SURREY INDEPENDENT LIVING CHARITY

Annual Report 2024/25



Chair's report

Welcome to our 2024/25 Annual Report.

2025 has been another eventful year for SILC, with ongoing developments and preparations for further change on the horizon. We have made significant strides, building on the momentum gained from previous years.

The new IT system and process upgrades introduced in 2024 have improved transparency and streamlined workflows. This has enabled us to restructure the organisation and better respond to changing conditions.

Correspondingly, staffing changes have occurred, with several long-serving team members departing and new recruits integrating effectively. The shift towards increased office-based working has contributed to enhanced teamwork and operational efficiency.

SILC continues to deliver the Skills for Care contract, offering Personal Assistant and Employer training. We refined our modules and re-launched our in-person peer support groups for Direct Payment Recipients and for Personal Assistants, which received very positive feedback. Quarterly sessions are now planned.

We also continue to promote Support Finder, our platform linking disabled people with Personal Assistants for independent living. Our outreach has included social media campaigns, attending job fairs, and support from Surrey Jobcentres, which have helped to promote Personal Assistant and Carer roles. Despite these efforts, the shortage of Personal Assistants remains a significant challenge. To address this, we launched a summer recruitment campaign, distributing leaflets and conducting awareness activities. The effectiveness of these efforts will become clear over time.

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Our finances have continued to improve with a positive income-expenditure balance, placing SILC in a robust position and meeting our sustainable budget goal early. Our ethical investment strategy remains successful, maintaining transparency and reflecting our values.

However, broader policy changes, such as Surrey's local government reorganisation and the merger of NHS Surrey Heartlands and NHS Sussex Integrated Care Boards, have created uncertainty for SILC, given their importance as revenue sources.

In response, we have conducted a strategic review and will focus on strengthening our internal capacity and Trustee board to support future growth. Collaborating with similar organisations will be crucial to resolving the shortage of Personal Assistants and carers, which may restrict our future service expansion.

Despite the ongoing changes, SILC staff have remained dedicated to helping our clients, displaying professionalism, empathy, and respect throughout. I want to thank all the SILC team members for their commitment to our mission and for always striving to do more for those who rely on us. Our support is vital for many clients, and our staff truly understand this, often putting in extra effort to make a real difference.



Fiona Bailey
SILC Chair

What our clients say about us

"Life changing! I would not have been able to work out everything by myself. At every step I could pop an email and ask a question.

You made everything seem easy when I was feeling overwhelmed with it all, I am truly grateful for the help and support."

"Your service is an absolute God send. There's no where else to turn. Thank you so much."

"The service was amazing. SILC was just great. SILC are the only ones who made me aware of everything while the council didn't tell me anything about the direct payment or being an employer.

I was poorly at the time, but SILC made everything so easy. I felt they were approachable and it was a great experience overall. I was heavily pregnant at the time, and SILC was able to help with everything so brilliantly."

"Absolutely brilliant. Met my expectations as always. Always incredibly helpful and supportive. Your help took away the worry of getting something sorted that needed sorting urgently when I didn't know how."

"You as a charity have helped me more than any of the other professionals I deal with, you guys are always willing to help"

"I might have given up without SILC's support. Having someone else listen to the details of the case meant I was sure I'd followed the right approach and covered all the appropriate options."

What our clients say about us

"I find things like this completely overwhelming, but the SILC adviser was such a great support guiding me through each step."

"Thank you so much to the person I spoke to on Reception. They de-muddled my muddle and I can now move on."

"I felt very reassured by both of the advocates I spoke to at SILC. The first advocate helped me to understand the complaints process more clearly, and the second advocate was not only extremely helpful, they were very personable and empathetic, whilst always being professional and clear about what advice they could give and how they could help.

The advocates made an enormous difference to my confidence - I am particularly grateful to them for all the advice they gave to me."

"The entire set up was so smooth thanks to SILC. Thank you do much! It took a weight off my mind. Being a carer takes a lot of my time and energy, so it was good to get this great help."

"Having someone else listen to the details of the case was very helpful in that it convinced me that I was right to continue."

"Thank you very much for all your help and assistance over email and phone, it was all very helpful! Appreciated!"

"Thank you so much for the PHB carer payment. The break was a welcome relief from the stresses in my life at home. It did me the world of good to have some time away."

SILC Service Activity

Supporting self-managed care

2024-25 was a busy year for SILC and we continue to receive a high level of demand for our services. We received 466 referrals for our Direct Payment, Personal Health Budget and Self-funding advice and support. Our Referral, Recruitment and Training support team dealt with 10,407 calls.



Advocacy

In January 2024 we reviewed and restructured the way we deliver the Health Complaints Advocacy Service to a more team and office-based approach which has made the service more responsive to complaint enquiries and referrals.

Between April 2024 and March 2025 we had 560 enquiries about our IHCA service sent out 339 referral packs and helped over 201 clients with their formal complaints.

Personal Assistant Recruitment

During 2024-25 we have supported 142 direct recruitments with help to employ 204 new PAs. 210 PAs were registered on our Support Finder website. We also carried out 469 separate Disclosure and Barring (DBS checks) to aid the safe recruitment and employment of PA's.

However, as with last year, recruiting personal assistants (PAs) remains challenging.

We have updated our recruitment information to clients to help them to explore every avenue for recruitment & have also invested in the promotion of our Support Finder service to try to encourage more PAs to sign up.

Daily Money Management

We continue to offer this vital service to many existing clients, providing services such as acting as an appointee for benefit purposes; setting up and managing bank accounts on an individual's behalf; assistance with budgeting and bill paying; and the provision of regular manageable cash amounts. Unfortunately, due to a lack of funding, we are still unable to open this service up to new referrals.

It is disappointing that we have been unable to secure any funding to expand this service. There is a very real need for financially vulnerable people to be supported to safely manage their finances.

SILC Service Activity

Training

Following our successful funding bid, SILC received Skills for Care funding to run a programme of PA and PA Employer training events for 2024 – 25. This was highly successful. We ran 22 online training courses, 3 in-person First Aid courses, 8 in-person moving and positioning sessions, 2 introductory webinars for Employers of PAs, 2 introductory information webinars for PAs. In total, we provided training for 196 PAs and Employers of PAs.

Our funding bid has been approved for 2025-26 by Skills for Care, and we are going to be able to provide an expanded training offering to include more in-person first aid sessions at Astolat, and bespoke moving and positioning sessions for individual PA Employers in their own homes. All courses are already available to book via our Eventbrite training page.

If you are in receipt of a DP and need more specialist training, please request this from your Social Care Locality Team and we can provide training once funding is agreed.

We also provide training if you are in receipt of a Personal Health Budget for your care from the NHS, please just request the training needed from the PHB team and we can liaise with them once funding is agreed to meet your training needs.

If you fund your own care, please contact SILC directly to discuss your requirements.

Carer Personal Health Budgets (PHBs) and Early Intervention Payments (EIPs)

SILC continued throughout the year to facilitate making GP Carer Personal Health Budget payments to Carers, funded by the NHS, following receipt of a referral from their doctor. Early Intervention Payments to Young Carers, also continued to be made, following referrals received from Surrey County Council Children's service and from Action for Carers.

The payments were used, in a variety of ways, with the aim of providing, the carer with some form of relief or respite from their caring role. Many carers used the money for a breakaway or towards a holiday.

This year SILC made a total of 2,212 GP PHB payments, 276 Early Intervention payments, to Young Carers, and 78 Surrey County Council Carer Crisis Payments.



SILC Service Activity

Fundraising and Projects

Fundraise for SILC

An easy and free way that people can help raise funds for SILC is by signing up and shopping online via Easyfundraising.

They will donate funds to SILC when you shop via their donation link. There are thousands of brands who participate, and funds can be raised by purchasing anything from food & drink, entertainment, fashion & beauty, travel, utilities, insurance and more!

If you are interested in undertaking a challenge event to fundraise on behalf of SILC (marathon, cycle event etc.) then please let us know. Other fundraising ideas and a donation link can be found on the 'Support Us' section of our website - **www.surreyilc.org.uk/support-us/**



Peer Support

In 2024-25 SILC ran 2 webinars for PAs, and 2 for Employers of PAs, and we also offered bi-monthly online peer support groups for PAs and Employers.

We have surveyed participants, and other PAs and service users, and have found that there has been a shift in attitudes towards online groups and that people are now feeling more comfortable to start meeting in-person again following Covid.

For 2025-26 we are acting on this valuable feedback and are hosting quarterly PA Employer Peer Support and PA Peer Support Groups. It is lovely to see people coming together, supporting each other, and sharing their lived experience.

Support Finder

We have continued to try and widen the reach and awareness of our Support Finder service to increase the number of potential PAs signing up. We are forging links with the local Universities and attended their student job fairs, as well as attending other local careers fairs. We have also linked up with all the Job centres in Surrey.

We continue to promote Support Finder across social media, including posting a 'Job of the Week'. Please follow us on social media! All links can be found on www.supportfinder.org.uk. Support Finder continues to be a huge focus for us, and we are always working to try and improve the service. We will be sending out a survey to gain feedback from users, so look out for that!

Treasurer’s report

First of all, a big thank you to Joan and Dave for their hard work this year.

Financial Review

SILC has achieved a surplus of £10,811 for the 2024 - 25 financial year. The trustees were pleased with this result, as it is ahead of the position outlined in the strategic plan. Savings were realised earlier than initially projected, primarily due to changes in the team structure, with a greater proportion of roles now sitting within the admin team.

Investments

In June 2024 the board of trustees chose to move the portfolio from a tracker to a managed, ethical fund. This change aligns with SILC’s values and aims to balance growth opportunities with a cautious approach to risk. The trustees are happy with the performance of the fund to date.

Reserves Policy

I can continue to confirm that SILC’s policy to retain unrestricted reserves to cover at least six months expenditure and provide funds for unexpected contingencies has been met.

At the end of the financial year SILC carried forward reserves of £525,625, with funds balances of:

Unrestricted General Fund:

£451,687

Restricted Fund:

£73,938

Hannah Ridzuan Poulton
SILC Treasurer

Financial report

Statement of Financial Activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestrict- Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income						
Donations and	17,423	-	17,423	24,645	-	24,645
Charitable activities	587,059	29,975	617,034	583,305	30,000	613,305
Investments	4,791	-	4,791	4,212	-	4,212
Total in-	**609,273**	**29,975**	**639,248**	**612,162**	**30,000**	**642,162**
Expenditure						
Charitable activities:	591,269	35,867	627,136	619,496	32,869	652,365
Total ex-	**591,269**	**35,867**	**627,136**	**619,496**	**32,869**	**652,365**
Net gains/ investments	(1,301)	-	(1,301)	10,726	-	10,726
Net expenditure for the year/ Net movement in	16,703	(5,892)	10,811	3,392	(2,869)	523
Fund balances at 1st	434,984	79,830	514,814	431,592	82,699	514,291
Fund balances at 31st March 2024	**451,687**	**73,938**	**525,625**	**434,984**	**79,830**	**514,814**

Balance sheet

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

	2025		2024	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets				
Tangible assets		6,588		6,890
Current Assets				
Debtors	95,842		54,802	
Investments	282,784		284,085	
Cash at bank and in hand	191,837		219,355	
	570,463		558,242	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(51,408)		(50,298)	
Net Current Assets		519,037		507,924
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities		**525,625**		**514,814**
Income Funds				
Restricted funds		73,938		79,830
Unrestricted funds		451,687		434,984
Total Funds		**525,625**		**514,814**

This is a summary from the financial statements of the charity 'Surrey Independent Living Charity' for the year ended 31st March 2025. If you would like a copy of the statutory financial statements, they may be obtained from Surrey Independent Living Charity, Astolat, Coniers Way, Guildford, Surrey, GU4 7HL.

The annual accounts were independently examined by the accountants Kirk Rice LLP

Signed on behalf of the board of Trustees

Fiona Bailey

SILC Trustee Chairperson

SILC Trustee and staff list

Correct as of 23rd September 2025

SILC Trustees

Carey Lawrence	Emmanuel Okonya
Fiona Bailey (Chair)	Hannah Ridzuan Poulton (Treasurer)
Leonie Riddett	Milena Krasovec

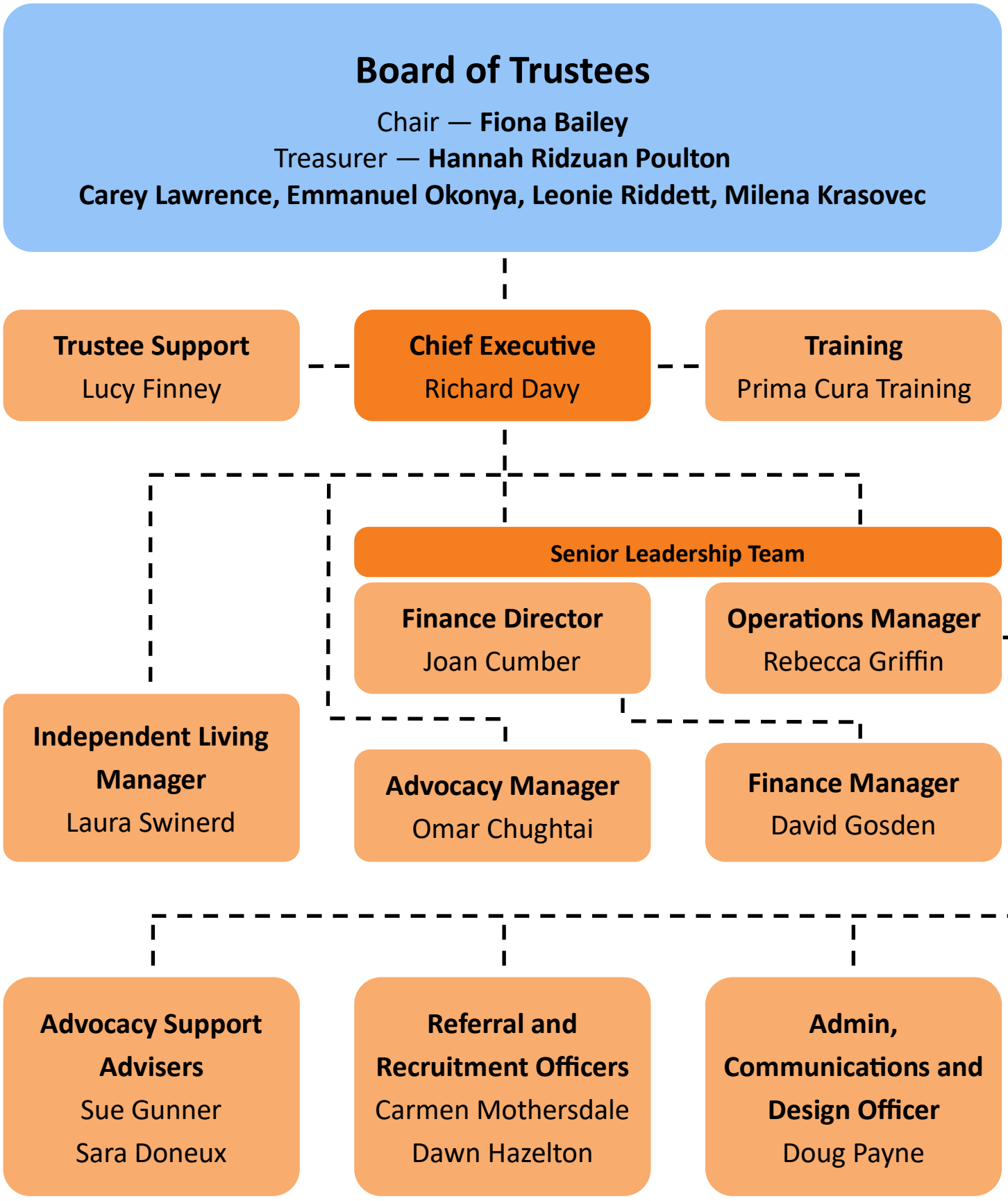
SILC Staff

Carmen Mothersdale	Referral and Recruitment Officer
David Gosden	Finance Manager
Dawn Hazelton	Referral and Recruitment Officer
Doug Payne	Admin, Communications and Design Officer
Joan Cumber	Finance Director
Laura Swinerd	Independent Living Manager
Omar Chughtai	Advocacy Manager
Rebecca Griffin	Operations Manager
Richard Davy	Chief Executive
Sara Doneux	Advocacy Support Adviser
Sue Gunner	Advocacy Support Adviser



Staff structure flowchart

Correct as of 23rd September 2025





Surrey Independent Living Charity
Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham,
Guildford, Surrey, GU4 7HL

Self-managed care services, Personal Health Budgets support and GP Carer Break Prescription programme

Telephone: 01483 458 111
Text: 07771 108 624
Email: admin@surreyilc.org.uk

Independent Health Complaints Advocacy

Telephone: 01483 310 500
Text: 07704 265 377
Email: nhsadvocacy@surreyilc.org.uk

www.surreyilc.org.uk
www.supportfinder.org.uk

Registered charity number: 1146482
Company number: 7877608