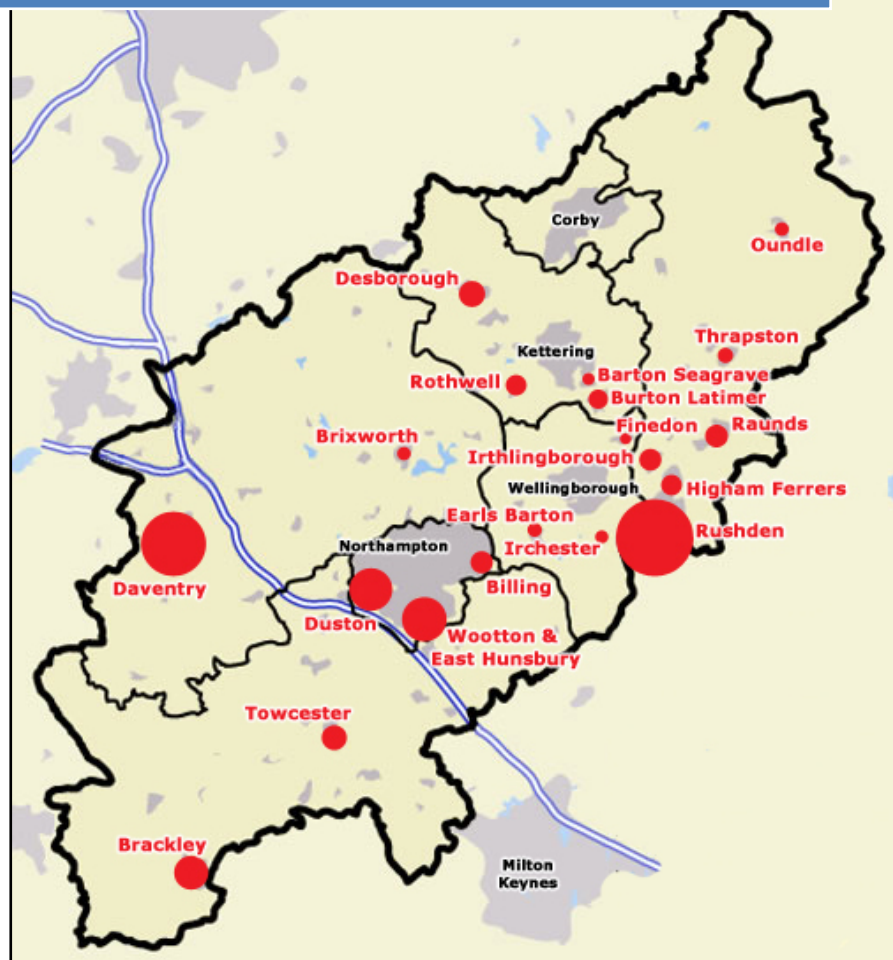


Year ending
31 March 2021

Annual Report of the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils



Empowering Parish
& Town Councils

Chairman's Report

The year up until 31 March 2021 was unfortunately dominated by the Coronavirus pandemic once again. Communities and families across the county have been impacted greatly and I am sure we have all been affected one way or another.

Resilience is a word that is used often these days and I am happy to report that our Parish and Town Councils, Councillors, Clerks, Community leaders and colleagues have shown great resilience during this period.



Mike Scott, Chairman

At no time has there been any sense that public service would take a back seat, and all have enthusiastically met the challenge of continuing to serve their local electorate. Our members continue to innovate, with one example being a council providing VR headsets for councillors that were having to self-isolate!

At the same time as this, the formation of the new Unitary authorities carried on. Northants CALC staff have been hard at work in supporting our members during this period, providing help and support to new members, as well as providing much needed advice on how to deal with issues relating to the pandemic through a dedicated web page.

Inaugural meetings have been held for the new Parish and Town Councils being formed, and in May 2020 the new Shadow Councils for West Northamptonshire and North

Northamptonshire were formed with Vesting Day on 1 April 2021, followed by local elections on 6 May 2021 for the unitaries and parishes.

At the time of writing both Vesting Day and the local elections have taken place and we have two fully elected unitary authorities in place. I am confident that our Parish and Town Councils, through the resilience and hard work shown already, are ready and willing to work with our principal authorities to take on additional services and challenges in order to improve the lives of our local electorate. together.

Mike Scott, Chairman

Balance Sheet Summary

Northants CALC Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021:

	£	£
	2020	2021
Fixed assets	1,492	0
Debtors	2,483	26,435
Cash at bank	112,421	151,612
Total Assets	116,396	178,047

	£	£
	2020	2021
Creditors	(43,046)	(50,768)
Receipts in advance	-	-
Current Liabilities	(43,046)	(50,768)

	£	£
	2020	2021
Assets less liabilities	73,350	127,279

Finance Report

A summary of the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2021 is appended to the Annual Report. The accounts are independently inspected by Kate Brown Accountants, Chartered Accountants, and submitted to Companies House under the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

The Association maintains a system of internal controls to ensure the

effectiveness and efficiency of its activities and operating procedures. A director is appointed with responsibility to



scrutinise the internal controls and working practices, which has proved to be a very useful governance tool that helps improve risk identification and mitigation. The Internal Controls Director (ICD) carries out a minimum of three on-site checks per year and may check any system or procedure at will.

The Association ended the financial year with a surplus of £53,929, due to income higher than expected and costs being lower than expected. The increased income was due mainly to the outgoing borough councils engaging Northants CALC as consultants for the creation of the new town councils in Corby, Kettering, Northampton, and Wellingborough, as well as Kingsthorpe Parish Council and Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council. The savings generated from moving out of Litchborough also started to have a positive effect in the second half of the financial year. The Association keeps very tight control on all expenditure, with regular reporting to the board of directors.

Overall, the Association's financial position is very positive, and it is well placed to cope with the short and medium-term financial outlook.

Corporate Governance

The board operates according to the following principles:

The board should be independent of the staff:

The board has determined that each director is independent in character and judgement and that there are no relationships or circumstances which are likely to affect their judgement or impair their independence.

Directors should be submitted for re-appointment annually:

Recommendations for re-appointment should not be assumed but be based on disclosed procedures and continued satisfactory performance.

There should be full disclosure of the board's membership:

A list of directors with biographies is available on the Association's web site.

The board should aim to have a balance of skills, experience, and knowledge:

The board operates a Composition & Diversity Policy that ensures that the board contains a good mix of clerks and councillors from small and large councils.

The board should undertake an annual review of its own performance:

All directors complete self-assessment forms that help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the board.

The board should give attention to overall strategy:

The board monitors performance against its agreed strategy on an ongoing basis and reviews its overall strategy, including the viability of the Association in its current form.

Chief Executive's Report

It has been a quiet year with not much happening, said nobody in 2020/21! It will go down as probably the most turbulent year ever in the history of the Association and of local government in Northamptonshire.

Our year was dominated by the Coronavirus pandemic and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and the impact of those things on parish and town councils in Northamptonshire.

The year started with the creation of four new local councils: Far Cotton and Delapre Community Council, Kingsthorpe Parish Council, Northampton Town Council, and Wellingborough Town Council all came into legal existence on 1 April 2020. Northampton Town Council (NTC) is the biggest local council in England by some way. Northants CALC was engaged by Northampton Borough Council and Borough Council of Wellingborough to provide consultancy support to get the new councils up and running. Northants CALC is indebted to Lesley Sambrook Smith for her hard work and diligence, and to Richard Walden, who joined us on a temporary contract, for his knowledge and wisdom. I tell my CALC colleagues across the country "It's always a good idea to set up a new parish or town councils; just make sure you don't try it during Local Government Reorganisation and a global pandemic!"

Days after the new councils were created, we got the news from government that the local elections scheduled for May 2020 were being postponed a year due to the pandemic. It was a blow given all the preparation that had already gone in to having the elections in 2020, and it meant a six-year term for all parish and town councillors, as the elections had already been postponed one year due to LGR.

In May 2020 the shadow unitary councils were created, and we had the excitement and history of their first ever meetings being held in June. I have lost count of the number of principal council meetings that Lesley and I attended during the year; it was made easier by the fact that they were necessarily held online, so between us we only missed one or two during the whole year. We felt that it was important to keep parish and town councils in the minds of the decision makers, so we pulled out all the stops to make that happen. In July 2020 I was invited to assist with the recruitment of the unitary council Chief Executives, and I chaired the Community Stakeholder Panel. I can reveal that the calibre of candidates was

very high, so the successful ones, Anna Earnshaw for West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) and Rob Bridge for North Northamptonshire Council (NNC), came through some stiff competition. They took up their respective posts in autumn 2020 and we have worked closely with them and their teams to build a good relationship between the unitary councils and parish and town councils.

All of local government was forced into meeting online, and it turned out to be a revelation. Our member councils have reported better attendance from councillors and members of the public, greater engagement, and shorter meetings! All highly desirable things. It is imperative that government understands the benefits and makes provision for remote or hybrid meetings to become a permanent fixture.

Remote working generally has also been a revelation for Northants CALC. The three members of staff decamped from Litchborough in March 2020 to our home offices, and we haven't looked back. We did not skip a beat and in fact we have enhanced and improved our service standards. Remote working has been so successful for us that in June 2020 the board made the decision to give up the Litchborough office altogether. Before we left, the landlord made us return the premises to its former industrial unit state, which meant getting the builders in and having to oversee a six-week building (or demolition!) project as well as clearing out all our belongings. Again, my thanks go to Lesley and to Marie Reilly for their help in making sure the project completed smoothly and on time.

In November 2020, Lynne Taylor completed her three-year term as chairman and Mike Scott, the former vice chairman, was elected in her place. I would like to place on record my personal thanks to Lynne for her chairmanship and support. As a Chief Executive all you can really ask for is the unwavering support of your chairman, whilst being honestly and robustly held to account. Lynne did a great job of

that, and she steered the Association through some big changes. Since his election, Mike Scott has continued that work and I look forward to working with him and the other board members to push on to deliver even better value for money to member councils.

At the start of the year under report we were planning a big Climate Change Conference for parish and town councils. Sadly, that became a casualty of the pandemic (we will return to it in due course) but that hasn't stopped us taking direct action. As well as massively reducing our carbon footprint through remote working, we were delighted in September 2020 to create a partnership with Weedon-based Complete Utility Solutions (CUS) to create an energy buying scheme for member councils. By the end of March 2021, the scheme had saved member councils over £30,000 and, critically, had saved over 100 tonnes of CO2 emissions by sourcing from green energy suppliers, saving money and helping save the planet all at the same time. We look forward to seeing how far the scheme can do and will report on further savings in future years.

In March 2021 the board set up a Governance Working Group to review the format and frequency of meetings, the role of honorary officers, and the way the board conducts business. The working group will make recommendations to the AGM in 2021 that aim to ensure that the Association's governance is fit for purpose for whatever the next five to ten years throws our way. The Association is well governed and properly managed; member councils can be assured that they are well represented and that every penny of membership fees is spent wisely and carefully.

I would like to thank the board of directors, including Julia Tufnail who resigned from the board in May 2020 having moved out of Northamptonshire, and all the vice presidents for their commitment and willingness to adapt in very difficult circumstances. The work of

the board is mostly behind the scenes, but the staff could not do their jobs effectively without the support and trust of the board.

And finally, thank you to all our member councils, the ones that have existed since 1894, and the ones that are less than a year old! By 1 April 2021 Northamptonshire will be 100% parished, which is a monumental achievement for the Association and a wonderful thing for the county's residents, who will all now enjoy democracy and representation at its finest and most local level. If that doesn't encourage and motivate us to do even more then I don't know what will!

Danny Moody, Chief Executive

Association Staff

Position	Name
Chief Executive	Danny Moody
Deputy Chief Executive	Lesley Sambrook Smith
Training Manager	Marie Reilly

Honorary Officers & Auditor

The following were elected at the AGM on 3 October 2020 to serve for one year:

Name	Title
Jeffery Greenwell	President
Catherine Lomax	Vice President
Gwen Radcliffe	Vice President
Gordon Shorley	Vice President
Kate Brown Accountants	Auditors



Council meetings were a bit different in 2020!

Board of Directors

The following were elected at the AGM on 3 October 2020 to serve for one year:

Name	Current Role
Peter Allen	Director
Chris Horsman	Director
Lynn Lavender	Vice chairman
Richard Lewis	Director
Geoff Paul	Director
Mike Scott	Chairman
Lynne Taylor	Director
Gill Wells	Director

Membership Fee

In Northamptonshire as at 31 March 2020 there were 207 parish councils, 15 town councils and 51 parish meetings (civil parishes without a parish council). The largest council is Northampton Town Council (electorate c90,000) and the smallest council is Brampton Ash Parish Council (electorate 58). The smallest parish meeting is Althorp Parish Meeting (electorate 11). The highest precepting council in 2019/20 is Rushden Town Council (£1,016,224) and the lowest (of the ones that precept at all) is Catesby Parish Meeting (£90). Together, councils in Northamptonshire raised £14.1 million in precept in 2020/21.

98% of the councils in the county are in membership of the Association. The membership fees are set by the AGM each October.

	£	£
Year Ending 31 st March	2021	2022
Base rate <i>(per council)</i>	161.55	163.33
County Association <i>(per elector)</i>	0.2424	0.2451
NALC affiliation <i>(per elector)</i>	0.0720	0.0741

Nb: The Northants CALC fee for councils with 10,000 to 30,000 electors is capped at £2,613.26 and for councils with more than 30,000 electors the cap is £4,747.22.

Internal Audit Service

187 of the 222 parish and town councils in Northamptonshire

used the Internal Audit Service from Northants CALC for the year ending 31 March 2021.



A team of specialist auditors are contracted by the Association to provide the service to parish and town councils, ranging from the smallest with annual expenditure of less than £1,000 to the largest with annual expenditure in excess of £1,000,000.

The purpose of internal audit is to review whether the systems of financial and other controls over a council's activities and operating procedures are effective.

Internal audit function must be independent of the other financial controls and procedures of the council.

The person or persons carrying out internal audit must also be competent to carry out the role in a way that will meet the business needs of each local council.

Member Enquiry Service (MES)

The Member Enquiry Service (MES) is an email-based enquiry service for member councils that provides a timely response to non-complex, generic enquiries.

In the year to 31 March 2021, MES responded to 198 enquiries from member councils on an extremely diverse range of subjects.

Member councils may not know that MES is operated on a volunteer basis by a team of four expert and dedicated clerks all of whom are CiLCA trained.

Huge thanks go to Nikki Daft, Erica Fothergill (who stepped down in March 2021), Helen Hoier, Rosie Smart, and Tina Charteress (who joined in March 2021 to replace Erica) for their support and hard work during the year.

Data Protection Officer (DPO) Service

The DPO Service provides councils with a



dedicated email address and named officers to act as DPO. The role of the DPO is to inform and advise the Council and its employees about their obligations to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and other data protection laws, to monitor compliance and advise on data protection impact assessments, train staff and conduct internal audits. The DPO is the first point of contact for supervisory authorities and for individuals whose data is processed (including employees, councillors and members of the public).

180 of the county's parish and town councils subscribed to the DPO Service in 2020/21.

Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS)

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has refreshed the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS).

All councils are encouraged to consider going for accreditation. There's a level for everyone: Foundation recognises sound standard practice; Quality recognises good practice and Quality Gold recognises best practice in all aspects. Councils can accredit at one level and then work towards a higher level if they choose.

Councillor Panel

The Northants CALC Councillor Panel was established in 2012 to provide the Association with a quick way to understand the attitude, thoughts, and feelings of the councillorship in the county. Around 115 Councillors are registered on the panel, which operates on an e-mail basis. We send out questions and surveys (normally using SurveyMonkey) and give the Councillor Panel a few days to respond. The results are used as a guide, and they help inform our work. It's not a formal consultation mechanism and the

responses are those of individual councillors, not councils, but it does give us a very quick and cost-effective way of engaging with Councillors.

This year we consulted the Councillor Panel on issues such as the response to the Coronavirus pandemic, planning and development control, and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

The Councillor Panel is extremely useful to the Association and all councillors are encouraged to sign up for it, even if just on a trial basis. All you have to do to sign up to the panel is send an email to info@northantscalc.com with your expression of interest and you will be added to the distribution list. Typical response rates are in the order of 50 – 70%, so not every member of the panel responds to every survey. If you would like to know more before signing up, please contact Northants CALC by telephone on 01327 831482 or e-mail info@northantscalc.com and request a copy of the Councillor Panel Terms of Reference.

Printed or electronic copies of this Annual Report and further details are available on request. Please e-mail info@northantscalc.com.

Registered number
07335699

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited

Report and Unaudited Accounts

31 March 2021

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited

Registered number: 07335699

Directors' Report

The directors present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Principal activities

The company's principal activity during the year is to provide support and services to its members, parish and town councils in Northamptonshire. The company is a non profit making organisation and is limited by guarantee.

Directors

The following persons served as directors during the year:

Richard Lewis
Gillian Helen Wells
Peter Robert Allen
Lynne Jane Taylor
Lynn Lavender
Geoffrey Paul
Christopher Horsman
Michael John Scott
Sara Marie Homer (resigned 25 April 2019)

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

This report was approved by the board on 10 July 2021 and signed on its behalf.



Mike Scott
Chairman

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited

Chartered Accountants' report to the board of directors on the preparation of the unaudited statutory accounts of Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited for the year ended 31 March 2021

In order to assist you to fulfil your duties under the Companies Act 2006, we have prepared for your approval the accounts of Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise of the Profit and Loss Account, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Changes in Equity and the related notes from the company's accounting records and from information and explanations you have given us.

As a practising member firm of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, we are subject to its ethical and other professional requirements which are detailed at icaew.com/membershandbook.

Our work has been undertaken in accordance with AAF 2/10 as detailed at icaew.com/compilation.

Kate Brown Accountants
Chartered Accountants
The Annexe, Rectory Farm
Cranford Road
Great Addington
Northamptonshire
NN14 4BQ

10 July 2021

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited
Profit and Loss Account
for the year ended 31 March 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
Turnover	322,248	193,320
Cost of sales	(106,521)	(63,863)
Gross profit	<u>215,727</u>	<u>129,457</u>
Administrative expenses	(162,781)	(155,497)
Operating profit/(loss)	<u>52,946</u>	<u>(26,040)</u>
Interest receivable	983	585
Profit/(loss) on ordinary activities before taxation	<u>53,929</u>	<u>(25,455)</u>
Tax on profit/(loss) on ordinary activities	-	-
Profit/(loss) for the financial year	<u><u>53,929</u></u>	<u><u>(25,455)</u></u>

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited

Registered number: 07335699

Balance Sheet

as at 31 March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	3	-	1,492
Current assets			
Debtors	4	26,435	2,483
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>151,612</u>	<u>112,421</u>
		178,047	114,904
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	5	(50,768)	(43,046)
Net current assets		<u>127,279</u>	<u>71,858</u>
Net assets		<u>127,279</u>	<u>73,350</u>
Capital and reserves			
Profit and loss account		127,279	73,350
Shareholders' funds		<u>127,279</u>	<u>73,350</u>

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the requirement to obtain an audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Act.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The accounts have been prepared and delivered in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime. The profit and loss account has not been delivered to the Registrar of Companies.



Mike Scott
Chairman

Approved by the board on 10 July 2021

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited
Statement of Changes in Equity
for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Share capital	Profit and loss account	Total
	£	£	£
At 1 April 2019	-	98,805	98,805
Loss for the financial year		(25,455)	(25,455)
At 31 March 2020	<u>-</u>	<u>73,350</u>	<u>73,350</u>
At 1 April 2020	-	73,350	73,350
Profit for the financial year		53,929	53,929
At 31 March 2021	<u>-</u>	<u>127,279</u>	<u>127,279</u>

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2021

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with FRS 102, The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (as applied to small entities by section 1A of the standard).

Turnover

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, net of discounts and value added taxes. Turnover includes revenue earned from the sale of goods and from the rendering of services. Turnover from the sale of goods is recognised when the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods have transferred to the buyer. Turnover from the rendering of services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract. The stage of completion of a contract is measured by comparing the costs incurred for work performed to date to the total estimated contract costs.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulative depreciation and any accumulative impairment losses. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, other than freehold land, at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset evenly over its expected useful life, as follows:

Freehold buildings	over 50 years
Leasehold land and buildings	over the lease term
Plant and machinery	over 5 years
Fixtures, fittings, tools and equipment	over 5 years

Debtors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price (which is usually the invoice price), less any impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts. Loans and other financial assets are initially recognised at transaction price including any transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost determined using the effective interest method, less any impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts.

Creditors

Short term creditors are measured at transaction price (which is usually the invoice price). Loans and other financial liabilities are initially recognised at transaction price net of any transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost determined using the effective interest method.

Provisions

Provisions (ie liabilities of uncertain timing or amount) are recognised when there is an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that economic benefit will be transferred to settle the obligation and the amount of the obligation can be estimated reliably.

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2021

Leased assets

A lease is classified as a finance lease if it transfers substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership. All other leases are classified as operating leases. The rights of use and obligations under finance leases are initially recognised as assets and liabilities at amounts equal to the fair value of the leased assets or, if lower, the present value of the minimum lease payments. Minimum lease payments are apportioned between the finance charge and the reduction in the outstanding liability using the effective interest rate method. The finance charge is allocated to each period during the lease so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability. Leased assets are depreciated in accordance with the company's policy for tangible fixed assets. If there is no reasonable certainty that ownership will be obtained at the end of the lease term, the asset is depreciated over the lower of the lease term and its useful life. Operating lease payments are recognised as an expense on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Pensions

Contributions to defined contribution plans are expensed in the period to which they relate.

2 Employees	2021	2020
	Number	Number
Average number of persons employed by the company	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
 3 Tangible fixed assets		
		Plant and machinery etc
		£
Cost		
At 1 April 2020		19,366
Disposals		<u>(19,366)</u>
At 31 March 2021		<u>-</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2020		17,874
Charge for the year		1,492
On disposals		<u>(19,366)</u>
At 31 March 2021		<u>-</u>
Net book value		
At 31 March 2021		<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2020		<u>1,492</u>
 4 Debtors	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	<u>26,435</u>	<u>2,483</u>

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2021

5 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	40,596	37,559
Other creditors	10,172	5,487
	<u>50,768</u>	<u>43,046</u>

6 Other information

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited is a private company limited by guarantee and incorporated in England. Its registered office is:

30 Church Street
Helmdon
Northants
NN13 5QJ

Correspondence Address:

PO Box 7936
Brackley
Northamptonshire
NN13 9BY

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited
Detailed profit and loss account
for the year ended 31 March 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
Sales	322,248	193,320
Cost of sales	(106,521)	(63,863)
Gross profit	<u>215,727</u>	<u>129,457</u>
Administrative expenses	(162,781)	(155,497)
Operating profit/(loss)	<u>52,946</u>	<u>(26,040)</u>
Interest receivable	983	585
Profit/(loss) before tax	<u>53,929</u>	<u>(25,455)</u>

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited
Detailed profit and loss account
for the year ended 31 March 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
Sales		
Sales	<u>322,248</u>	<u>193,320</u>
Cost of sales		
Purchases	53,817	54,989
Other direct costs	<u>52,704</u>	<u>8,874</u>
	<u>106,521</u>	<u>63,863</u>
Administrative expenses		
Employee costs:		
Wages and salaries	125,247	117,376
Travel and subsistence	224	1,085
	<u>125,471</u>	<u>118,461</u>
Premises costs:		
Rent	4,374	8,706
Service charges	-	482
Light and heat	419	2,637
	<u>4,793</u>	<u>11,825</u>
General administrative expenses:		
Telephone and fax	2,589	1,892
Stationery and printing	144	1,264
Bank charges	218	239
Repairs and maintenance	-	840
Depreciation	1,491	1,344
Loss on investments	161	2,471
Bad debts	-	6,362
Sundry expenses	25,949	5,110
	<u>30,552</u>	<u>19,522</u>
Legal and professional costs:		
Accountancy fees	992	2,104
Other legal and professional	973	3,585
	<u>1,965</u>	<u>5,689</u>
	<u>162,781</u>	<u>155,497</u>