

**Lincolnshire
Association of Local
Councils**



Annual Report

2025-26

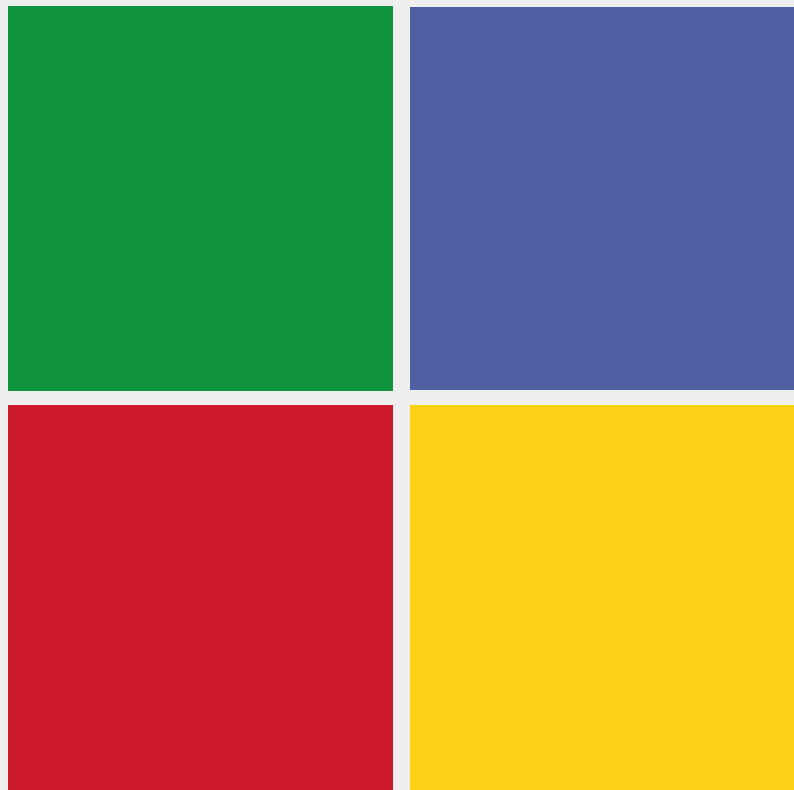


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Management Committee

President: Gary Ellis

Vice President & Chair: Tony Howard

Vice President & Treasurer: Mike Passfield

Vice Chair: Karri Davey

**Committee Members: Steve Fletcher, Lynda Phillips, Cllr Cathie Nicoll,
Cllr Reece Harrington, Cllr Nigel Eaton**

Pay & Recruitment Working Group

Lynda Phillips, Nigel Eaton, Chris Myers, Carolyn Barber, Vacancy



President's Report - Gary Ellis

As I step down as President of the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC), and as this is my final Annual General Meeting, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported the Association during my tenure.

It has been a privilege and an honour to serve as President and to work alongside such dedicated councillors, clerks, officers, and volunteers who give so generously of their time and expertise in support of parish and town councils across Lincolnshire. The commitment, professionalism, and enthusiasm demonstrated throughout the Association have been a constant source of encouragement and inspiration.

Together, we have navigated challenges, embraced opportunities, and continued to strengthen the vital role that local councils play in serving their communities. We have developed the services and training offered to member councils, enabling them to deliver high-quality services to their residents, while ensuring that the Association remains a strong voice for Lincolnshire at local, regional, and national levels of government.

Any successes achieved during my time as President, and previously as Chairman and Board Member, have been the result of a collective effort, and I am deeply appreciative of the support, commitment, and friendship I have received.



The work undertaken over the last 18 months has focused on modernising the Association and ensuring that the systems and structures are in place to develop and expand member services. Through the delivery of training, IT support, audit services, and HR advice to member councils, LALC has become stronger and better equipped to meet future challenges.

The Association is now well positioned to support continued growth and to help councils navigate the opportunities and changes arising from devolution and local government reorganisation planned for Lincolnshire.

I would like to thank the Board, Katrina, our Chief Executive officer (CEO), the staff team, member councils, and all those who have contributed to the work of LALC. Your dedication to local democracy and community service makes a real difference to the people of Lincolnshire.

As I conclude my term as President, I do so with confidence in the future of the Association and with my warmest wishes for its continued success. Thank you all for your service, commitment, and support throughout my tenure.

Thanks Gary

— Gary Ellis, President



Chair's Report - Tony Howard

It is now just over a decade since I presented my first Chair's report and my how times have changed!

Back then we were still pondering what format a proposed referendum on European Union membership would take and the word 'Covid' was not part of our vocabulary. Even when I produced what I thought would be my final report in 2023 we were still adjusting to sing 'King' in the National Anthem rather than 'Queen'. Yet, on the other hand, some things I reported back at the start still sound very familiar. In particular I remember feeling disappointed that national government had failed to bring forward legislation to help local councils have an effective Code of Conduct to work with and there were the first conversations locally about Local Government Reorganisation.

However, one factor has remained constant throughout. Having a training programme in place in order to keep members up-to-date with legislative changes and refresher courses to keep councillors, both old and new, in line with best practice has been and continues to be at the heart of what LALC offers to all our towns & villages. The delivery may have changed, with more reliance on the internet, and the basket of topics increased in size but the emphasis on quality remains.

Another constant over the years has been the excellent service our office team provide to the association and my eternal thanks go to Katrina and her team for their dedication and devotion. Also, with an ever increasing list of services being provided alongside our in-house training I must also thank our team of auditors, locum clerks and webmasters. At which point it is pertinent to welcome to the team our new webmaster, Jonathan Clarke, who hopefully will become a familiar face to many of you in the coming months.



There is no doubt that the year ahead will be dominated by the ongoing business of Local Government Reorganisation with all of our councils set to be affected one way or another. As I write the national government are on the point of making their decision as to which of the proposals put forward will be put into practice. So although I can't advise members which path we will be following, I can confirm, most definitely, that change will certainly happen, as there is a firm calendar in place to replace our existing, complex council structure with something more streamlined.

Whilst all this work on reorganisation is taking ever more time during the working week, the long established engagement with regional & national bodies continues unabated.

At national level, NALC – the National association of Local Councils – continues to be our main route into conversations with Westminster and since my return to the Chair I am very grateful to our Vice Chair Karri Davey who has stepped up to be our representative on their National Assembly, although sadly she has subsequently had to resign from the association.

Regionally, our liaison with the other county associations in FEMALC – the Federation of East Midlands Associations of Local Councils - is well established and it has fallen to Lincolnshire to provide their secretariat function for the past year. More recently we have been developing closer ties with our northern neighbours and those have resulted in the formation of EMYA – the East Midlands and Yorkshire Association. This latter organisation will come into its own as the parishes of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire become part of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority.

It is my sincere hope that, whatever the outcome of the reorganisation process, that it does not bring unforeseen burdens to our sector. I would, however, advise all councils to keep a very watchful eye on the progression so as not to be caught out by any of the changes. Whatever the outcome, the LALC team will always be on hand to provide the advice you need to carry on as we are in constant touch with those at the centre of the changes both nationally and locally.

To conclude this report I would like to formally give my thanks, both personally and on your behalf, to two stalwarts of the Management Committee who, in addition to our already departed Vice Chair, are due to leave in the next few weeks, Mike Passfield and Gary Ellis.

Mike has held the post of Treasurer for as long as I can remember and has provided the association with superb financial guidance all during that time. His departure provides the opportunity for us to consider implementing a Finance Committee to take on the duties that Mike has previously provided – a model of financial overview preferred by many of the other county associations.

Gary Ellis, it seems to me, has been with us forever. Before becoming our long standing President he was for several years our Chair and his knowledge and experience are beyond compare. His will be big boots to fill!

To both our departing colleagues I wish them only the very best for whatever may come their way in their respective futures.

Of course departures always give rise to opportunities for others to step up to the plate. Therefore my final message for this year is to ask that, if you are interested in joining our Management Committee, you contact the office to learn more about what is involved.

Thank you.

Tony Howard - Chair



Chief Executive's Report - Katrina Evans

The 2025/26 year has been another busy and productive period for LALC, with our team continuing to support member councils across a wide range of services—from answering queries and delivering training to managing audits, websites, and locum support.

With all councillors now able to access the LALC Portal, councils have greater autonomy in sourcing policies, advice notes, and core governance documents. Our CRM system (Junari) has helped us track training attendance, monitor enquiries, and improve our services—all of which are reflected in the data later in this report. All councillors registered on the CRM system now receive the fortnightly e-news and the monthly training bulletin as well as the clerk and Chair of the Council. Please register your councillors on the portal, but please also remember to remove them when they leave or ask LALC to do this if you are unsure.

We also have the forums where clerks and councillors can communicate with each other, and it is another communication stream for LALC. The Officers have recently updated the forums due to leavers and changes to email addresses.

We encourage councils to use the CRM or email enquiries@lalc.co.uk for all queries to ensure timely and secure responses. Whilst we will aim to take calls and answer queries on the day, this is not always possible due to other commitments.



Collaboration & Representation

LALC has actively participated in:

- Quarterly Management meetings – the Management Committee are responsible for the finance and governance of the Association (minutes available)
- Quarterly County Officer meetings – most are held remotely, with additional face to face meetings once or twice a year
- Monthly EMYA (East Midlands and Yorkshire Associations) Officer sessions – for 2026 Lincolnshire are the Secretariat. In addition, Member & Officer meetings are held twice yearly, one remote and one face to face, with the last face to face being held in Derbyshire on 14 May 2025
- National Assembly representation
- Fortnightly NALC/CALC calls
- Engagement with Principal Authorities and forums

These meetings ensure your voice is heard nationally. We remain ready to take local issues forward to NALC, Government Ministers, or your MPs—so keep talking to us.

Governance & Leadership

At the July 2025 AGM, Chris Kelk, Operations Manager of Stagecoach was a Guest Speaker which was a successful evening with lots of questions from attendees.

The Management Committee met on 24th July and the first item on the agenda was to elect a Chair. Changes had been made to the Constitution to allow for a non-councillor to be the Chair of the Association. Tony Howard was nominated and elected as Chair. He thanked members for the nomination and committed to help the Association through the Local Government Reorganisation. Cllr Karri Davey remained as Vice Chair and National Assembly representative.

In January 2026, Mike Passfield tendered his resignation as Treasurer but agreed to stay until we recruited a new Treasurer. However, at a meeting of the Management Committee in April, it was agreed to recommend to the AGM that we change the constitution and abolish the role of Treasurer and appoint a Finance Committee, made up of the Chair, Chief Executive and a.n. other who would be responsible for writing the quarterly and annual reports.



Mike has been on the Management Committee and previous County Committee for approximately 12 years, with 10 of those years as the Treasurer of LALC. Mike and myself, were instrumental in setting the new subscription structure for 2016/17 and reviewed it each year since, in line with setting the budget. Mike will be a great loss to the Association, and I would like to thank him for all his time and support for myself, Lindsey and LALC.

Gary Ellis, President also tendered his resignation with his last meeting being the AGM in July, which he will chair. Gary has been a valued member of LALC since 1998, holding the role as Chair during his tenure and after a couple of years break, returned as the President. His knowledge and expertise will be a loss to the Sector, and I would like to personally thank him for his support over the years. A new president will be elected at the AGM.

Finally, we have also received a resignation from Cllr Karri Davey, Vice Chair who had decided it was time to leave her local Parish Council and subsequently the Management Committee. Karri was also the member of the National Assembly at NALC and was elected to the Committee in 2023.

This leaves two vacancies on the Management Committee and we will be looking to co-opt at our next meeting, on 16th July. A new Chair and Vice Chair will be elected at that meeting and a new President will be elected at the AGM. Tony Howard will be nominated as the President at the AGM and will subsequently resign as Chair at the next meeting.

Supporting Councils

Recruitment & Pay Working Group

Formed in November 2024, this group—led by Lynda Phillips—has begun gathering data on recruitment challenges and pay structures. At the Clerks Networking Day in November 25, the clerks present were tasked with looking at the current job profiles (2004) and what they could look like moving forward. NALC workforce task group have recently released a new draft job evaluation scheme for CALCs to review before it is rolled out to Councils.



Worknest (Health & Safety)

Now entering our third year of partnership, Worknest offers expert advice and a member-only website—uptake has remained low and we will need to review this for next year. We urge councils to utilise this valuable resource while we have it.

Finance

We've renewed our agreement with Steve Parkinson Partnership for financial enquiries and delivery of training sessions, which remain popular to our members

HR Support

After many years as retained support for LALC and many other Associations Chris Moses retired at the end of March. Chris will be a massive loss for the Sector. EMYA procured another retainer in Wilkins, Chapman & Rollits who will support the Association and local councils in the same way that Chris used to. Initial enquiries will need to come via LALC. The service will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is working for all parties.

Website Management

Approximately one-third of member councils now use this rolling service. LALC said goodbye to Tony Shaw as Webmaster in April and welcomed Jonathan Clarke to the team. Jonathan has previous experience with Jadu websites and can be reached on the same webmaster email address and telephone number as previously.

Legal Advice

As well as the NALC legal team, EMYA has an agreement with Wilkins, Chapman & Rollits (WCR) to provide initial legal advice to Councils. For further advice Councils may reach an agreement with WCR.



Internal Audit Service

Our Internal Audit service continues to grow, with more councils engaging and more auditors onboard. The service not only checks year-end finances but also helps councils improve governance throughout the year.

We'll begin offering intermediate audits in Autumn/Winter to help councils prepare ahead of the 2026/27 AGAR requirements.

A reminder: councils should consult LALC when audits flag gaps in policy or transparency—we're here to help, and the portal has model documents ready to use. The Internal Auditor is there to answer any of your audit questions, but not as a trainer and to give further support outside of the audit process.

(A detailed table of audit fees can be found on our website).

Events & Training

Our Summer Conference was a great success, and the 2026 Conference (14 July) will introduce further new “talking tables”, give delegates access to Principal Authorities and sector experts. Please come along and take the opportunity to also network with colleagues.

Training remains a key part of our offer. Thanks to Andrew and Elaine for delivering excellent sessions, and to Katrina for continuing with Clerk Induction and CiLCA. The previous CiLCA portfolio closed to new registrations on 1 August 2025. A new version was launched in 2026 with refreshed training support. Elizabeth Raymond has joined the team to deliver the training and mentor the students along with Steve Fletcher and myself.

Please continue to let us know your council's training needs—we adapt our offer to suit demand.

Looking Ahead

We've managed our budget carefully, keeping affiliation fees as low as possible while expanding services. At the year end we had a surplus of circa £7k which will contribute to the upgrade of the Junari CRM system and website for this year, plus officer time to implement changes to the website for the benefit of our members.

We remain hopeful that by the Summer, Government should have made a decision on what Local Government Reorganisation will look like for Lincolnshire. LALC has continued to engage with the principal authorities and ERNLLCA. We'll keep members informed and supported through any changes. We would like to implement a Forum for Town Councils, where support can be given to each other, established and new and any upcoming new councils.

Thanks to the Team

Finally, heartfelt thanks to the LALC team:

- **Andrew** for expert advice and council support and training delivery
- **Elaine** for managing e-news bulletins, the portal, and training support
- **Lindsey** for keeping the office, finances, and all of us organised

Together, along with the Committee remain committed to serving our members through every challenge and opportunity.

Katrina Evans - Chief Executive



Training Report

Over the past year, LALC and our trusted partners delivered a total of **63 training events** (covering **37 topics**), attended by **773 delegates** across Lincolnshire. Of these:

- **23 events (36.5%)** were held **in person**, providing valuable opportunities for face-to-face learning and networking.
- **40 events (63.5%)** were delivered **remotely**, offering flexible access to training for busy council members and clerks.
- **8 events** were organised in conjunction with neighbouring CALCs.

In addition to the LALC-led sessions:

- **63 delegates** took part in **Parkinson Partnership** events, covering **7 diverse topics**. (These are covered under our Core training for ATS members).
- **27 delegates** attended **Breakthrough Communications** sessions, covering **15 different subjects**.
- **13 delegates** completed **Nimble eLearning** courses across **10 topics**, offering on-demand learning.

Unfortunately, **2 events** had to be cancelled — 1 due to low uptake, and 1 due to technical difficulties experienced by an external presenter (subsequently rearranged).

146 (43% of our member councils) signed up to the **Annual Training Scheme**, which covers our Core training - topics that are common to all councils.

Our CiLCA programme was delivered to **16 delegates** over two cohorts. These sessions were delivered via face to face and remote options. The second cohort was aimed at those delegates who needed to complete the old CiLCA portfolio before the deadline, as the new CiLCA portfolio was launched in February 2026.

Congratulations to the following who passed their CiLCA in this period:

Lynn Ottaviano (Norfolk ALC), Stacey Hoyland (Sturton by Stow PC), Susie Crowe (Skegness TC), Helen Key (Billinghay PC), Lynnette Pryke (Alford TC), Hazel Fox (Willoughton PC), Hazel Bell (Welton by Lincoln PC), Emma Thorpe (Branston PC).



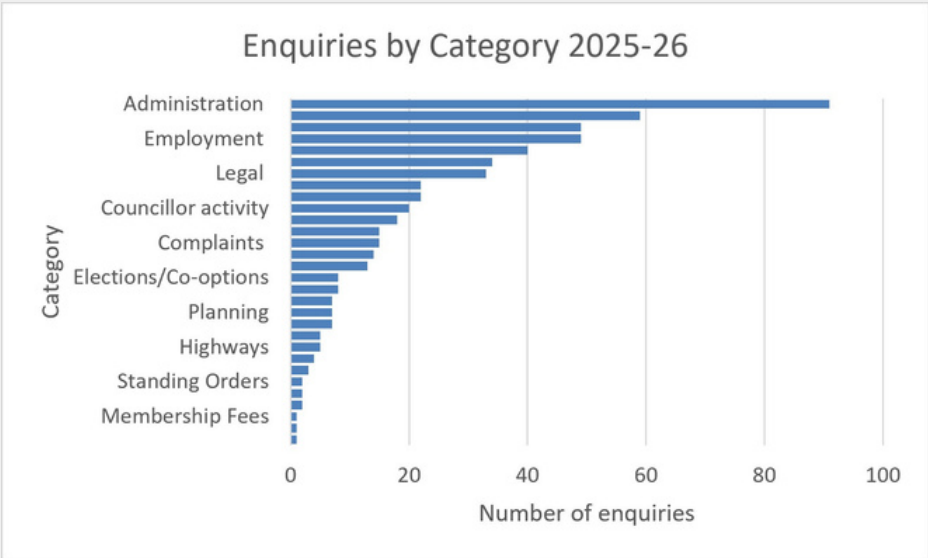
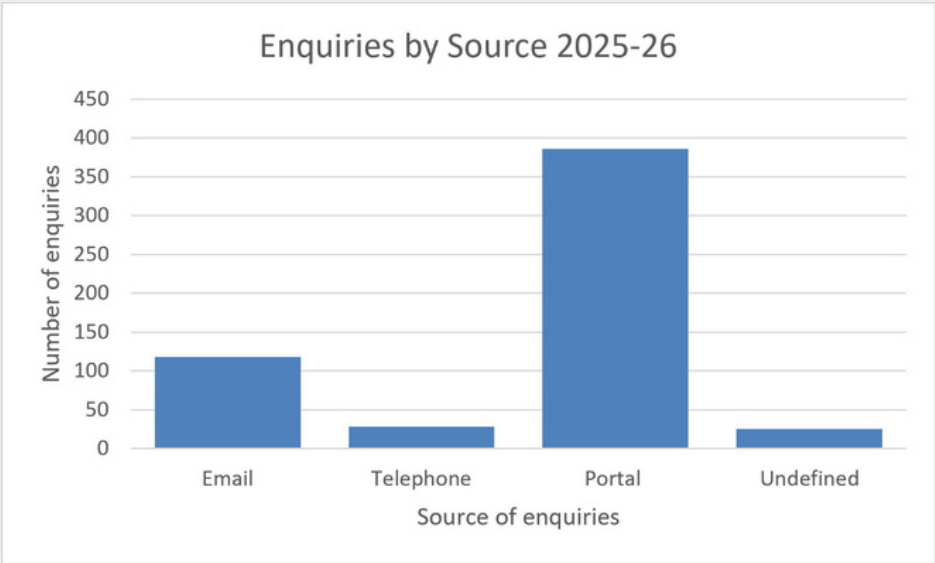
Please continue to provide feedback - we can't improve without this.

If there is any specific training that you feel would be useful to others, please let us know.



Enquiries

Logging enquiries via the LALC portal remains the easiest and most efficient method for members to raise an enquiry with us and we will respond via the portal. We obviously still take enquiries via email (enquiries@lalc.co.uk), telephone and occasionally in person. Enquires taken via these alternative methods are generally put onto the CRM, so that there is a historical log of the responses available to the council.



Finance Report - Mike Passfield

Assurance level:	Substantial X	Reasonable	Partial	No assurance
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Rational for Assurance rating

- Financial income above budgeted income by 38.4k, largely associated with Locum Clerk, internal audit, ATS and additional affiliation fees.
- A year end net surplus of £7.3k
- Financial year end audit conducted on 11th May 2026 - Nil concerns noted.

Assurance action

- Final year end closure reporting
- Positive internal audit review and report

Purpose

This report is the annual Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils finance report for the 2025/26 financial year.



“Year end net surplus of £7.3k”



Governance & Internal Controls

The Association maintains a **robust system of internal controls** to support the effective and efficient delivery of its activities and operating procedures. Each year, a member of the Executive Committee is appointed with responsibility for financial oversight. This individual scrutinises internal controls and working practices, forming an important governance mechanism that enhances risk identification and mitigation. This role works closely with both leadership and administrative functions to maintain financial integrity.

As part of the year-end process, Mr Chris Hewis (Auditor) attended to undertake the annual financial audit. His review was thorough and constructive, and he commented positively on the transparency, organisation, and accuracy of the Association's financial records and processes. His feedback reinforces **confidence in the financial governance arrangements** and provides valuable external assurance on the effectiveness of current systems.

In addition, the Association's financial risk register was formally reviewed as part of the internal control process. This review confirmed that all identified risks remain appropriately monitored and mitigated. It was also noted that the Association's Financial Regulations remain current and in date, with the next scheduled review set for March 2027.

Financial Overview

The 2025/26 financial year has been one of both strong income performance and continued operational pressure for the Association.

The Association achieved its full budgeted income for the year. This includes a £6.2k surplus brought forward from 2024/25 and a £3.5k transfer from IT reserves. In addition, £30k of income was received above or outside of the original budget. This additional income was primarily driven by higher-than-anticipated activity across training, internal audit services, locum clerk provision, and website management.

While these income streams performed well, they also generated associated costs. As a result, the Association recorded an overall overspend of £23k across several budget lines, including training delivery, staffing, events, and operational costs such as electricity.



Despite these pressures, the Association has closed the year broadly in line with expectations, reporting a **modest surplus of £7.3k**. The reserves position remains stable at £118,697 at year end.

Looking ahead, the financial outlook for 2026/27 is expected to remain challenging. The Committee has needed to carefully consider the use of the current year surplus, balancing the need to maintain adequate reserves with the anticipated pressures on next year's operating budget.

Reserves

The Association's reserves at the end of 2025/26 are £118,697.

Reserve Accounts	
General Business Reserves	£79,092
Staffing Reserves & Training	£7,000
Training Programme Reserves	£6,105
Business Continuity	£20,000
IT Reserves	£6,500
Total	£118,697

Closing Remarks

This report marks my final annual finance report as Vice President and Treasurer of the Association, as I step down after 12 years of service. It has been a privilege to support the Association and its member councils over this time. I have seen significant change across the sector, and I have every confidence that the Association will continue to adapt and respond effectively to the challenges ahead.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to colleagues, members, and officers, past and present for their support and collaboration.

I wish the Association and all member councils every success in navigating the forthcoming changes within the sector and beyond.



Income and Expenditure – Q4 (2025/26)

Code	Item	Budget	Y.T.D.	Variance
Income		25/26		
4000	Affiliation fees	126140	125982	-158
4002	Other publications	0	0	0
40021	LALC News/E- News	0	1075	1075
4004	Principal Council training support	0	0	0
4006	Bank interest	1000	1757	757
4007	LALC AGM and Conference	5500	7155	1655
40071	Networking Day	0	950	950
40072	Lincolnshire Show	0	1293	1293
4008	Training courses	13000	21801	8801
40088	Annual Training Scheme	18500	20550	2050
4009	Postage	0	0	0
4010	Website Management	12000	14184	2184
4017	Sundry Income - Balance from 24/25	6261	6261	0
4012	Additional member services - LCC - PC Adverts	225	640	415
4013	Regional Grant	5000	5000	0
40041	Partnership working - training grants	0	0	0
4018	FEMALC income	0	0	0
40011	Internal audit	12000	17828	5828
40012	Locum Clerk	0	5528	5528
4017	Tfr for Portal Enhancement & IT Equip	3500	3500	0
	TOTAL INCOME	203126	233504	30378

Income and Expenditure – FYE (2025/26)

Code	Item	Budget	Y.T.D.	Variance
Expenditure		25/26		
8100	Bad Debt Write Off	0	0	0
5001	Local Council Review	0	0	0
5002	Other publications	50	0	-50
5008	Training courses	14800	19242	4442
5011	Local Council Award Scheme	0	0	0
6001	Staff Training	500	0	-500
6002	Training - Salary	8000	9923	1923
6022	Retained HR Support	450	540	90
60221	Retained H&S Support - Worknest	700	721	21
60222	Retained Finance Support	412	450	38
7000	NALC subscription	38325	38063	-262
6000/6001	Staffing	91342	89401	-1941
6003	Internal Audit - Salary	10000	12697	2697
6004	Website Management - Salary	10261	12464	2203
60031	Locum Clerk - Salary	0	4785	4785
7002	Staff travel and subsistence	900	1953	1053
7003	Members' travel/Chair's allowance	500	230	-270
7004	NALC AGM and Conference	0	0	0
7005	LALC Conference	6000	6782	782
70051	Networking Day	0	556	556

Income and Expenditure – FYE (2025/26) - cont.

Code	Item	Budget	Y.T.D.	Variance
Expenditure		24/25		
7006	Association meetings - room hire	0	0	0
7007/7008	Stationery	500	867	367
7009	Photocopying - Woodco	800	517	-283
7010	Office IT/Accs Support Package	9000	10895	1895
7011	Postage & Franking Machine	180	160	-20
7012	FEMALC expenses	300	444	144
7013	Audit fee	175	175	0
7014	Data protection registration fee	35	47	12
7015	Bank charges	0	0	0
7027	Office rent	5000	4888	-122
7017	Telephone (3 x mobiles)	900	968	68
7018	Office equipment - repair and renewal	1000	1367	367
7019	Advertising and recruitment	0	60	60
7020	Additional member support	165	480	315
7023	Computers for councils - IT Support	0	0	0
7025	Insurance	520	634	114
7026	Office Move/Office Building	0	0	0
7030	Electricity	2000	3670	1670
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	202815	226166	23351
	NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	311	7338	7027

LALC Team

Chief Executive

Katrina Evans

Deputy Chief Executive

Andrew Everard

Media & Training Support Officer

Elaine Atkin

Senior Finance & Admin Officer

Lindsey Westman

Webmaster

Tony Shaw (to April 2026)

CiLCA Mentor/Trainer

Steve Fletcher

Team Lead for Internal Auditors

Steve Fletcher



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