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# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

NATIONAL HAIR &  
BEAUTY FEDERATION



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

## INTRODUCTION

### Chief Executive Summary: A Year of Consolidation and Green Shoots

As I present my second annual report as Chief Executive, I reflect on 2024 as a year defined by purposeful transformation, strategic investment, and unwavering commitment to our Members during one of the most challenging periods our sector has faced.

We are in our first year of a five-year plan, and this inaugural year has been one of consolidation and green shoots. While economic headwinds have been significant, we have not only weathered the storm but emerged stronger and more focused than ever.

Each of my team of directors has produced a section reflecting their area of work, demonstrating the breadth and depth of our achievements across all aspects of the NHBF.

## BUILDING FROM STRENGTH

Our achievements demonstrate the power of strategic leadership combined with operational excellence. We are successfully transforming the NHBF from a service provider into the premier authority for the hair and beauty sector, establishing new quality benchmarks and creating clear pathways for professional development and sector growth.

## POLICY LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

We have become one of the government's most trusted sources of intelligence in the hair and beauty sector. Our quarterly State of the Industry surveys are now referenced by policymakers as "valuable tools," with our evidence-based quality earning specific recognition from the Low Pay Commission.

Securing the first hair and beauty sector ministerial meeting with Small Business Minister Gareth Thomas following the election demonstrates the relationships we've built and the respect we've earned. Our participation in the Department of Business and Trade Skills Working Group, providing formal evidence to the Scottish COVID-19 inquiry, and ongoing collaboration with HMRC all showcase how we've established our voice at the highest policymaking levels.

## MEMBER-CENTRIC INNOVATION AND QUALITY EXCELLENCE

Our "Business in a Box" initiative represents a major evolution from traditional support materials to comprehensive business toolkits, while enhanced legal resources now cover more employment scenarios across all UK nations. The enhancement of our Quality, Standards and Education team provides dedicated expertise across all industries.

Despite challenging economic conditions, we've improved first-year Member retention by 7% and launched our 50+ year Member recognition program, showcasing inspiring examples of business resilience that benefit our entire community.



## FINANCIAL PRUDENCE AND STRATEGIC INVESTMENT

Our financial management this year exemplifies the balance between prudent stewardship and strategic investment. We successfully reduced overall expenditure by 9% while maintaining service quality, achieved a record investment portfolio high, and most importantly, invested in enhanced Member services and benefits.

This financial discipline has created the solid foundation we need for sustainable growth while demonstrating our commitment to delivering immediate value to our Members. The unqualified audit opinion from Streets LLP confirms the robustness of our financial controls and our commitment to transparency.

## COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE SECTOR

The trust-building initiative that our President, Amanda Lodge-Stewart, and I launched in January set a powerful precedent for the year. Our face-to-face meetings with key industry organisations, including the Hair & Barber Council, Freelance Hairdressers Association, and Salon Employers Association, amongst many others — attempted to address historical tensions and created a foundation for more unified sector representation during challenging times.

Our enhanced collaborative approach has amplified the sector's voice through strategic partnerships with government bodies, educational institutions, and commercial organisations. The breadth of our relationships—from Ofgem on energy efficiency to the **Beauty Industry Group** on aesthetics regulation, from L'Oréal's educational initiatives to our work with **Unifrog** promoting careers to schools nationwide—demonstrates our unique position at the heart of the hair and beauty landscape.

Our participation in major industry events like Hair Con 2024, Salon International, Professional Beauty, and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Beauty Conference has strengthened our collaborative opportunities, while our international engagement through **Coiffure EU** ensures we maintain a global perspective on sector developments.

## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

**Survive and Thrive:** The unanimous board endorsement of our **Survive and Thrive** initiative in November represents a pivotal moment in our year's activities. This comprehensive response to the unprecedented challenges our Members face, including the 6.7% increase in National Living Wage and 16.3% rise in the 18-20 rate—demonstrates our commitment to supporting businesses through practical guidance while advocating for policy changes at the highest levels.

This initiative, launching in January 2025, encapsulates everything we've built in 2024: evidence-based advocacy, practical Member support, strategic partnerships, and proactive leadership during challenging times.

## TEAM EXCELLENCE AND ORGANISATIONAL GROWTH

The successful recruitment of our complete Quality and Standards team, the strategic restructuring of our Marketing function, and the implementation of enhanced HR systems have created an organisation capable of delivering operational excellence. Our team's embrace of change while maintaining an unwavering commitment to Member service has been truly inspiring.

## LOOKING AHEAD WITH CONFIDENCE

As we enter 2025, the foundations we've established position us perfectly to accelerate our growth initiatives while continuing to enhance Member services. Our strong financial position, enhanced government relationships, comprehensive support systems, and unified team approach provide the platform for the transformational change our sector needs.

The challenges facing our Members remain substantial, but so does our determination and capability to address them. We have become more than a Trade Association—we are the driving force behind the sector-wide transformation, the trusted voice in government corridors, and the essential partner for businesses navigating an evolving landscape.

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## A PERSONAL REFLECTION

After 37+ years in this sector, I still wake up every morning excited about the work we do. The privilege of leading the NHBF during this transformational period, working alongside such dedicated colleagues, and serving Members who demonstrate remarkable resilience and innovation every day, continues to inspire everything we achieve.

The journey from a 16-year-old YTS learner to Chief Executive has given me a deep understanding of every level of our sector. This perspective, combined with the exceptional team we've built and the strategic foundations we've laid, fills me with confidence about our sector's future and the NHBF's role in shaping it.

2024 has been a year of necessary consolidation that has created the green shoots of renewal. The investments we've made in people, systems, relationships, and Member services are already showing returns. As we launch into 2025 with our Survive and Thrive initiative and continued five-year strategy implementation, we do so from a position of strength, with clear direction, and with the unwavering commitment to make everyday count for our Members and our sector.

The best is yet to come!

*Caroline*

**Caroline Larissey**

**Chief Executive**

National Hair and Beauty Federation



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# SECTION 1: MEMBER SERVICES, SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY

## ENHANCING MEMBER RESOURCES, SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY IN 2024

**Following the comprehensive review of Member resources at the end of 2023, the NHBF has further strengthened its support offerings in 2024, ensuring Members receive timely, relevant, and legally compliant guidance to navigate an increasingly complex business environment. Beyond providing practical resources, we've also enhanced our sense of community through recognition initiatives and improved communication channels.**

### MEMBER RETENTION AND GROWTH

The hair and beauty sector faced unprecedented economic pressures in 2024, with rising operational costs, increased competition, and changing consumer habits creating a perfect storm for many businesses. Like many Membership organisations serving sectors under financial strain, the NHBF experienced a decline in overall Membership numbers, largely driven by business closures and professionals leaving the industry altogether.

Despite these challenging circumstances, we've strengthened our support for remaining Members and implemented targeted strategies to mitigate Membership losses. Our direct engagement with non-renewing Members revealed that 68% cited business closure or career change as their primary reason for departure.

Our enhanced first-year Member communication strategy has shown promising results, with retention rates for this vulnerable segment improving by 7% compared to 2023, despite the harsh economic climate. These communications have been specifically designed to demonstrate immediate value and practical support during the critical early stages of Membership.

The recognition of our long-standing Members has provided inspirational examples of business resilience, with our 50+ year Members sharing valuable insights about navigating previous economic downturns. These success stories have been integrated into our Member communications, offering practical wisdom alongside our technical support.

While addressing immediate Member needs remains our priority, we've also invested in research to identify emerging opportunities for sector growth, providing forward-looking resources to help Members diversify and adapt their businesses. Our quarterly State of the Industry surveys have become an essential tool for identifying early warning signs and success indicators across the sector.

The current Membership climate, while challenging, has reinforced the critical importance of the NHBF's support role. By continuing to demonstrate our value as an essential business partner rather than a discretionary expense, we're building a more resilient, engaged Membership base that is better positioned to capitalise on future opportunities as economic conditions improve.



## LEGAL RESOURCES AND COMPLIANCE SUPPORT

Building on last year's review of our suite of contracts and employment handbooks, we have undertaken a complete update of our employment-related resources, working with specialist employment lawyers to ensure all documents reflect the latest legislative changes that came into effect in April 2024. Key developments include:

- Expansion of our apprenticeship agreements from 10 to 14, adding new templates to cover additional apprenticeships available in Wales and Scotland
- Development of a new template Fixed Term Contract for Maternity cover to complement our existing suite of employment contracts
- Comprehensive review and update of our Commercial Chair Renting Agreements, with independent legal verification confirming both compliance and practical usability
- Enhanced checklists and guides for self-employment relationships, providing additional protection for salon owners
- These improvements ensure our Members have access to the most current, legally sound documentation across all employment types and business models within our sector.

## COMMUNICATION AND MEMBER SUPPORT

The NHBF has significantly enhanced its Member communication and support services throughout 2024:

- **Robust Helpline Usage:** 1,460 unique Members contacted our Employment Law helpline during the first three quarters of 2024, resulting in over 9,600 interactions - a 22% increase from 2023's 1,200 helpline users
- **Top Member Concerns:** Our helpline data shows consistent priorities throughout the year, with discipline, contracts, apprenticeships, sickness absence, and resignation being the primary concerns among our Member community
- **Service Improvements:** Following Member feedback, we have enhanced our helpline operations by clarifying service expectations and implementing detailed reporting to maintain high service standards
- **Enhanced First-Year Member Communications:** Implemented an automated email sequence for new Members to improve engagement and increase retention rates

## CELEBRATING OUR MEMBER COMMUNITY

In 2024, we launched a special recognition program for Members celebrating 50+ years with NHBF:

- Established a formal recognition visit procedure with accompanying PR and communication templates
- Conducted recognition visits to longstanding Members including Clive Boon, Dora Fletcher, Lloyd Griffiths, John Belfield, and Graham Daniels Hair
- Created visibility for these loyal Members through social media features and coverage in Salon Focus magazine
- Presented commemorative plaques and certificates to celebrate their five decades of Membership

This initiative not only honours our most loyal Members but also showcases the stability and heritage of businesses within our community, strengthening the sense of belonging that makes the NHBF more than just a trade association.





## ADDRESSING EMERGING MEMBER NEEDS

Throughout 2024, the NHBF has remained responsive to evolving Member needs:

- **National Minimum Wage Support:** Provided extensive guidance to Members on implementing the April 2024 increases, including advice on managing short-time working implications
- **Redundancy Guidance:** Developed comprehensive resources to support Members making difficult staffing decisions in response to economic pressures
- **Apprenticeship Support:** Created tailored guidance on apprenticeship management, particularly focusing on wage requirements and training obligations
- **Chair Renting Clarity:** Enhanced resources to clarify the relationship between salon owners and self-employed contractors

## COMMERCIAL LEGAL SUPPORT

Our commercial legal team has maintained its focus on the most pressing business concerns:

- Commercial contracts and terms
- Consumer law compliance
- Commercial property issues
- General business legal matters

The team has handled an increased volume of complex queries, reflecting the growing regulatory complexity facing hair and beauty businesses.

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“The NHBF’s commitment to providing exceptional Member support and fostering a vibrant community has never been stronger. Throughout 2024, we’ve built upon our foundational resources to create an even more comprehensive support system for our Members. The significant increase in helpline usage demonstrates both the challenging business environment and the trust Members place in our guidance.

Our enhanced legal resources now cover more employment scenarios than ever before, with specialised documents for various employment types across all UK nations. The expansion of our apprenticeship agreements to include nation-specific documents reflects our commitment to supporting skills development throughout the sector.

I’ve been particularly proud of our 50+ year Member recognition program. Visiting these long-standing businesses and hearing their stories of resilience and adaptation has been truly inspiring. These Members have weathered countless economic cycles and industry changes yet continue to thrive with NHBF support. Their stories enrich our community and provide valuable perspectives to newer Members.

We actively listen to feedback, as demonstrated by our recent helpline service improvements. By continually refining our offering based on Member experiences, we ensure our services remain relevant and accessible.

The NHBF Member Services team remains dedicated to empowering our Members to navigate challenges and identify opportunities in an ever-evolving landscape. Our priority remains unwavering - to provide timely, legal, relevant and comprehensive support that enables hair and beauty businesses to not just survive, but thrive, while ensuring safe practice and strengthening the bonds that make our community so special.”

**Tina Beaumont-Goddard, Membership Director**

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# SECTION 2: POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## BUILDING ON SUCCESS: ADVANCING MEMBER INTERESTS IN 2024

Following the solid foundation of policy achievements in 2023, NHBF has significantly expanded its influence and advocacy impact throughout 2024. Under the leadership of Rosina Robson, Director of Policy and Public Affairs, supported by Chief Executive Caroline Larissey, we have navigated political transition and economic challenges to deliver tangible results for our Members across all UK nations.

### KEY ADVOCACY METRICS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2024, the NHBF strengthened its reputation as the sector's leading voice through:

- Securing the first ministerial meeting with the new Small Business Minister Gareth Thomas following the election, building on our 9 ministerial meetings in 2023
- Attending the Labour Party Conference, providing direct access to key ministers including Jacqui Smith (Skills Minister), Tulip Siddiq (Economic Secretary to HM Treasury), and Liam Byrne (Chair of the Business & Trade Select Committee)
- Publishing 4 quarterly State of the Industry surveys (continuing our consistent tracking from 2023), now recognised by government officials as a “valuable tool” with approximately 500 responses per quarter
- Delivering written evidence and formal oral testimony to the Low Pay Commission, with commissioners specifically requesting direct meetings with Members in Dover, Portsmouth, and Wolverhampton
- Providing formal evidence to the Scottish COVID-19 inquiry as the only sector organisation invited to respond
- Maintaining our active participation in the HMRC Personal Care Compliance Forum, following our 4 meetings with HMRC in 2023
- Continuing to attend the Beauty, Aesthetics and Wellbeing All-Party Parliamentary Group meetings, building on our work from 2023



## MAJOR POLICY PROGRESS

### VAT REFORM: FROM CONCEPT TO ACTION

Building on our VAT smoothing mechanism project outlined in 2023, we launched the full VAT smoothing mechanism report in January 2024, receiving positive acknowledgement from officials. Kevin Hollinrake MP confirmed he was “actively pursuing the policy with HM Treasury.” Our persistent advocacy contributed to the government lifting the VAT threshold to £90,000 in the Spring Budget – providing breathing room for businesses while we continue to push for comprehensive reform.

### RESPONDING TO BUDGET CHALLENGES WITH EVIDENCE-BASED ADVOCACY

When the Autumn Budget introduced new pressures, we commissioned the “Straightening out the costs” report with Pragmatix Advisory Ltd, providing concrete evidence of impacts on sector businesses. This builds on our two submissions to the Chancellor in 2023, now with enhanced data and case studies strengthening our position in ongoing discussions with HM Treasury and the Department for Business & Trade.

### SKILLS AND APPRENTICESHIPS: FROM FUNDING TO IMPLEMENTATION

We chaired the Sector Skills Action Plan meeting to implement recommendations from the Careers at the Cutting Edge report. This work contributed to the government allocating £60 million in additional funding for training and apprenticeships.



## ENHANCED ADVOCACY ACROSS DEVOLVED NATIONS

### SCOTLAND

Building on our 2023 submission to the Scottish Affairs Committee:

- Developed a targeted Scotland apprenticeship campaign addressing the critical funding shortfall in Scottish training provision
- Held productive meetings with Scottish MSPs John McNally and Michelle Thomson focusing on apprenticeship funding challenges
- Invited to provide formal evidence to the Scottish COVID-19 inquiry in December
- Responded to the Scotland Tenancy of Shops Act consultation on commercial contract reforms

### WALES

#### Advancing our input on Special Procedures from 2023:

- Participated actively in the Cross Party Group on small shops in the Welsh Senedd
- Submitted a detailed response to the Wales Special Procedures consultation, working collaboratively with the Beauty Industry Group Task & Finish Group on licensing

### NORTHERN IRELAND

- Maintained awareness of the unique regulatory environment, particularly regarding the implications of the Northern Ireland Protocol on product availability and business operations
- Continued our targeted engagement with Northern Ireland officials following our ministerial correspondence in 2023

## BECOMING THE GOVERNMENT'S TRUSTED SOURCE

**A defining achievement of 2024 has been NHBF's establishment as the government's most trusted source for hair and beauty sector intelligence. Building on our meetings with UK Government officials, we have:**

- Elevated our quarterly State of the Industry surveys to become a reference point for policymakers
- Developed our authoritative Industry Statistics report using ONS data, becoming the definitive resource on sector trends
- Received specific recognition from the Low Pay Commission for our evidence-based quality
- Established NHBF as one of few organisations invited to provide evidence to the Scottish COVID-19 inquiry

## BEAUTY, AESTHETICS AND WELLBEING ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

**Building on our active engagement with the BAW APPG in 2023, we have:**

- Continued our work on shaping the implementation of the proposed licensing regime for aesthetic non-surgical cosmetic treatments
- Advanced the social prescribing agenda, highlighting the value of complementary therapies in supporting health and wellbeing
- Maintained our influential position in discussions on aesthetics regulation across all UK nations

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Reflecting on 2024, I am immensely proud of what we have accomplished together during a year of significant political and economic change. The achievements of this year have built significantly on our policy wins from 2023, strengthening our evidence-based approach and our ability to represent the sector effectively at all levels of government.

The resilience of our Members across the UK continues to inspire our advocacy work, and I've been particularly struck by your determination to adapt and innovate despite substantial challenges. What has been especially gratifying is seeing the growing recognition from governments across all UK nations of the vital economic and social contribution that hair and beauty businesses make to our communities. The fact that officials and ministers increasingly seek out our data and insights is a testament to the credibility we have built through years of evidence-based advocacy.

Our achievement in securing the first ministerial meeting with Gareth Thomas following the election was a positive milestone, establishing our voice with the new administration from day one. This early access has proved invaluable in raising awareness of sector challenges at the highest levels of government.

Our engagement with the Low Pay Commission this year was particularly significant, providing a platform for business owners to directly communicate the real-world impacts of wage increases to policymakers. Similarly, our evidence to the Scottish COVID-19 inquiry demonstrated the sector's voice in critical public policy discussions.

The launch of our manifesto in Parliament, with cross-party support, demonstrated the sector's importance transcends political divisions. Meanwhile, our VAT smoothing mechanism report has laid the groundwork for ongoing reform discussions with Treasury officials.

Our targeted approach to devolved nations has been especially rewarding, as we've addressed the unique challenges and opportunities in each region – from apprenticeship funding in Scotland to Special Procedures regulation in Wales.

Your continued support through responding to our surveys, participating in consultations, and salon visits and sharing your experiences remains the essential foundation of our work. Together, we have a powerful voice across all nations of the UK, and we look forward to amplifying that voice throughout the coming year.”

**Rosina Robson, Policy and Public Affairs Director**



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## SECTION 3: QUALITY, STANDARDS AND EDUCATION TEAM

### DRIVING EXCELLENCE AND SETTING INDUSTRY STANDARDS

**Significant milestones have been achieved in 2024, through strategic partnerships, innovative initiatives, and tireless advocacy; we have continued to elevate sector standards while creating new pathways for professional development across the sector.**

### APPRENTICESHIPS

Building on our 2023 success in supporting the HPASG to secure significant funding increases for Level 2 apprenticeships (57% increase for Hairdressing Professionals and 28% increase for Barbering), 2024 has seen remarkable progress in expanding the apprenticeship framework:

- **Advanced and Creative Hair Professional Standard (Level 3):** The proposal has been agreed in principle, with the employer steering group actively refining the standard to meet industry needs.
- **Level 5 Aesthetics and Skin Rejuvenation Apprenticeship:** This game-changing standard underwent public consultation, creating a clear progression pathway into aesthetics that combines non-surgical cosmetic procedures and beauty therapy training. This represents a significant advancement in establishing a credible, recognised pathway in the growing aesthetics sector.
- **After much lobbying the Secretary of State for Education announced T Level changes**

### STRATEGIC POLICY PROPOSALS

Following on from our **skills crisis report** findings, in Autumn 2024, we developed and presented comprehensive proposals to the Department of Education and the Department of Business and Trade to support sector growth and development:

- **Young Apprenticeship Programme/Foundation Apprenticeship:** Creating an early entry pathway to build foundational skills and interest in hair and beauty careers before formal apprenticeships
- **Flexible Self-Employed Apprenticeship Scheme:** Innovative approach designed to transform training in the sector, specifically addressing the unique needs of self-employed professionals and business owners who make up a significant portion of our sector
- **Reallocation of Apprenticeship Levy Funding:** Strategic recommendations for more effective distribution of levy funds to better support SMEs in our sector who typically cannot access these resources
- **Accelerated Apprenticeship Model:** Framework for streamlined, efficient apprenticeship delivery that maintains quality while reducing time to qualification, helping address critical skills shortages

These policy proposals represent a significant step forward in our advocacy work, offering practical, sector-specific solutions to longstanding challenges in training and skills development. Following our meeting with Small Business Minister Gareth Thomas MP, these proposals have received initial positive feedback and are being considered as part of broader reforms to vocational education and training.



## ELEVATING SECTOR STANDARDS

Building on our commitment to excellence, we've made substantial progress in elevating and formalising sector standards across multiple areas:

- **Code of Conduct Enhancement:** Updated and strengthened our established **Code of Conduct** to be more robust and comprehensive, providing clear quality benchmarks for Members to follow.
- **Health & Safety Excellence:** Delivered specialised **Health & Safety Business in a Box toolkit** webinar via HJ and Pro Beauty, reaching thousands of sector professionals. These sessions not only supported compliance but promoted best practice approaches that exceeded minimum requirements.
- **Quality, Standards and Education Advisory Group:** Established this strategic body in September 2024, bringing together industry experts to guide the development of cohesive, forward-looking standards that meet both current needs and anticipate future trends.
- **Digital resources for Members:** We have expanded our **apprenticeship webpage** and Toolkit; these comprehensive resources are now fully developed and live on the website, providing essential information and tools for both apprentices and employers

## PRIMARY AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIP: ENHANCING REGULATORY STANDARDS

Building on our established Primary Authority Partnership, we have:

- **NHBF Assured Campaign:** Developed a comprehensive quality assurance framework via our Primary Authority partnership with East Surrey and Woking Council that enables businesses to demonstrate their commitment to excellence through verified standards adherence. The "Business in a Box" provides Members with a structured pathway to achieving recognised quality benchmarks.
- Established a virtual Primary Authority Partnership for Wales, extending this valuable regulatory support to Members throughout the UK
- Provided Consumer Rights training for the Quality team, ensuring up-to-date guidance for Members



## HAIR AND BEAUTY MEDIATION SERVICE

**Our Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service continues to provide an efficient means of resolving conflicts between consumers and traders:**

- Successfully processed multiple ADR cases, with a high-resolution rate
- Completed a successful annual audit with the Chartered Trading Standards Institute in January 2025
- Maintained an average dispute resolution timeframe of under 10 weeks
- Implemented enhanced service awareness through website resources and Member training

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

**2024 has seen the expansion of strategic partnerships to enhance Member benefits:**

- **Unifrog:** Collaborated on career profiles showcasing hairdressing, beauty therapy, nail, and makeup careers, with Phase 1 now near completion
- **Resolver:** Working to help Members capitalise on their online presence and reputation through data analytics
- **Global Pay:** Offering Members a transparent pricing system as part of our NHBF+ Member offer
- **Tones of Beauty:** Collaborating on a two-day event at London Excel in 2025, showcasing sector excellence and innovation

## EDUCATIONAL CONTENT AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Throughout 2024, we've produced valuable educational content through **Salon Focus magazine**, our **blogs** and **news** items and other channels:

- **Appreciating Apprentices:** Highlighting the benefits of apprenticeships for businesses
- **Neurodivergent Individuals and Employees:** Guidance on supporting neurodivergent Team Members
- **Unit Accreditation for Apprentices:** Clarifying regulations around apprentice pay and accreditation processes
- **Generation Next:** Strategies for quickly integrating apprentices into the salon workflow
- **Skin Rejuvenation Standard:** Explaining the background, history, and importance of the new standard

## INDUSTRY REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY

Our team has maintained an active presence at key industry events and regulatory discussions:

- Participated in the Salon International panel session discussing the future of industry education and training
- Attended the EVO Barbering event in Liverpool, maintaining visibility in specialised sectors
- Continued engagement with the Beauty Industry Group (BIG) Task & Finish Group on licensing
- Provided extensive support to the Hair Professional Apprenticeship Steering Group (HPASG) and chairperson and Beauty Professional Apprenticeship Steering Group (BPASG) and chairperson
- Collaboratively worked with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education on apprenticeship standards

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“I'm honoured to build upon the exceptional framework established and lead the Quality, Standards and Education division through this pivotal transition to Skills England. My immediate focus will be further developing and promoting our industry standards, particularly as we navigate the transition to Skills England and finalising key apprenticeship standards that will shape the future of our industry's professional development. The Level 5 Aesthetics and Skin Rejuvenation Apprenticeship represents a landmark opportunity to establish recognised qualifications and standards in this rapidly growing sector. The 'Survive and Thrive' campaign will remain central to our work as we help Members navigate significant legislative changes in 2025 while maintaining quality benchmarks. By combining practical guidance with innovative standards-based solutions, we aim to strengthen business resilience and professional credibility across the sector. I'm particularly excited about expanding our NHBF Assured Campaign and partnerships with organisations like Unifrog, creating new avenues for demonstrating and verifying adherence to industry standards. Our enhanced code of conduct provides Members with clear quality benchmarks to follow, reflecting our commitment to elevating professional credibility while enhancing the industry's appeal to new entrants. Working alongside our dedicated Quality team, I look forward to building on the strong foundation of sector standards established and developing new initiatives that promote excellence, consistency, and innovation throughout our sector.”

**Cathy Weston, Director of Quality and Standards**  
(May 2024 onwards)



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“Joining the NHBF team has allowed me to contribute specialised hair sector expertise at a crucial time for apprenticeship development. Working closely with the Hair Professional Apprenticeship Steering Group, I’ve been instrumental in refining the Level 3 Advanced and Creative Hair Professional Standard to meet evolving industry needs. The progress on our Level 3 Advanced and Creative Hair Professional Standard represents significant steps forward in creating professionally recognised pathways that elevate our sector’s standing. My role also involves developing strategic partnerships that enhance Member benefits and expand our reach within the hair and beauty sector. Our enhanced resources and toolkit are now providing essential support for Members, creating clear pathways for professional development in hairdressing and barbering.”

**Sadie Brockbank, Quality Standards and Partnership Manager for Hair** (July 2024)



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“The beauty and aesthetics sector is experiencing unprecedented growth, and I’m excited to help establish credible, recognised standards in this evolving landscape. The groundbreaking Level 5 Aesthetics and Skin Rejuvenation Apprenticeship represents significant steps forward in creating professionally recognised pathways that elevate our sector’s standing. This game-changing standard creates a clear progression pathway that combines non-surgical cosmetic procedures and beauty therapy training, establishing credible qualifications in this rapidly growing sector. Through our partnerships and specialised guidance, we’re ensuring beauty professionals have access to the highest quality training standards.”

**Jo Lancaster, Quality Standards Manager for Beauty and Aesthetics** (October 2024)



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# SECTION 4: PR, MARKETING & MEDIA ACTIVITY SUMMARY

## AMPLIFYING IMPACT AND ENHANCING MEMBER EXPERIENCE

### MAJOR CAMPAIGN ACHIEVEMENTS

#### SURVIVE AND THRIVE INITIATIVE DEVELOPMENT (NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2024)

Our most significant strategic achievement was the development and planning of the **Survive and Thrive Initiative** following the November budget announcement. This comprehensive initiative was designed as NHBF's response to the **unprecedented challenges** facing Members, with extensive planning and preparation throughout late 2024 for launch in 2025. The strategic foundation received board endorsement on 28 November 2024, positioning NHBF as a sector leader providing practical solutions rather than just commentary.

#### ECONOMIC AUTHORITY & POLICY LEADERSHIP

NHBF established itself as the definitive source for economic analysis within the hair and beauty sector through our partnership with Pragmatix Advisory. The "Straightening Out the Costs" report revealed the £139 million cost impact of the 2024 Autumn Budget, generating significant media coverage and reinforcing our position as a data-driven advocate for sector interests. This comprehensive analysis showed that 72% of businesses would need to increase prices, with 45% expecting staff reductions.

#### MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS INNOVATION

**Business in a Box Launch:** Following extensive development in 2023, NHBF successfully launched comprehensive "Business in a Box" toolkits for both hair and beauty businesses as a significant FREE enhancement to Member support offerings. The launch was supported by multi-channel promotion including product photography, video content, dedicated website landing pages, and social media campaigns, generating overwhelmingly positive Member response.

#### MEMBER RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Successfully launched Member recognition program celebrating those who maintained NHBF Membership for 50+ years. This initiative honoured loyal Members while highlighting sector stability and heritage, providing inspiring examples of sustained business success.

#### WORKPLACE PROTECTION RESOURCES

Developed a comprehensive support package for the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2024, demonstrating a proactive commitment to supporting Members through complex legislative changes while promoting safer workplace environments.

#### SALONFOCUS MAGAZINE SUCCESS

Delivered quarterly magazine providing valuable insights across 2024 editions covering sustainability, business planning, T-Levels, recruitment challenges, cyber-security, harmonised allergy alert testing, and supporting neurodiversity.

#### VAT REFORM CAMPAIGN EXPANSION

Comprehensive 15-year campaigning effort included **VAT Smoothing Mechanism Report Discussion, Campaigning for the last 15 years, Smoothing Mechanism Webinar - What are our Members opinions?, What is VAT?, How has NHBF been lobbying for the Hair & Beauty Industry? What is the VAT Smoothing Mechanism Report? What are the two sets of options from the report?**





## EVENTS & INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT EXCELLENCE

### SALON INTERNATIONAL 2024

- Secured larger, more prominently positioned stand creating a welcoming “drop-in surgery” environment
- Sponsored Digital Skills stage hosting panel discussions on key industry issues
- Engaged with hundreds of professionals, strengthening existing relationships and developing new connections

### PROFESSIONAL BEAUTY 2024

- Participated in London (March) and Manchester events showcasing expertise and support offerings
- Sponsored Digital Skills Business Stage hosting discussions on VAT reform and influencer marketing
- Participated in aesthetics panel demonstrating expertise in a growing sector
- Utilised VIP lounge for direct Member engagement and prospect data capture



## GOVERNANCE & BOARD TRANSITIONS

### BOARD MEMBER ELECTIONS 2024

The year saw significant governance activity with the successful completion of Board Member Elections, demonstrating NHBF’s democratic processes and Member engagement. Following comprehensive voting in March 2024, new leadership was installed to guide the Federation through transformation.

### MEDIA COVERAGE IMPACT

The board elections generated positive coverage across trade publications, emphasising NHBF’s commitment to democratic governance and diverse representation. Caroline Larissey’s statement welcoming new board Members was widely quoted: “I am delighted to welcome NHBF’s newest board Members. Each brings a wealth of experience and expertise that will undoubtedly strengthen NHBF’s mission of promoting safe, legal and profitable salon businesses.”

## PARTNERSHIP EXCELLENCE

**SLB PR COLLABORATION:** Our partnership with SLB PR, a multi-faceted award-winning creative communications agency, delivered campaigns that went beyond traditional PR limits. Their “deliberately disruptive and culturally connected” approach helped elevate NHBF above standard trade association communications, successfully bridging the gap between industry commerce and cultural relevance while protecting and enhancing our reputation during challenging regulatory periods.

“

We're proud to have supported NHBF throughout 2024, applying our 'deliberately disruptive and culturally connected' approach during unprecedented challenges for the hair and beauty sector. Our role has been to help position NHBF as the definitive voice of leadership and innovation.

We've delivered communications that go beyond traditional PR limits - from securing authoritative coverage for the £139 million budget impact analysis to building the strategic communications foundation for the Survive and Thrive initiative. Our work has elevated NHBF above standard trade association communications while protecting its reputation during the most challenging regulatory period the sector has faced.

The foundation we've helped build positions NHBF to guide the hair and beauty sector through transformation with confidence. We're honoured to provide communications that inspire, protect, and empower this vital professional community.

— SLB PR



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## DIGITAL MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

### WEBSITE PERFORMANCE & DIGITAL REACH

- Maintained robust traffic with 50,000+ monthly page views throughout 2024
- Strong user engagement with average engagement times exceeding 1 minute
- Attracted 12,000-14,000 new visitors quarterly, expanding sector reach
- Most popular content included the homepage, Member resources, industry statistics, and business start-up guidance

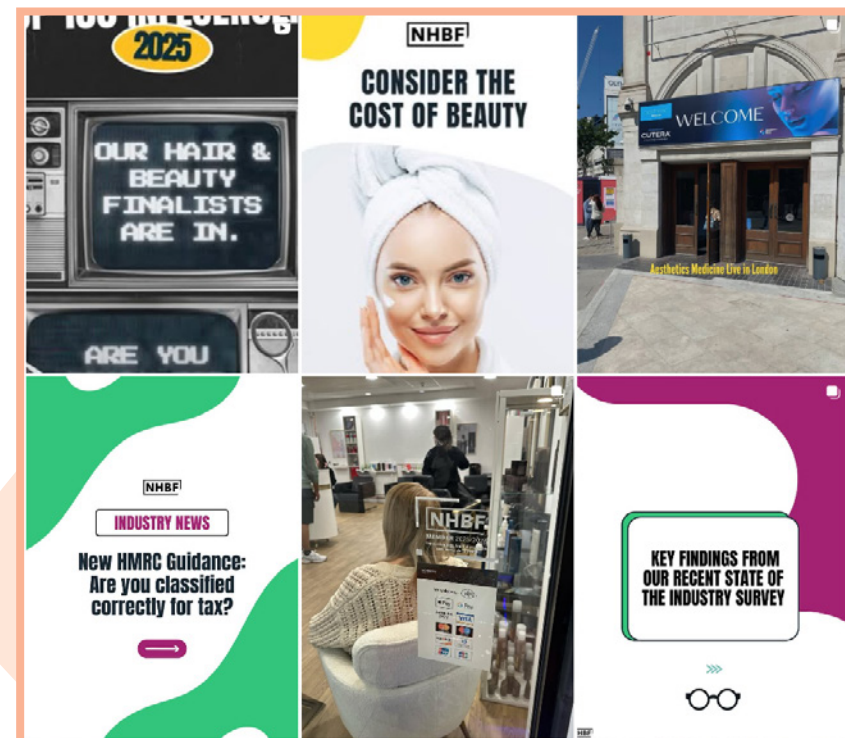
Our most popular blog content reflects the practical needs of our audience:

- **“Evolution of Hairstyles”** - consistently our top-performing blog with over 1,000 monthly views
- **“10 Steps to Start Your Own Hair or Beauty Business”** - essential guidance for entrepreneurs
- **“National Minimum Wage Rises”** - timely information on regulatory changes
- **“Business Rates for Small Businesses”** - practical financial guidance with exceptional engagement times
- **“Trends and History of Beards”** - specialised content for the barbering sector

While we’ve maintained our existing website’s performance, significant work has been undertaken on our Digital Transformation project. This ambitious initiative aims to create an integrated digital ecosystem. The project has faced challenges including timeline adjustments and resource allocation, but we remain committed to delivering a solution that significantly enhances the digital experience for our Members. Currently scheduled for launch in 2025, this platform will transform how Members engage with the NHBF online.

### SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM SUCCESS

- **Facebook:** Maintained a substantial community of 134,000+ followers despite industry-wide organic reach challenges
- **Instagram:** Sustained engaged audience of 79,000+ followers with consistent content delivery
- **LinkedIn:** Achieved steady growth to 1,700+ followers (+70 YOY), focusing on industry professionals
- **Channel Expansion:** Successfully launched TikTok presence and Broadcast channel, reaching new audience segments



## CONTENT STRATEGY EVOLUTION:

- Significantly increased video production, from professional Member profiles to educational content
- Implemented interactive features including polls, quizzes, and Q&A sessions to boost engagement
- Developed multi-slide carousel posts delivering comprehensive information in digestible formats
- Featured NHBF team Members and real Members, creating authentic connection points

## EMAIL MARKETING EXCELLENCE

- Exceptional engagement with Member newsletters achieving 48-52% open rates, significantly above industry standards
- Non-member communications achieving strong 36-42% open rates
- Click-through rates of 2-5% for Members and up to 2.4% for non-members
- Enhanced segmentation and automation through the transition to the Dot Digital platform

“

Leading our digital marketing efforts during a period of significant change has been both challenging and rewarding. Our team has successfully balanced maintaining high performance across existing platforms while simultaneously supporting the complex Digital Transformation project. I'm particularly proud of our success in expanding our content strategy to include more video and interactive elements, resulting in significantly higher engagement across all platforms. Looking ahead, I'm excited about the opportunities our new digital platform will create. While the journey has been challenging, the enhanced capabilities will enable us to deliver more personalised, responsive digital experiences that truly serve our Members' evolving needs.

**Viv Lau, Digital Marketing Manager**



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Supporting our digital marketing activities throughout 2024 has given me a unique perspective on both our challenges and achievements. Despite the significant demands of the Digital Transformation project, we've maintained exceptional performance across our existing digital channels. Our social media presence has evolved considerably, with more dynamic content formats driving increased engagement. As we approach the final stages of our Digital Transformation project I'm focused on ensuring we have robust transition plans for all our digital platforms. By combining careful planning with agile response capabilities, we'll ensure that our Members experience a seamless transition to our enhanced digital ecosystem.

**Yvonne Doffour, Digital Marketing Executive**



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## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS OUTCOMES

### MEDIA COVERAGE ANALYSIS

- Secured coverage across trade publications including Professional Beauty, Modern Barber, and SalonEVO Magazine
- Generated business media coverage emphasising the sector's £5.8 billion economic contribution
- Achieved policy media attention through government engagement and reform proposals
- Strategic hashtag campaigns (#NHBFTop100influencers, #Hairandbeautytop100) amplifying sector achievements

### STRATEGIC PLANNING & FUTURE FOUNDATION

- Successfully developed a comprehensive Survive and Thrive Initiative framework for the 2025 launch
- Positioned regulatory challenges as opportunities for sector transformation
- Emphasised NHBF's proactive planning during industry uncertainty
- Created a foundation for a positive narrative around Member support and sector resilience
- Demonstrated authority through evidence-based policy advocacy

### DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRESS

- Advanced ambitious Digital Transformation project creating an integrated digital ecosystem
- Maintained high performance across existing platforms during the transformation period
- Scheduled for 2025 launch to revolutionise Member online engagement
- Implemented enhanced analytics and data-driven decision-making across all channels

## LEADERSHIP TEAM STATEMENTS

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2024 has represented a significant year of transition and achievement for our Marketing and Communications function. Despite the challenges of team restructuring and our ongoing Digital Transformation project, the team has successfully delivered major initiatives that create tangible value for our Members. As we look toward 2025, the Marketing team's transformation positions us well to enhance our commercial approach while maintaining the exceptional Member service that defines the NHBF.

**Caroline Larissey, Chief Executive**



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Taking on management of the Sales and Marketing function during Autumn 2024 has been both a challenge and a privilege. Our event strategy has been particularly successful, with an enhanced presence at key industry gatherings generating significant engagement opportunities. Looking ahead, we'll be focusing on enhancing our commercial partnerships and supporting the crucial final stages of our Digital Transformation project.

**Farooq Ali, Head of Sales and Marketing**



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## INDUSTRY RECOGNITION & AWARDS

**Top 100 Influencers Index Success:** Now in its fourth year, NHBF's Top 100 Influencers Index continued to celebrate excellence and innovation across the sector. Adapted to an online format for 2024, the program filmed presenter segments at Salon International, created engaging announcement content and developed comprehensive promotional assets including certificates and personalised social media content for winners with enhanced 2025 event plans through new sponsorship arrangements.

### SECTOR CELEBRATION IMPACT

- Successfully promoted professional excellence and talent recognition
- Reinforced NHBF's role in elevating industry standards and opportunities
- Created positive narratives around career development and sector pride
- Generated coverage showcasing innovation and creative skill across hair and beauty
- Proven media relationships across trade, business, and policy publications
- Recognised leadership team with established authority and credibility
- Robust messaging frameworks tested during challenging economic circumstances
- Established a comprehensive support platform ready to guide Members through transformation



# SECTION 5: SURVIVE AND THRIVE INITIATIVE

## A STRATEGIC RESPONSE TO SECTOR TRANSFORMATION

### STRATEGIC FOUNDATION

A defining milestone of our 2024 activities was the extraordinary board meeting held on 28 November 2024, where the Survive and Thrive initiative was presented as our strategic response to the unprecedented challenges facing our Members.

The board unanimously endorsed this comprehensive approach as a well-needed step forward for supporting both our Membership and the wider sector, recognising it as the most significant support initiative in our recent history. This multi-faceted communication strategy and Member support package was specifically designed to address the substantial regulatory and economic changes taking effect in April 2025. These changes include a 6.7% increase in National Living Wage to £12.21 per hour, a significant 16.3% rise in the 18-20 rate to £10 per hour, increased National Insurance contributions, and reduced business rates relief—changes that represent real financial challenges for every business in our sector.

### COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN COMPONENTS - EMPOWERING MEMBERS THROUGH CHANGE

The initiative encompasses several key strategic components of the initiative.

### COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Planned press releases and monthly PR activities designed to amplify our sector's voice and demonstrate our collective resilience, supported by our PR partners **SLB PR** who would help share success stories and positive sector narratives across media platforms.

### STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Preparations for a landmark stakeholder event at Electric Space in London, scheduled for January 2025, designed as an interactive practical experience rather than traditional presentations, featuring pop-up resource hubs and direct engagement with our expert team.

### ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Commissioning of a comprehensive post-budget Pragmatix economic impact report - Straightening out the costs to provide data-driven insights into the sector's challenges and opportunities, strengthening our evidence base for policy advocacy.

### PRACTICAL MEMBER SUPPORT

Development of extensive Member support resources including budget impact calculators, pricing strategy guides, updated contract templates, employment guides, and chair rental agreements—all designed to provide immediate, actionable support.



## FOUNDATION BUILT ON MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

The initiative was built on extensive Member engagement throughout 2024, drawing insights from businesses across the spectrum—from passionate newcomers to extraordinary veterans and multi-generational businesses.

These Member visits and conversations reinforced what we already knew: our sector's strength lies in its people, its resilience, and its unwavering commitment to excellence. Every interaction deepened our understanding of the real challenges facing businesses and informed the practical design of our support tools and resources.

## LEGACY AND FUTURE IMPACT

The initiative is designed as a year-long campaign running throughout 2025 to demonstrate our commitment to sustained support rather than one-time assistance, positioning our Members to navigate the challenging landscape ahead with confidence, strategic support, and the collective strength that comes from being part of a united, forward-thinking professional federation. Reflecting our shared commitment to ensuring that every Member—from passionate newcomers to multi-generational businesses—has access to the tools, expertise, and advocacy needed to not just survive significant industry changes, but to emerge stronger, more resilient, and better positioned for sustainable success.

“

We're delighted to support the NHBF's Survive and Thrive Initiative through strategic PR and communications. The hair and beauty sector is experiencing unprecedented change, and our role is to ensure the NHBF's voice cuts through the noise to reach key stakeholders, media, and policymakers. Through targeted press releases, proactive media engagement, and strategic storytelling, we're helping to showcase the sector's resilience and the vital support the NHBF provides to its Members. This isn't just about managing communications—it's about amplifying the success stories that demonstrate how businesses across the hair and beauty sector are not just surviving regulatory changes, but using them as a springboard for growth and innovation. The NHBF's commitment to its Members deserves a communications approach that matches their ambition and professionalism.

**Sharon Brigden**

**SLB PR**



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# SECTION 6: INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

## STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS AND AMPLIFYING SECTOR VOICE

The NHBF has significantly enhanced its collaborative approach throughout 2024; through strategic partnerships, government engagement, and cross-sector alliances, we have amplified the hair and beauty sector's voice while creating new opportunities for our Members and the wider industry.

### GOVERNMENT AND MINISTERIAL ENGAGEMENT

#### DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND TRADE

Our relationship with the Department of Business and Trade has strengthened considerably:

- Successfully secured the first ministerial meeting with the new Small Business Minister, Gareth Thomas MP, following the general election
- Met with Kevin Hollinrake MP, Minister responsible for the Personal Care sector
- Invitation to take a lead role in the DBT Skills Working Group
- Held several meetings with DBT officials to discuss a range of sector issues
- Participated in two Personal Care roundtables
- Attended meetings with the Secretary of State for Business & Trade following the autumn budget and post-budget announcements

#### TREASURY ENGAGEMENT

Our proactive approach to fiscal policy has yielded tangible results:

- Submitted detailed **letters to the Chancellor** outlining key sector asks ahead of both the Autumn Statement (November 22) and Spring Budget (March 6)
- Secured a significant win with the continuation of the 75% business rates discount for retail in 2024/25
- Advocated effectively for **VAT reform** and employer incentives for apprenticeships
- Attended the CBI conference and posed a direct question to Jonathan Reynolds, Labour shadow Business lead, regarding support for small businesses through the proposed Growth and Skills levy
- Retail **sector plea for business relief**

#### HMRC COLLABORATION

We've maintained a productive dialogue with HMRC:

- Participated in two further meetings to discuss the tax compliance communication and education campaign planned for Q1 2024
- Continued involvement in the Personal Care Compliance Forum
- Provided Member guidance on tax compliance issues and avoidance of disguised employment

## DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS ENGLAND

### We've maintained strong engagement with education policymakers:

- Met with Robert Halfon, then Secretary of State for Skills, Further and Higher Education, regarding technical education reforms, particularly changes required to T-Levels
- Advocated successfully for splitting the T-level pathway, suggesting that while the beauty route could be fit for purpose with further development, a more vocational qualification was needed for hairdressing and barbering
- Participated in two Skills England meetings, shaping the future of vocational education

Continued our involvement in the Apprenticeship Ambassador program and T Level Ambassador representing sector interests in skills development

## PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENT

### Our work with parliamentarians has been extensive:

- Engaged with the APPG on Beauty, Aesthetics and Wellbeing
- Secured citation on the floor of the House of Commons in December after briefing Steve Brine MP about sector concerns regarding aesthetics regulation
- Participated in a meeting with the Secretary of State for Skills, Further and Higher Education regarding T-Level reforms
- Submitted evidence to parliamentary committees including the House of Lords Future Skills Inquiry and Built Environment Committee

## CONSULTATIONS AND POLICY INPUT

### We've actively contributed to numerous consultations and inquiries:

- **Aesthetics Regulation – England:** Maintained ongoing dialogue with BIG and the Task and Finish Group to influence next steps, with the government expected to report on its consultation in March
- **Scotland:** provided evidence and directly spoke to Members of the Aesthetics Regulation enquiry team
- **Special Procedures Regulation – Wales:** Following our consultation submission, we await the findings which are currently being translated into Welsh before publication
- **Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry:** Provided formal oral evidence as the only sector organisation to respond
- **Scotland Tenancy of Shops:** Submitted recommendations on updating commercial contracts legislation
- **House of Lords Future Skills Inquiry:** Presented sector-specific recommendations to the Industry and Regulators Committee
- **House of Lords Built Environment Committee:** Submitted evidence on high street futures and their impact on our sector



## LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS

In January, we launched a series of face-to-face meetings with key industry organisations, signalling a clear commitment to open dialogue and collaborative problem-solving from the very start of the year. These frank and productive discussions were specifically designed to address historical tensions and create a foundation for more unified sector representation.

### The meetings covered:

- The NHBF's focus and strategy for 2024 onwards
- Potential areas of conflict or overlap between organisations
- Opportunities to align on key industry issues
- Key NHBF campaigns include:
  - **Business support**, including **VAT reform**
  - **Education and training improvements**, building on the **Careers at the Cutting Edge report**
  - **Beauty, aesthetics and wellbeing initiatives**
  - **Safety and quality standards**
  - **Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) and Wellbeing**
  - **Ethical and sustainable businesses**

This proactive approach set a positive tone for the year's collaborative work and yielded tangible benefits in terms of coordinated advocacy and shared resources. Caroline and Amanda also conducted personal meetings with influential individual NHBF Members to gather grassroots perspectives and strengthen engagement throughout every level of the sector.



## INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS AND CROSS-SECTOR ALLIANCES

### BEAUTY INDUSTRY GROUP (BIG)

#### Our work with the Beauty Industry Group has intensified:

- Regular attendance at quarterly meetings by NHBF Chief Executive
- Active participation in the licensing task and finish group, particularly regarding:
  - The proposed JCCP supervision framework and its implications
  - The Welsh consultation on special procedures including epilation
  - Aesthetics regulation in England and Scotland
  - Contributing to website updates and broader sector communications

## PROFESSIONAL BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

We've strengthened relationships with key industry organisations through strategic meetings:

### BUSINESS SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

Regular participation in FSB trade associations meetings and the IRC/ Independent Retailers Group to share intelligence and coordinate advocacy

### PRODUCT MANUFACTURERS AND SUPPLIERS

We've developed strategic relationships with major industry suppliers:

- **L'Oréal:** Met with their Director of Communications and education lead, supporting parliamentary events including Women in Science with Caroline Nokes MP
- **KAO:** Participation in employer meetings to discuss workforce development needs
- **Harmonised Allergy Alert Testing:** As a gesture of collaborative working, we agreed and promoted the **harmonised professional skin testing protocol** announced by leading industry bodies and associations, working alongside Hair Council, Sentio, Colour Start and CTPA to produce comprehensive FAQ documentation



## OFGEM PARTNERSHIP

Our collaboration with Ofgem, the energy regulator, has expanded to include:

Our **Energy Aware** collaborative campaign with Ofgem included:

- Successful completion of **filming for our energy efficiency initiative at Boons Hair Salon in Redford**
- Regular participation in the small and medium-sized user groups, ensuring sector-specific energy concerns are addressed
- Joint development of practical guidance for businesses dealing with energy suppliers
- Attendance at the Ofgem stakeholder conference, maintaining visibility in energy policy discussions

## CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS

We've maintained our commitment to industry charitable initiatives:

- Regular attendance at monthly Hair and Beauty Charity meetings
- Representation at the Hair and Beauty Charity summer party
- Support for the Tommy's baby loss initiative, raising awareness of this important cause
- Supported cancer charity Skcin Masced (Melanoma And Skin Cancer Early Detection) **MASCED UK**
- Supported **BELONG** study designed by researchers at King's College London in collaboration with hairdressers, clients, and healthcare professionals in the UK to improve the health of women in South and West London.
- Personalised **support** for **mental wellbeing for Member and their clients**

## INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION

### COIFFURE EU

Our international engagement has continued to flourish by attending the General Assembly meeting, where we contributed to important discussions on industry standards and cross-border collaboration. Additionally, we prepared comprehensive briefing documents for our discussions with unions and the group throughout 2024, ensuring all stakeholders were well-informed on critical issues affecting our sector.

Regular online meetings have formed the backbone of our ongoing international dialogue, with representation consistently provided by Mark Coray and supported by Rosina Robson. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Mark for his exceptional dedication and leadership in completing this vital role. His commitment to fostering international relationships and maintaining our presence within the European network has been invaluable to our organisation's continued growth and influence.

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The opportunity to represent our interests at the European level has been both challenging and rewarding. Building these international partnerships has strengthened our voice in shaping the future of our industry across borders.

**Mark Coray**

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Through these sustained efforts, we have successfully maintained our position as an engaged and influential Member of the European coiffure community, setting a strong foundation for future collaborative endeavours.



## EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

**We've fostered relationships with educational stakeholders:**

**Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education:** Regular engagement in qualification development

**Unifrog:** Exploring opportunities to promote hair and beauty careers to schools nationwide

**Association of Hairdressers and Therapists:** Sponsorship of student competitions to support emerging talent

**Beauty Professional and Hair Professional Steering Groups:** Ongoing participation in apprenticeship standard development

## EVENT PARTICIPATION AND INDUSTRY PRESENCE

Our visibility at key industry events has enhanced our collaborative opportunities:

**Hair Con 2024:** Significant presence including a live session with Dom Lehane, a "Business Basics" talk, participation in the "Business Xtra" panel, and discussions on recruitment and technology

**Professional Beauty:** Attendance at London and Manchester events

**Salon International:** Attendance and sponsorship of the business stage

**Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Beauty Conference:** Presented on the Business in a Box solution for environmental health officers

**Awards Judging:** Participation in TAFT Awards and Excellence Awards judging panels

## COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

We've developed valuable commercial relationships:

- **Worknest:** Discussions regarding enhanced service offerings for NHBF Members
- **Resolver:** Exploration of potential partnership for the NHBF+ scheme
- **Genesis IT:** Strategy meetings regarding future-proofing NHBF's digital infrastructure
- **Oomi:** Coordination of CRM system

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Our partnerships across government, industry, education, and commerce position the NHBF uniquely within the hair and beauty sector. In 2024, we strategically expanded our network to ensure Members' voices reach every decision-making forum affecting their businesses.

Early face-to-face meetings established open dialogue and unified representation during challenging economic times, building trust that enabled effective advocacy on VAT reform and aesthetics regulation. New channels with the Department of Business and Trade and ongoing collaboration with the Beauty Industry Group on licensing demonstrate how partnership shapes policy.

Our work with Ofgem, including filming at Boons Hair Salon, shows how sector knowledge combined with regulatory expertise creates practical business resources. We continue expanding partnerships that create Member value while strengthening our collective voice during economic and regulatory change.

**Caroline Larissey, Chief Executive**

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# SECTION 7 FINANCE & ACCOUNTS

## BUILDING RESILIENCE IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Our financial position remains strong despite industry-wide headwinds, with several positive developments to highlight:

### FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

- Successfully reduced overall expenditure by 9% (£169k) through strategic cost management, while maintaining the quality of Member services
- Improved financial performance by 17.5% (£58k) despite Membership income challenges
- Implemented smarter operational practices that will continue to benefit the Federation in future years

### INVESTMENT SUCCESS

- Achieved record investment portfolio high of £3.4m in 2024
- Delivered £201k investment growth plus £80k investment income
- Invested £190k in enhanced Member services and benefits as part of our commitment to improving Member value
- Strategic investment partnership with Rathbones continues to preserve and grow Member funds effectively

“

2024 marks the first year of our ambitious five-year growth strategy. While it has been a year of necessary consolidation, we're already seeing encouraging green shoots. Our financial discipline has allowed us to make strategic investments in Member services while building the robust foundation needed for sustainable growth. The £190k investment in enhanced Member benefits represents our commitment to delivering immediate value while implementing longer-term initiatives that will transform how we serve our community.

**Caroline Larissey, Chief Executive**



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Our financial performance this year reflects a deliberate balance between prudent management and strategic investment. Despite industry challenges, we've strengthened our financial position while funding the initial phase of our five-year plan. The record high of our investment portfolio at £3.4m demonstrates the effectiveness of our long-term financial strategy. As we move forward, this solid financial foundation will enable us to accelerate our growth initiatives while continuing to enhance the services our Members rely on.

**Sarah Pigden, Director of Finance**

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### MEMBERSHIP STABILITY

- Reduced the rate of Membership decline by 15% compared to 2023
- Successfully welcomed 620 new Members through target recruitment initiatives
- Retention strategies showing improved results compared to the previous year

### GOVERNANCE EXCELLENCE

- Received an unqualified audit opinion from Streets LLP for the 2024 financial year
- Maintained robust internal controls and financial systems
- Continued commitment to financial transparency and accountability to our Members

The Federation's prudent financial management has created a solid foundation that positions us to weather industry challenges while continuing to invest in our Members' future.

## SECTION 8: STAFF AND OPERATIONS

### CONSOLIDATION, GREEN SHOOTS AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

2024 has been a year of consolidation and green shoots, including a comprehensive review of the NHBF team with an aim of operational excellence in line with the 5-year implementation plan and strategy. This focused approach has allowed us to optimise our organisational structure while fostering renewed growth and development in key areas.

Building on the solid foundation established in late 2023, the NHBF has continued to evolve and strengthen its team structure throughout 2024. Through strategic recruitment, thoughtful restructuring, and enhanced operational processes, we have created a more agile organisation better positioned to serve our Members during challenging economic times.

### LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Following the appointment of our new Chief Executive in November 2023, their first full year of leadership demonstrated significant progress in strategic implementation aligned with our 5-year plan. We embedded a comprehensive OKR (Objectives and Key Results) framework that brought measurable focus to all departments, creating clear alignment between individual contributions and organisational goals.

The transition strengthened our strategic foundation and established robust systems for accountability and performance measurement across the organisation. This structured approach enabled us to translate high-level strategic objectives into actionable departmental targets, fostering a culture of clarity and purposeful execution throughout all levels of the organisation.

We established and convened Advisory Boards for policy and quality standards, which enhanced sector engagement and provided valuable external perspectives to inform decision-making.



## QUALITY AND STANDARDS TEAM DEVELOPMENT

During the first six months of 2024, while recruitment for a replacement was underway, **Caroline Larissey** continued to cover her previous role as **Quality and Standards Director** alongside her **Chief Executive responsibilities**.

After a thorough, but unfortunately prolonged recruitment process, we successfully established a complete Quality and Standards team:

**Cathy Weston:** Joined as Director of Quality and Standards in June 2024, bringing fresh perspectives and strategic vision to our leadership team

**Sarah (Sadie) Brockbank:** Appointed as Quality, Standards & Partnerships Manager for Hair on August 1, 2024, bringing specialised sector expertise and enhancing partnership opportunities

**Joanne (Jo) Lancaster:** Appointed as Joined as Quality and Standards Manager for Beauty and Aesthetics in October 2024 bringing specialised sector expertise in beauty and aesthetics

This team structure ensures we have dedicated expertise across all sectors while maintaining consistent quality standards throughout our operations.



## MARKETING TEAM RESTRUCTURE

In the autumn of 2024, we implemented a strategic restructuring of the Marketing team to enhance our commercial focus and better align with Member needs. This restructuring has positioned the Marketing team to take a more commercial, strategic approach to Member engagement while ensuring effective delivery of key initiatives.

### KEY APPOINTMENTS AND ROLE ENHANCEMENTS

**Farooq Ali:** An existing staff Member, successfully interviewed for and appointed to a new Head of Sales and Marketing position

**Jo Yates:** Expanded responsibilities with a more commercially focused job description

**Viv Lau:** Enhanced role as Digital Marketing Manager with expanded responsibilities

**Yvonne Doffour:** Promoted to Digital Marketing Executive in December 2024

### STRATEGIC TEMPORARY HIRES

**Lucie Frankova:** Appointed as Web Content Administrator to support the digital transformation project

**Bethany Leaver:** Hired as Campaign Marketing Manager to spearhead the Survive & Thrive initiative, starting January 2025

### TEAM CHANGES

Martin Langhorn, Digital Marketing Executive, and Samantha Turner-Meyern, Digital Marketing Director, left in Autumn 2024. Following these departures, Caroline Larissey, Chief Executive, temporarily assumed responsibility for the digital marketing portfolio while recruitment proceeded for a new Commercial Director position. This new role has been designed with a broader remit, to encompass both Sales & Marketing functions, and drive operational excellence in alignment with our 5-year implementation plan and strategy. The Commercial Director role was successfully recruited in April 2025.



## HR SYSTEMS AND POLICY ENHANCEMENTS

**We've implemented several improvements to our HR operations:**

- YouManage HR System Implementation
- Policy Refinements
- Introduced an Employee Sharing Success incentive scheme
- Implemented a new Personal Development Review (PDR) process aligned with the NHBF OKRs
- Updated and refined policies for TOIL, flexible working, travel, subsistence, expenses, dress code, and house style
- Developed a comprehensive sustainability checklist to ensure environmentally responsible operations

## HR SUPPORT AND RESTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION

In August 2024, the NHBF strengthened its HR capacity to manage the restructuring process effectively. Abigail (Abi) Smith joined as People and Resources Administrator, providing dedicated support for restructuring activities and enhanced HR services under the guidance of Sarah Pigden, Finance Director, who maintains ultimate responsibility for HR functions. Additionally, People Puzzles was commissioned as an external HR consultancy, and HCR Law provided Employment Law advice, to ensure quality assurance and compliance throughout the organisational changes.

## WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS

**We've enhanced our physical workspace to support team wellbeing and operational efficiency:**

- Converted the previous Chief Executive's office into a staff room/small meeting room
- Completed a comprehensive clear-out of the NHBF building with unwanted assets recycled or removed
- Implemented improved fire safety procedures following an official visit, including a guest sign-in sheet, designated fire wardens, and meeting points
- Redecorated the downstairs floor & staircase, and replaced window blinds

## TEAM DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

**Our focus on professional development has continued throughout 2024:**

- Enhanced team dynamics by including SLB PR in Senior Management Team meetings
- Implemented customised development plans based on individual, and team needs
- Provided specialised training opportunities in relevant areas including employment law updates



## LOOKING FORWARD TO 2025

### As we enter 2025, our people strategy will focus on:

- Further embedding the OKR approach to enhance organisational alignment and impact measurement
- Expanding professional development opportunities across all departments
- Exploring additional Member benefits from our internal systems and processes
- Continuing to enhance our commercial approach across all teams
- Supporting team wellbeing during a period of significant digital transformation

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2024 has been a year of significant consolidation and strategic alignment, with green shoots of renewal emerging across our operational structure. The comprehensive team review we undertook has been instrumental in creating an organisation that can deliver operational excellence in accordance with our 5-year implementation plan.

The successful recruitment of our Quality and Standards team has brought specialised expertise across all industries within our sector, while our Marketing team restructuring has enhanced our commercial capabilities during a challenging economic period.

The implementation of our OKR framework has created greater alignment between individual contributions and our strategic priorities, empowering team Members while maintaining accountability. This approach, combined with our enhanced PDR process, provides a solid foundation for both individual and organisational growth.

I'm particularly proud of how the team has embraced change while maintaining their unwavering commitment to Member service. The YouManage HR system implementation exemplifies our approach to operational improvement – enhancing internal processes while identifying potential future Member benefits.

As we look toward 2025, our focus will be on further embedding our commercial mindset while continuing to support team wellbeing and professional development. The foundations established this year position us well to navigate the challenges ahead while identifying new opportunities to enhance Member value.

**Caroline Larissey, Chief Executive**



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# SECTION 9: BOARD ACTIVITY AND GOVERNANCE

## BOARD TRANSITIONS AND CHANGES

2024 marked a significant year of transition for the NHBF Board, with several key changes that have strengthened our governance structure and strategic focus.

**Amanda Lodge Stewart** continued her leadership role as President, providing stability and continuity during this period of change. We thank Amanda for her ongoing dedication to steering the organisation through these important transitions.

During the year, we bid farewell to several valued board Members.

**Samantha Cunningham** and **Jo Johnson** made the personal decision to step down after completing one year of service on the board. We appreciate their contributions during their tenure and respect their decision to focus on other commitments.

We also said goodbye to three long-standing Board Members who reached the maximum term limits as outlined in our governance framework. **Kevin Huggins**, **Mark Coray**, and **Carolyn Sweeney** completed extensive periods of service, having served the maximum consecutive terms. Their years of dedication, expertise, and unwavering support have been instrumental in shaping the NHBF into the organisation it is today. Mark, Kevin and Carolyn were formally recognised and thanked by the Chief Executive and President at our July Annual General Meeting for their outstanding contributions.

**Beverly Bates** and **Fiona Johnson** continued into their second term, while **Jamie Mettyear**, in his second year, was voted **Vice President** on the board, bringing valuable continuity and experience to our governance structure.

## NEW BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Following our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in July, we welcomed three newly elected Directors to the Board: **Debbie Digby**, **Richard Marshall**, and **Kelly Shaw**. These appointments followed an extensive board induction process designed to ensure new Members are fully prepared for their governance responsibilities.



## GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENTS

**To enhance our governance effectiveness, the board undertook several important initiatives in 2024:**

**SKILLS MATRIX ASSESSMENT:** We conducted a comprehensive skills matrix evaluation to ensure board Members collectively possess the knowledge and expertise required for effective governance. This process helped identify any capability gaps and informed our approach to supporting board development.

**BOARD COMPOSITION:** In accordance with NHBF Rules and Regulations 11.2 (Composition, Appointment and Removal of Board Directors), the board now comprises nine elected directors, including the President. All directors serve three-year terms and are eligible for re-election or reappointment for one additional term, with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

**MEETING STRUCTURE OPTIMISATION:** We restructured our meeting schedule to enhance strategic focus and operational efficiency. Board meetings were moved to Mondays to enable the senior management team to attend and provide direct feedback to Board Members. The frequency was reduced to four strategic meetings per year, with provisions for exceptional meetings when required.

**ADVISORY BOARD INTEGRATION:** Two advisory boards were established to support strategic alignment and the implementation of the 5-year strategy and Member support initiatives. Fiona headed the Policy and Public Affairs advisory board, while Amanda led the Quality Standards and Education advisory board. Both advisory boards feed directly into board meetings, ensuring our governance discussions are more strategically focused while the advisory boards handle operational development matters and provide diverse Member perspectives.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

“

2024 has been a year of thoughtful transition and strengthening for the NHBF Board. While we've said farewell to valued colleagues who have given so much to our organisation, we've also welcomed fresh perspectives and implemented governance improvements that position us well for the future. The dedication of our outgoing Members, particularly Kevin, Mark, and Carolyn, has laid a strong foundation that our new board Members can build upon. Our refined meeting structure and skills-based approach to governance ensure we remain focused on our strategic objectives while maintaining the Member-centric values that define NHBF. I'm confident that these changes will enhance our ability to serve our Members effectively in the years ahead.

**Amanda Lodge Stewart, NHBF President**

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# SECTION 10: PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT STATEMENT

## BUILDING A STRONGER NHBF

“

As I prepare to conclude my presidency in July 2025, I reflect on what has been an exceptionally challenging year for hair and beauty businesses. Our Members have faced unprecedented economic pressures, rising costs, and regulatory changes that have tested the resilience of even the most established businesses. Throughout these difficulties, the NHBF team has remained steadfastly focused on supporting our Members to navigate these challenges by providing essential tools and resources. The results documented in this report demonstrate how the NHBF has evolved beyond being just a Trade Association to become the essential partner our Members need during these demanding times.

The achievements documented in this annual report represent more than operational success—they demonstrate how the NHBF is actively creating its own narrative in a sector too often defined by external challenges and negative perceptions. While others focus on difficulties, we have chosen to build solutions. Where others see obstacles, we have created opportunities.

From securing unprecedented government access to developing groundbreaking apprenticeship standards, from launching innovative Member support initiatives to establishing quality frameworks that elevate our entire sector—every achievement reflects strategic thinking focused on long-term impact rather than short-term fixes.

What particularly impresses me is how the NHBF has refused to be defined by the negativity that can pervade industry discourse. Instead of accepting limitations, we have challenged assumptions. Rather than following trends, we have set them. This report showcases an organisation that doesn't just respond to change—it creates.

The trust-building initiative, the NHBF launched at the beginning of 2024 exemplifies this approach. By proactively addressing historical tensions and fostering collaboration across the sector, we have demonstrated that positive leadership can overcome entrenched divisions. The NHBF is showing the entire sector what's possible when we focus on shared goals rather than historical grievances.

Change is never easy, and transformation inevitably brings challenges. We have had some challenging voices and perspectives, which have sometimes proved difficult to navigate. However, the NHBF team's steadfast commitment to our Members and their ability to rise above these challenges while maintaining focus on long-term strategic goals demonstrates the kind of leadership our sector needs.

Positive leadership can make tiny steps towards collaborative working that can be built upon over time. The team's resilience and determination have been crucial in navigating through periods of uncertainty while keeping the organisation moving forward. Throughout it all, the team have continued to provide consistent information to support our Members and the sector navigates the challenging environment.

Our Members deserve an organisation that fights for their success, advocates for their interests, and elevates their professional standing. This report provides compelling evidence that they have exactly that in the NHBF.

Kind regards, Mandy

**From Amanda Lodge Stewart, NHBF President**



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## FROM JAMIE METTYEAR, VICE PRESIDENT

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**As Vice President, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the NHBF team’s exceptional capabilities and their unwavering dedication to transforming the NHBF into the premier authority for our sector.**

What strikes me most about this year’s accomplishments is the team’s ability to maintain strategic focus and deliver measurable results, even when navigating complex organisational dynamics. The presentation of the Survive and Thrive initiative exemplified the forward-thinking approach that characterises the NHBF —always looking ahead to anticipate Member needs and sector challenges.

The NHBF team has consistently demonstrated remarkable resilience and professionalism in their ability to translate vision into reality, whether through policy influence that secured ministerial meetings or innovative Member services that provide genuine value and reflect leadership of the highest calibre.

The NHBF’s achievement of becoming one of the government’s most trusted sources for hair and beauty sector intelligence didn’t happen by accident—it’s the result of strategic thinking, relationship-building skills, and commitment to evidence-based advocacy.

What I find inspiring about the NHBF’s approach is the unwavering commitment to creating positive changes for our Members, regardless of external pressures or criticism. In a sector that can be dominated by challenges and concerns, the team has consistently chosen to focus on solutions and opportunities. This positive leadership style has been instrumental in elevating the NHBF’s reputation and influence.

As we look forward, I remain confident that the NHBF team has established the foundation necessary for sustained success. The green shoots evident in 2024’s consolidation year give every reason to expect continued growth and impact.

Best Wishes

Jamie

**Jamie Mettyear, Vice President**



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# FINANCIALS 1

National Hair & Beauty Federation Limited **Summarised Income and Expenditure Account** for the year ended 31 December 2024.

INCOME	2024 £	2023 £		2024 £	2023 £
Members fees	<b>1,251,487</b>	1,337,683	<b>Operating Surplus / (Deficit) for the year</b>	<b>(274,382)</b>	(332,736)
Insurance commission	<b>36,779</b>	47,596	Realised / (losses) on listed investments		
Sales to members	<b>11,856</b>	10,964	Corporation tax	-	-
Competition and event income	<b>650</b>	10,238	<b>Total recognised gains relating to the year</b>	-	-
Magazine advertising and sponsorship income	<b>19,539</b>	31,117	Re-analysis of unpaid share capital from previous years	-	-
Investment income and interest receivable	<b>80,537</b>	74,326	Unrealised gains on listed investments	<b>201,241</b>	144,476
Other income	<b>22,169</b>	22,273	<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>(73,141)</b>	(188,260)
<b>Total income</b>	<b>1,423,016</b>	1,534,196			
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			<b>Issue / (withdrawal) of shares</b>	<b>(396)</b>	(466)
Direct membership services	<b>367,969</b>	370,687	<b>Balance brought forward at 1 January 2023</b>	<b>3,500,070</b>	3,688,796
Meeting costs	<b>36,817</b>	31,472			
Affiliation fees and subscriptions	<b>6,745</b>	14,711	<b>Balance carried forward at 31 December 2023</b>	<b>3,426,533</b>	3,500,070
Competition and event costs	<b>9,622</b>	26,915			
Publicity and promotional costs	<b>225,566</b>	288,033			
Honoraria	<b>9,415</b>	9,466			
Staff costs	<b>638,526</b>	726,903			
Premises and office equipment costs	<b>108,551</b>	104,359			
Administration costs	<b>275,068</b>	261,324			
Irrecoverable VAT	<b>19,119</b>	33,062			
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,697,398</b>	1,866,931			
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) before exceptional items</b>	<b>(274,382)</b>	(332,736)			

The Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet have been extracted from the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024. If you wish to have a copy of the full Financial Statements please visit [www.nhbf.co.uk](http://www.nhbf.co.uk) or contact us on 01234 831965.

# FINANCIALS 2

National Hair & Beauty Federation Limited **Summarised Financial Position** for the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Intangible assets	1	10,318
Tangible assets	282,096	286,510
Investments	3,208,026	3,138,786
	<b>3,490,123</b>	3,435,614
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Debtors	239,278	132,936
Short term bank deposits and cash at bank	8,769	254,933
	<b>248,047</b>	387,869
<b>CREDITORS</b>		
Amounts falling due within one year	(311,637)	(323,413)
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>(63,590)</b>	64,456
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>3,426,533</b>	3,500,070
<b>Represented by: Capital, funds and reserves</b>		
<b>Capital, funds and reserves</b>		
Share capital	4,669	5,065
Income & expenditure account	2,606,501	2,785,919
<b>Designated funds</b>		
Revaluation fund	533,267	412,259
Tangible and intangible fixed assets fund	282,096	296,827
Regions and networking groups fund	-	-
<b>Total capital, funds &amp; reserves</b>	<b>3,426,533</b>	3,500,070

## REPORT OF THE AUDITOR

The auditor's report on the full accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024 was unqualified.

Streets Auditors LLP  
Statutory Auditor, Chartered Accountants  
Wyboston, Bedfordshire

**Date: 20 May 2025**





## NHBF

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