

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited
Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statements
for the financial year ended 31 March 2025



Third Sector Accountancy Limited
Chartered Accountants and Independent Reporting Accountant
Hollyoake House
Hanover Street
Manchester
Greater Manchester
M60 0AS
United Kingdom

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

CONTENTS

	Page
Management Committee and Other Information	3
Annual Report	4 - 5
Accountants' Report	6
Profit and Loss Account	7
Balance Sheet	8
Statement of Changes in Equity	9
Notes to the Financial Statements	10 - 14

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND OTHER INFORMATION

Management Committee

Shaun Fensom (Resigned 23 April 2024)
Ketan Varia (Appointed 10 July 2024)
Alyson Tyler
Clare Searle (Appointed 10 July 2024)
Adina Claire (Appointed 26 September 2024)
Rob Harrison
Tim Hunt (Resigned 26 September 2024)
Dan Welch
Shanta Bhavanni
Francesca de la Torre

Society Secretary

Rob Harrison

Society Number

30575R

Registered Office and Business Address

Unit 21, 41 Old Birley Street
Manchester
Greater Manchester
M15 5RF
England

Accountants

Third Sector Accountancy Limited
Chartered Accountants
Hollyoake House
Hanover Street
Manchester
Greater Manchester
M60 0AS
United Kingdom

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

ANNUAL REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

The Management Committee present their report and the unaudited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2025.

Directors' Report

Background

In 2022 Ethical Consumer Research Association embarked on a five year plan that began with two years of planned losses as we invested resources in a major upgrade to our approach to ranking corporate ethical behaviour.

We also undertook other product development work that included the extension of our Best Buy ethical accreditation scheme to products not formally reviewed as part of a buyers' guide.

In the third and subsequent years the plan required us to make trading surpluses to offset these deficits and rebuild our reserves.

This year's surplus

As the figures in these accounts show, this went well in the 2024/5 financial year (year 3), where we made a surplus of £62,477. If we subtract from this figure the £17,813 of interest paid on members' shares that can be found on page 8, we get to a revised surplus figure of £44,664 which is more consistent with our long-standing reporting history and still a great result.

Much of this was due to controlling costs as well as improving sales. Our 'ethical screenings' service for companies and charities to check out their suppliers and partners for 'ethical risk' did particularly well. We also implemented, as planned, a price rise for subscriptions to our consumer magazine and website, and increased researcher resources in the consultancy side of our work.

The upgrade to our ranking system has also begun to deliver on the goals we set. We have reduced research time for buyers guides while producing rankings that we think are higher quality, better aligned with those of other groups, and easier to communicate.

Uncertainty ahead

Although we are still projecting trading surpluses for the coming years, there is much uncertainty ahead. Political polarisation is seeing increased climate change denial, hate speech and even criminalisation of dissenting voices. Other changes, such as the employers national insurance increases which have increased our staff costs by around 10% this year, are also presenting very real challenges.

We think that continuing to develop multiple income streams, as we have been doing, is a key way of maintaining resilience amidst this uncertainty.

We are also planning to run our first crowdfunder in four years in the autumn. This will be to support our new workstream on 'challenging corporate power beyond consumer markets'.

Reserves

We continue to hold £448,131 of net assets as an additional buffer against uncertainty and as a resource to allow us to continue to invest in our products. During the year investor share capital rose slightly to £561,605 with four investor members leaving last year and four new ones joining.

Prior period adjustment

For our subscriptions income, which readers pay one year in advance, we perform a complex calculation at the end of each year where a proportion of each person's payment (depending on when they began subscribing) is transferred into the next year. When preparing these accounts, we discovered an error in this calculation for the previous financial year which means that we understated 2023/4 subscriptions income by £28,141. We have corrected this figure now which means that the surplus for that year (on page 5) is now much better than previously stated.

Management Committee

The Management Committee who served during the financial year are as follows:

Shaun Fensom (Resigned 23 April 2024)
Ketan Varia (Appointed 10 July 2024)
Alyson Tyler
Clare Searle (Appointed 10 July 2024)
Adina Claire (Appointed 26 September 2024)
Rob Harrison
Tim Hunt (Resigned 26 September 2024)
Dan Welch
Shanta Bhavanni
Francesca de la Torre

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

ANNUAL REPORT

for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

Political Contributions

The Society did not make any disclosable political donations in the current financial year.

Statement of Management Committee Responsibilities

The Management Committee are responsible for preparing the Management Committee Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Society law requires the Management Committee to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Management Committee have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law) including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" Section 1A (Small Entities). Under Society law the Management Committee must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Society and of the profit or loss of the Society for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Management Committee are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Society will continue in business.

On behalf of the Management Committee



Rob Harrison
Director

14 / 08 / 2025

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited
INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT REPORT
to the Board of Directors on the Compilation of the unaudited financial statements
of Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited
for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

We report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 set out on pages 6 to 9.

Respective responsibilities of the committee of management and the independent reporting accountant

The society's committee of management is responsible for the preparation of the accounts, and they consider that the society is exempt from an audit. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

Basis of opinion

Our procedures consisted of comparing the accounts with the books of account kept by the society and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the society as we considered necessary for the purpose of this report. These procedures provide the only assurance expressed in our opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion:

- the revenue account and balance sheet for year ended year are in agreement with the books of account kept by the society under section 75 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014;
- having regard only to, and on the basis of the information contained in the books of account, the revenue account and balance sheet for the year ended year comply with the requirements of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014; and
- the society met the financial criteria enabling it to disapply the requirement to have an audit of the accounts for the year specified in section 84 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

Third Sector Accountancy Limited

THIRD SECTOR ACCOUNTANCY LIMITED

Chartered Accountants and Independent Reporting Accountant
Hollyoake House
Hanover Street
Manchester
M60 0AS
United Kingdom

Date: 16 / 09 / 2025

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

REVENUE ACCOUNT

for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £ as restated
Turnover		937,929	958,992
Cost of sales		(226,738)	(318,377)
Gross profit		711,191	640,175
Administrative expenses		(659,389)	(617,139)
Operating profit		51,802	23,476
Investment income	3	1,329	1,238
Interest receivable and similar income		9,344	6,566
Profit before taxation		62,476	31,280
Tax on profit		-	-
Profit for the financial year		62,476	31,280
Total comprehensive income		62,476	31,280

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

Registration Number: 30575R

BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £ as restated
Fixed Assets			
Intangible assets	7	93,299	95,557
Tangible assets	8	12,739	5,087
Investments	9	31,586	30,928
Fixed Assets		137,624	131,572
Current Assets			
Stocks	10	500	500
Debtors	11	142,862	186,000
Cash at bank and in hand		528,565	547,396
		671,927	733,896
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(361,422)	(464,130)
Net Current Assets		310,505	269,766
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		448,129	401,338
Capital and Reserves			
Called up share capital		561,605	559,477
Retained earnings		(113,476)	(158,139)
Equity attributable to owners of the Society		448,129	401,338

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to societies subject to the small societies' regime and in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 Section 1A (Small Entities).

For the financial year ended 31 March 2025 the Society was entitled to exemption from audit under section 83 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

The directors confirm that the members have not required the Society to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the financial year in question in accordance with section 84 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

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

Approved by the directors and authorised for issue on 16 / 09 / 2025 and signed on its behalf by



Francesca de la Torre
Director



Alyson Tyler
Director



Rob Harrison
Secretary

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

as at 31 March 2025

	Called up share capital £	Retained earnings £	Total £
At 1 April 2023	568,538	(172,465)	396,073
Profit for the financial year	-	31,280	31,280
Interest paid on members' shares	-	(16,954)	(16,954)
Net proceeds of equity	13,933	-	13,933
New shares issued to members	(22,994)	-	(22,994)
Members' shares redeemed			
At 31 March 2024	559,477	(158,139)	401,338
Profit for the financial year	-	62,476	62,476
Interest paid on members' shares	-	(17,813)	(17,813)
Net proceeds of equity	18,271	-	18,271
New shares issued to members	(16,143)	-	(16,143)
Members' shares redeemed			
At 31 March 2025	561,605	(113,476)	448,129

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

1. General Information

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited is a Society registered in England. The registered number of the Society is 30575R. The registered office of the Society is Unit 21, 41 Old Birley Street, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M15 5RF, England which is also the principal place of business of the Society. The financial statements have been presented in Pound (£) which is also the functional currency of the Society.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the Society's financial statements.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements of the Society for the financial year ended 31 March 2025 have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 Section 1A (Small Entities) and the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis and in accordance with the historical cost convention except for certain properties and financial instruments that are measured at revalued amounts or fair values, as explained in the accounting policies below. Historical cost is generally based on the fair value of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

Turnover

Turnover comprises the invoice value of goods and services supplied by the Society, exclusive of trade discounts and value added tax.

Sale of goods

Turnover from the sale of goods is recognised when the significant risks and rewards of ownership of the goods has transferred to the buyer. This is usually at the point that the customer has signed for the delivery of the goods.

Rendering of services

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. Turnover is only recognised to the extent of recoverable expenses when the outcome of a contract cannot be estimated reliably.

Tax accounting policy

The society meets the standards and requirements of the Fair Tax Foundation UK Small Business Standard for the Fair Tax Mark certification. The Society is committed to paying all the taxes that we owe in accordance with the spirit of all tax laws that apply to our operations. We believe that paying our taxes in this way is the clearest indication we can give of being responsible participants in society. We will fulfil our commitment to paying the appropriate taxes that we owe by seeking to pay the right amount of tax, in the right place, and at the right time. We aim to do this by ensuring that we report our tax affairs in ways that reflect the economic reality of the transactions that we undertake during the course of our trade.

We will not seek to use those options made available in tax law, or the allowances and reliefs that it provides, in ways that are contrary to the spirit of the law. Nor will we undertake specific transactions with the sole or main aim of securing tax advantages that would otherwise not be available to us based on the reality of the trade that we undertake. The Society will never undertake transactions that would require notification to HM Revenue & Customs under the Disclosure of Tax Avoidance Schemes Regulations or participate in any arrangement to which it might be reasonably anticipated that the UK's General Anti-Abuse Rule might apply.

We believe tax havens undermine the UK's tax system. As a result, whilst we may trade with customers and suppliers genuinely located in places considered to be tax havens, we will not make use of those places to secure a tax advantage, and nor will we take advantage of the secrecy that many such jurisdictions provide for transactions recorded within them. Our accounts will be prepared in compliance with this policy and will seek to provide all the information that users, including HM Revenue & Customs, might need to properly appraise our tax position.

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

Intangible assets

Database

The database includes the customer and reference databases used by the Society. Database is valued at cost less accumulated amortisation.

Amortisation is calculated to write off the cost in equal annual instalments over their estimated useful life of 7 years.

Website

The website is valued at cost less accumulated amortisation.

Amortisation is calculated to write off the cost in equal annual instalments over their estimated useful life of 7 years.

Tangible assets and depreciation

Tangible assets are stated at cost or at valuation, less accumulated depreciation. The charge to depreciation is calculated to write off the original cost or valuation of tangible assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives as follows:

Computer equipment	- 4 years straight line
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Investments

Investments held as fixed assets are stated at cost less provision for any permanent diminution in value. Income from other investments together with any related tax credit is recognised in the Profit and Loss Account in the financial year in which it is receivable.

Stocks

Stocks and work in progress are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads. Work-in-progress is reflected in the accounts on a contract-by-contract basis by recording turnover and related costs as contract activity progresses.

Trade and other debtors

Trade and other debtors are initially recognised at fair value and thereafter stated at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts except where the effect of discounting would be immaterial. In such cases the receivables are stated at cost less impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts.

Trade and other creditors

Trade and other creditors are initially recognised at fair value and thereafter stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, unless the effect of discounting would be immaterial, in which case they are stated at cost.

Taxation

Current tax represents the amount expected to be paid or recovered in respect of taxable profits for the financial year and is calculated using the tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantially enacted at the Balance Sheet date.

Foreign currencies

Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rates of exchange ruling at the Balance Sheet date. Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rate ruling on the date of the transaction. The resulting exchange differences are dealt with in the Profit and Loss Account.

Ordinary share capital

Member shares have a nominal value of £1 and are non-transferable shares which are withdrawable at the discretion of the board. The shares confer membership of the society and entitle the member holding shares to a vote at the Annual General Meeting, on the basis of one member, one vote. Interest may be paid on the shares at the discretion of the board. In the event of the society being wound up, shareholders are only entitled to repayment of their shares (assuming sufficient funds are available) and not to any distribution of the residual assets.

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

3. Income from investments	2025	2024
	£	£
Investment income	1,329	1,238

4. Employees

The average monthly number of employees, including the Management Committee, during the financial year was 24, (2024 - 23).

	2025	2024
	Number	Number
Staff	24	23

5. Tax on Profit

Current tax for the financial year is £nil (2024: £nil). The breakdown of the tax charge, based on a profit of £62,362 (2023; £3,319) is as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Tax on profit at UK standard rate	11,871	5,943
Short term timing differences on fixed assets	(1,223)	(1,066)
Capital allowances	(8,359)	(7,110)
Tax deduction for interest paid on society shares	(3,385)	(3,221)
Relief for tax losses for which no deferred tax asset had been recognised	(7,262)	(1,529)
Dividends from companies	-	(128)
	-	-

The company had trading losses brought forward of £12,669 due to historic losses pre 01/04/2017, and £133,665 losses brought forward for the period post 01/04/17. The society made a tax profit in the year of £36,893, after deducting the share interest paid and the capital allowances. Pre 01/04/17 trading losses carried forward at 31 March 2025 were nil, and post 01/04/17 trading losses £126,557.

In addition, the company has trading losses available of £172,604 which were transferred from its subsidiary Ethical Consumer Information Services Ltd ("ECIS") when the entire trade and assets of that company were transferred to the holding company in 2008. HM Revenue and Customs have agreed that if the company makes a taxable profit after using up its own losses, it can offset the ECIS losses against 50% of those profits. During the year the society offset £18,447 taxable profits against pre 01/04/2017 ECIS trading losses, and at 31 March 2025 these losses carried forward were £154,157.

6. Prior financial year error correction

A prior year adjustment to the amount £28,141 has been made to amend a misstatement in the deferred subscription income as stated in the prior year. Before adjustment, reserves brought forward stood at £418,996; after adjusting reserves brought forward stand at £447,137. The 2024 surplus as previously stated stood at £3,318, and after the adjustment at £31,279.

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

7. Intangible assets

	Database £	Website £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	62,886	268,505	331,391
Additions	6,038	26,004	32,042
At 31 March 2025	68,924	294,509	363,433
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2024	32,729	203,105	235,834
Charge for financial year	7,445	26,855	34,300
At 31 March 2025	40,174	229,960	270,134
Net book value			
At 31 March 2025	28,750	64,549	93,299
At 31 March 2024	30,157	65,400	95,557

8. Tangible assets

	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2024	12,546	12,546
Additions	11,296	11,296
Disposals	(2,973)	(2,973)
At 31 March 2025	20,869	20,869
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2024	7,459	7,459
Charge for the financial year	3,256	3,256
On disposals	(2,585)	(2,585)
At 31 March 2025	8,130	8,130
Net book value		
At 31 March 2025	12,739	12,739
At 31 March 2024	5,087	5,087

9. Investments

	Unlisted investments £	Total £
Investments		
Cost		
At 31 March 2025	31,586	31,586
Net book value		
At 31 March 2025	31,586	31,586
At 31 March 2024	30,928	31,586

Ethical Consumer Research Association Limited
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the financial year ended 31 March 2025

10. Stocks	2025	2024
	£	£
Finished goods and goods for resale	500	500
The replacement cost of stock did not differ significantly from the figures shown.		
11. Debtors	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	115,027	171,986
Other debtors	35	35
Prepayments and accrued income	27,800	13,979
	142,862	186,000
12. Creditors	2025	2024
Amounts falling due within one year	£	£
		as restated
Trade creditors	19,749	19,030
Taxation and other social security	33,712	32,144
Other creditors	74,688	103,922
Accruals and deferred income	233,273	309,034
	361,422	464,130
13. Capital commitments		
The Society had no material capital commitments at the financial year ended 31 March 2025.		
14. Post-Balance Sheet Events		
There have been no significant events affecting the Society since the financial year-end.		

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