ■ The African Child
- Anfield Breckside Community Company ■ Arthritis Care ■ Arts Council of England ■ Ashcroft Project ■ Ashiana ■ Association of London Government ■ Asthma UK ■ Barnet Carers Centre
- Basildon, Billericay and Wickford Council for Voluntary Service
- BBC Children in Need ■ The Bedford Charity ■ Bristol Children's Fund ■ British Heart Foundation ■ Broadway ■ BVSC
- Children's Links ■ Citizenship Foundation ■ City of Bradford
- Civil Society Development Foundation ■ The Coalition of Carers ■ Community Evaluation Northern Ireland ■ Community Matters ■ Contact a Family ■ Coram Parents Centre ■ East Kent Cyrenians ■ Education Grants Team Lambeth ■ Enable ■ Involve
- Forward Scotland ■ Hamara HLC ■ Home Start ■ Institute of Nutrition ■ The Ismaili Centre ■ Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Kent Children's Fund ■ Kidscape ■ Learning and Skills Council
- Leicestershire Children's Fund ■ London Borough of Lambeth
- London Community Sports Network ■ London Housing Foundation ■ Manchester Community Learning Chest ■ The Mercers' Company ■ National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service ■ National Council for Voluntary Organisations
- NW Essex CVS Partnership ■ P3 (formerly Good Shepherd Trust) ■ Penwith Community Development Trust ■ Peterborough City Council ■ The PNE Group ■ Pre-school Learning Alliance
- Preston City Council ■ Princess Royal Trust for Carers ■ The Public ■ QNI Nursing Development Initiative ■ Religious Society of Friends ■ Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations
- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council ■ Shaw Trust ■ Sure Start Sheerness ■ Thames Reach Bondway ■ Thrive ■ Thurrock Council for Voluntary Services ■ Voluntary Sector Training
- World Learning/Croatia

## Annual review

Articles and case studies Dr Rowan Astbury, Eleanor Beardsley, Sally Cupitt, Dr Jean Ellis, Jane Jacobson, Jane Kay, Shehnaaz Latif, Sam Matthews, Colin Nee and Tim Wilson

Editing Colin Nee  
 Feedback Talitha Bassett and Amelia Nallamilli  
 Proof reading Jane Jacobson and Amelia Nallamilli  
 Photography Slater King [www.slater-king.com](http://www.slater-king.com)  
 Copy editing Helen Martins of Portfolio Publishing [www.portfoliopublishing.com](http://www.portfoliopublishing.com)

Design Dekko Advertising and Design [www.dekkoadvertising.com](http://www.dekkoadvertising.com)

Print Datum Colour Print

# Summary of financial information

## Trustees statement

The summarised financial information has been extracted from the full audited accounts prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985. The accounts, on which our auditors provided an unqualified opinion, were approved by the trustees on 26 April 2005, and have been filed with the Registrar of Companies and the Charity Commission. The full accounts are available on request from CES' office, and provide a more comprehensive description of the financial affairs of the charity.

In 2005, our income rose by 73% and our expenditure by 71% over the previous year. This very substantial growth resulted mostly from project grant income in respect of the ChangeUp national performance hub, for which CES is the accountable body. In addition to our own significant work on the hub, we received and passed on substantial restricted grants to two of our hub partners, NAVCA and NCVO.

Total income in 2005 amounted to £1,619,540, an increase of £683,691 over last year. Total expenditure in 2005 was £1,542,157, an increase of £640,120 over 2004. Expenditure on charitable activities grew by 75% to £1,481,598.

This year we adopted the newly revised guidelines for accounting and reporting by charities (SORP 2005). The new format introduces the category of governance costs, and we have restated our 2004 figures for comparison. In 2005, the costs of governing the charity were £37,096, compared to £34,696 in 2004.

**Overall, the results show a surplus of £77,383. This contrasts with a surplus last year of £33,812.**

## James Kelly

Honorary Treasurer  
26 April 2006

## Independent auditors' statement to the trustees of Charities Evaluation Services

We have examined the summary financial information set out on this page.

## Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the summary financial information. Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summary financial information within the Annual Review with the full annual accounts and Trustees' Report and for no other purpose. We also read the other information contained in the Annual Review and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summary financial information.

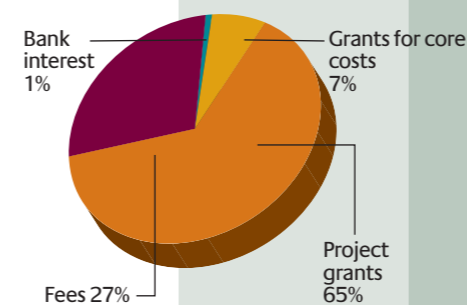
## Opinion

**In our opinion the summary financial information is consistent with the full annual accounts and Trustees report of CES for the year ended 31 December 2005.**

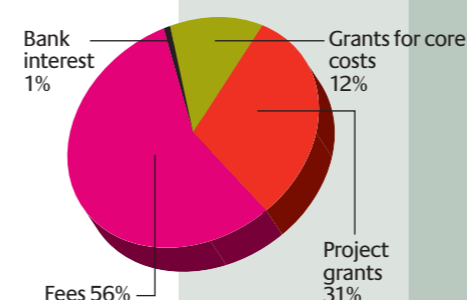
## Citroen Wells

Registered Auditors, Chartered Accountants  
26 April 2006

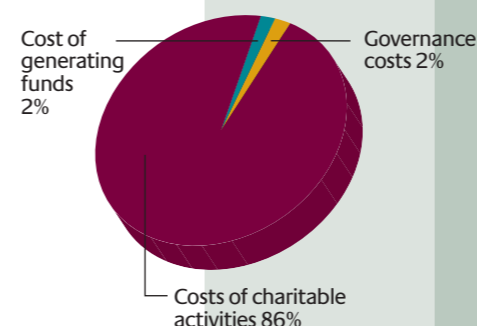
## Income breakdown 2005



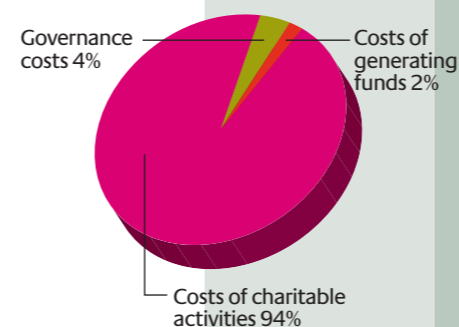
## Income breakdown 2004



## Expenditure breakdown 2005



## Expenditure breakdown 2004



## Income and Expenditure Account

	2005	2004
<b>Incoming resources</b>		
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>		
Grants for core costs	117,792	115,025
Bank interest	12,852	5,340
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>		
Grants for training, technical support and evaluations	1,056,754	287,269
Fees receivable for training, technical support and evaluations	432,142	528,215
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>1,619,540</b>	<b>935,849</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>		
Cost of generating funds	23,463	19,126
Costs of charitable activities - training, technical support and evaluations	1,481,598	848,215
Governance costs	37,096	34,696
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>1,542,157</b>	<b>902,037</b>
Net incoming resources for the year	77,383	33,812
Total funds brought forward	342,370	308,558
Total funds carried forward	419,753	342,370

## Balance sheet

	2005	2004
<b>Fixed assets</b>	<b>461,178</b>	<b>454,565</b>
Current Assets:		
Stock	4,100	3,677
Debtors	155,522	133,114
Cash at bank and in hand	743,244	118,221
Creditors: falling due within one year	(674,481)	(83,166)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>689,563</b>	<b>626,411</b>
Creditors: falling due after more than one year	(269,810)	(284,041)
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>419,753</b>	<b>342,370</b>
Represented by:		
Restricted funds	10,509	-
Unrestricted funds:		
- Fixed Asset Reserve	167,374	158,543
- General Reserve	241,870	183,827
	<b>419,753</b>	<b>342,370</b>

### **Charities Evaluation Services**

4 Coldbath Square  
London EC1R 5HL

Tel 020 7713 5722

Fax 020 7713 5692

email [enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk)

[www.ces-vol.org.uk](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk)

Charity registration number

803602

Company registration number

2510318

Registered in England & Wales

A Company Limited by Guarantee

### **Charities Evaluation Services believes in:**

- the power of self-evaluation and quality systems to make organisations stronger
- using evaluation and quality systems to help organisations learn, as well as be accountable
- promoting practical and affordable ways to demonstrate effectiveness and quality
- working in ways which respect diversity and are accessible to all
- working with the different interests of stakeholders
- sharing knowledge
- learning from those with whom we work.

### **Registered office**

4 Coldbath Square  
London EC1R 5HL

### **Bankers**

Unity Trust Bank Plc  
Nine Brindley Place  
4 Oozells Square  
Birmingham B1 2HB

### **Auditors**

Citroen Wells  
Devonshire House  
1 Devonshire Street  
London W1W 5DR