

Behind the magic

How Pets As Therapy works, what it costs and why every visit matters



1. The scale of PAT

PAT is a small national charity with a big reach. Here's what that looks like in numbers:

- More than 6,200 PAT Volunteers and their PAT Pets across the UK
- Recruited, assessed and supported 1,545 new volunteers during the financial year 2025/26
- Around 6,500 schools, hospitals, hospices, care homes and other community places receive a regular PAT visit
- Roughly 133,000 visits made in 2024/25
- Over 2 million people experienced a moment of magic with a PAT Pet
- All of this is supported by a Head Office team of just under 14 staff

To put that last number in context: those 14 people support more volunteers than many large charities have on their books, across thousands of locations, while answering over 100 enquiries every single day.

2. A small charity, doing a lot

PAT's annual income for the year ending September 2025 was £956,837. That sounds like a lot, but in the charity world it makes us a small charity. For comparison, many of the household-name UK charities have annual incomes of £50 million, £100 million or more.

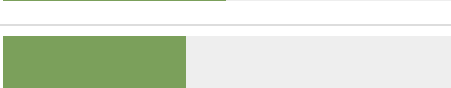
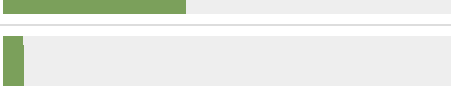
We don't have a fundraising department of dozens of people. We don't run TV adverts. We have a lean team, a tight budget and reserves that our trustees keep deliberately modest, plus a little to invest in the future.

Almost everything we achieve is achieved through volunteers. The visits themselves cost PAT nothing in volunteer fees – our amazing volunteers give their pet and their time and energy for free. What our income pays for is the support, infrastructure and safety net that allows those visits to happen reliably, safely and at scale.

3. Where our money comes from

We raise money from a mix of sources. No single source dominates, which is healthy, but it also means we have to keep working hard across all of them.

In 2024/25 our £957k of income came from:

Legacies (gifts left in Wills)	£199,264		21%
Donations from individuals and supporters	£157,858		16%
Volunteer fees annual contribution	£137,579		14%
<i>Grants – restricted (for specific projects)</i>	£137,334		14%
Grants – unrestricted (for general support)	£119,000		12%
Charitable activities (merchandise, statutory)	£107,357		11%
Corporate partnerships	£84,724		9%
Investment income (bank interest)	£13,721		1%

£137,334 of our grant income was restricted, meaning the funder asked us to spend it on specific work, like our regional Hubs or particular volunteer recruitment programmes. The other £119,000 of grant income was unrestricted, which means we can spend it wherever it's most needed.

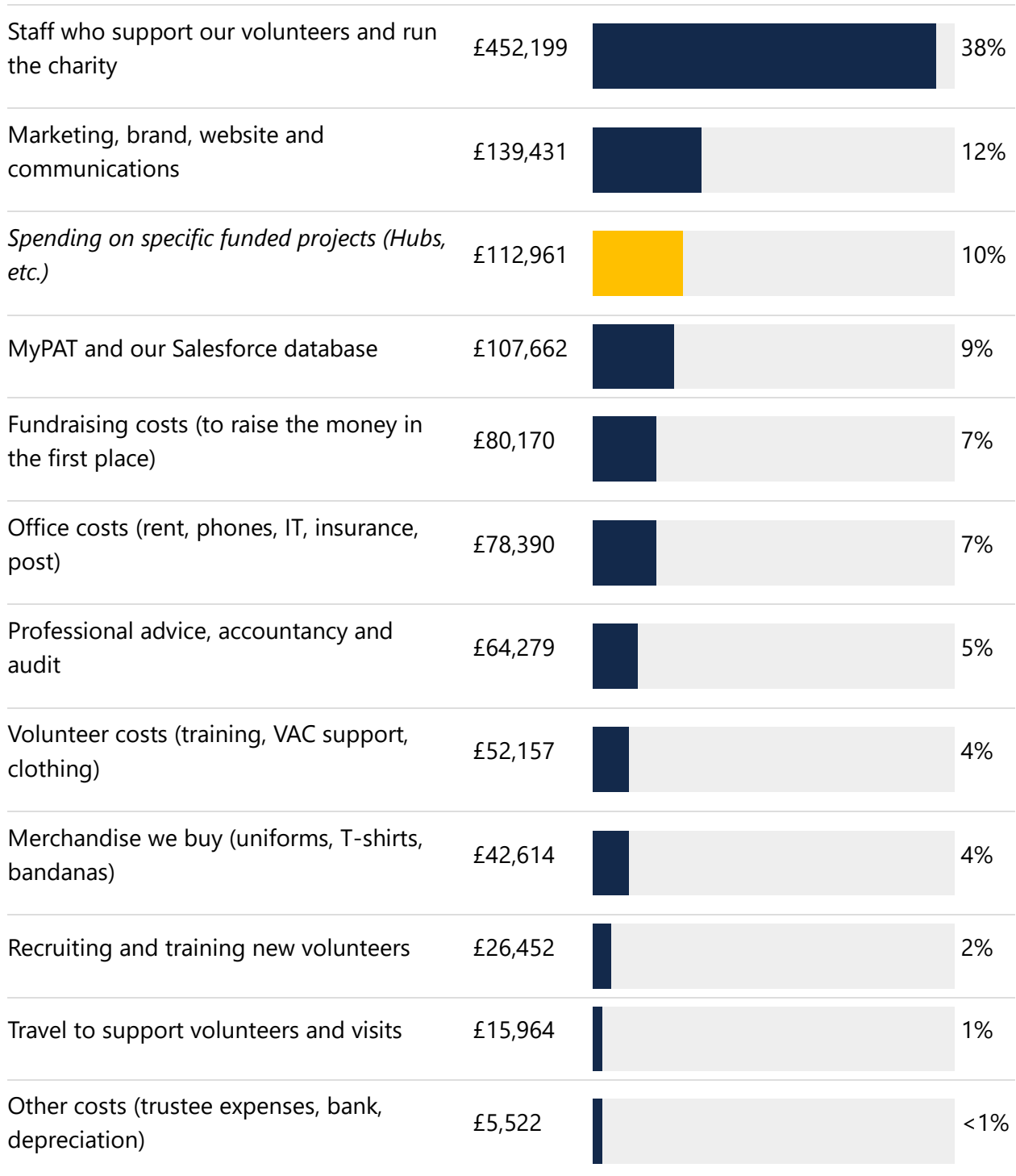
Worth noting: the £25 annual volunteer contribution is a vital part of this, totalling around £138,000 a year. But it covers only about £1 in every £7 we need. The other £6 we have to find from grants, gifts in Wills, donations, partnerships and the places we visit.

Legacies (gifts that supporters leave us in their Wills) are particularly important. They're the reason last year's income wasn't much lower, but they're also unpredictable, and we can't plan around them year to year.

4. Where the money goes

In 2024/25 we spent £1,177,801. That was more than we raised – a planned investment from our reserves into MyPAT, our refreshed brand, our new website and free uniform offer taken up by 3,000 volunteers. These are one-off costs that should help us grow income in the years ahead.

In 2024/25 we spent £1,177,801. Here's what our spending looks like, broken down:



The £112,961 marked “spending on specific funded projects” is restricted income that funders gave us for a particular purpose. The vast majority of it (£109,891) supported our regional Hubs in the North West of England and Scotland, with smaller amounts ringfenced for Read2Dogs, and supporting volunteers in Northern Ireland. We can’t use this money for anything else - which is why it’s separated out in the chart.

Where every £10 of our spending goes

Sometimes percentages are easier to picture as pounds. For every £10 PAT spends:

This is calculated on PAT’s unrestricted spending of £1,064,840, i.e. the spending where we have a real choice about where the money goes.

For every £10 of our unrestricted spending:

Staff who support volunteers, places we visit and run the charity	£4.25
Marketing, brand, website and communications	£1.31
MyPAT and our Salesforce database	£1.01
Fundraising costs	£0.75
Office costs (rent, phones, IT, insurance, post)	£0.74
Professional advice, accountancy and audit	£0.60
Volunteer costs and merchandise	£0.89
Recruitment, training, travel and other	£0.45

5. What does a PAT visit actually cost?

This is one of the questions we get asked most. The visit itself is free – volunteers and their pets provide it. But supporting the system that makes that visit possible (assessments, MyPAT, insurance, the staff on the end of the phone, the VAC who supports volunteers, the marketing that brings new volunteers on board) does have a cost.

If we divide our total expenditure by what we delivered last year, the numbers look like this:

£8.86	59p	£28	£91
The average cost to PAT of a supporting single volunteer visit	The average cost of supporting one moment of magic for a beneficiary	The average annual cost of supporting one PAT Volunteer	The average cost of recruiting a new volunteer and assessing their pet.

Our volunteers give their time for free. However, our fundraising and subscriptions enable us to offer them more support and reach even more people in need of a friendly PAT visit.

6. What that money delivered in 2024/25

It can be hard to see the link between a balance sheet and a wagging tail. So here are some of the things our spending made possible last year:

- Launched MyPAT, our new volunteer portal – used by every volunteer in some way
- Refreshed our brand and built a new website, generating much stronger awareness and recruitment
- Provided free branded uniforms to around 3,000 volunteers
- Increased our Volunteer Area Coordinators by 30%
- Hosted our first pet health webinars on dog behaviour, first aid and joint pain
- Grew Facebook followers by 117% and Instagram by 56%, helping us reach new audiences
- Launched Walk This May, our first national community fundraising campaign – with sign-ups already doubling for 2026
- Continued to support 6,500 establishments and answer 100+ enquiries a day from the Head Office team

None of this is dazzling spending. It's the unglamorous back-of-house work that makes the front-of-house magic possible.

A note on the figures in this document

The financial figures shown here are taken from our audited Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2025. Some of the wider information in this document, including current volunteer numbers and updates on activities such as Walk This May 2026, relates to our current financial year (2025/26) and is therefore not yet audited.

For a complete and accurate reflection of Pets As Therapy's finances, please refer to our full 2024/25 Annual Report and Financial Statements, which is the definitive record of our financial position.

For further information about our work, please visit www.petsastherapy.org or email info@petsastherapy.org.