

Company registration number: 02668971

Charity registration number: 1008190

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

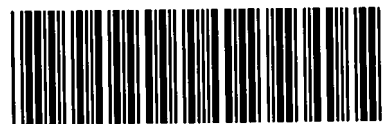
(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

KM
Chartered Accountants
1st Floor, Block C
The Wharf
Manchester Road
Burnley
Lancashire
BB11 1JG

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COMPANIES HOUSE

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

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Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Reference and Administrative Details

Trustees	S C Ledbetter H L Allen-Robson A Abbas S Shah M T Sidat C Robinson N McGrath
Secretary	J G Hodgkinson
Chief Executive Officer	J G Hodgkinson
Charity Registration Number	1008190
Company Registration Number	02668971
Registered Office	Boulevard Centre Cathedral Quarter Blackburn BB1 1EZ
Auditor	KM Chartered Accountants 1st Floor, Block C The Wharf Manchester Road Burnley Lancashire BB11 1JG
Bankers	Barclays Bank plc 72/78 St James Street Burnley Lancashire BB11 1NH

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Trustees

S C Ledbetter

H L Allen-Robson

A Abbas

S Shah

M T Sidat

N McGrath (appointed 2nd January 2024)

C Robinson (appointed 15th July 2024)

P Mathauda (resigned 6th December 2023)

R Duckworth (resigned 6th December 2023)

T Fazal (resigned 25th January 2024)

Objectives and activities

Policies and objectives

The principal object of the charity is to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community, in the local government districts of Blackburn with Darwen, Lancashire and its environs, and in particular the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness. To build capacity of third sector organisations and provide them with the necessary information, support and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose within the area of benefit. To promote, organise and facilitate co-operation and partnership working between third sector, statutory and other relevant bodies in the achievement of the above purposes within the area of benefit.

Activities for achieving the objectives

The trustees receive a quarterly update on actions derived from the strategic plan and review progress towards implementing the strategy every year and review the strategy itself. The content of the plan is discussed at the annual planning days for staff and trustees and the strategic plan will be formally reviewed by the trustees at its first Executive Committee of the financial year each year.

Grant making policies

All small grant programmes managed by Community CVS are managed in accordance with guidance and rules set down by our external partners. They are for activities which conform to the objects of our charity and are distributed to eligible voluntary, community and faith sector organisations to undertake charitable activities.

Fundraising disclosures

Community CVS continues to seek grant funding, contracts and service level agreements from national, regional and local partners to deliver services that are in keeping with our objectives and meet identified needs of the local community within Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

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Public benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

The charity is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum of Association on 6 December 1991, as amended by Special Resolution on 12 February 1998, and on 16 December 2014. The charitable company is a registered charity number 1008190.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The management of the charity is the responsibility of the Trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association.

Induction and training of trustees

A Trustee handbook, including roles and responsibilities, has been prepared for all new Trustees. All new trustees meet with the Chair and Chief Executive as part of the induction process and go through the Trustee handbook. Resources are available to support Trustees to meet their individual training needs to help them perform their duties as Trustees. Planning days are held with Trustees and staff on an annual basis.

Organisational structure

During the year, the charity employed on average 42 staff to deliver our activities and projects. All staff are responsible to the Chief Executive and ultimately, the trustees/directors. The trustees set the strategic framework within which the Chief Executive and management team operate. The trustees meet as a minimum six times per year as a Board of Trustees and more when required. The trustees receive regular reports on all aspects of the organisation, including finance, human resources, marketing & communications, health & safety, service activities, quality & performance, etc.

Major risks and management of those risks

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks. These major risks are the impact of short term funding, changes in funding streams, changes to key personnel and changes in local and central government policy.

STRATEGY, REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Our strategic framework guides everything we do. We undertook a fundamental strategic review to determine our future direction in a world totally transformed by the impact of the COVID 19 Pandemic, over 10 years of austerity, Brexit, the cost of living crisis, etc.

The process started in September 2022. We used appreciative enquiry as a methodology to discover our core values and strengths, dream about our aspirations for the future, design the building blocks to get there and establish a clear road map to achieve our destiny and deliver our future. External consultants were used to interview staff and volunteers, facilitate a two day CVS team 'away day' and support trustees at an away day.

We held a Together Everyone Achieves More Conference in May 2023 attended by over 300 local residents, volunteers and paid staff from the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups and organisations across Blackburn with Darwen.

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The outcome of the process has created a framework for the next 10 years – which will develop, evolve and transform as our communities, the VCFSE sector and all the stakeholders change over the same period. We will be responsive to the needs of the communities we serve, their aspirations, hopes and fears, the opportunities that present themselves – but always focused on achieving positive impact – socially, economically and environmentally.

OUR STRATEGY:

CONNECTING PEOPLE, GROWING COMMUNITIES

Our Mission:

“To support individuals, organisations and communities to achieve their full potential”

Our Vision:

For CVS to lead positive social, economic and environmental change transforming how the VCFSE Sector works collaboratively with the public and private sectors.

For CVS to be a valued community partner, recognized as the lead local infrastructure support organisation for communities within Blackburn with Darwen and elsewhere.

Our Values

Community Stewardship: valuing service to the community over self-interest and believing everyone has a responsibility to support positive social change for our community now and in the future. To advocate on behalf of our communities, especially the most vulnerable.

Co-operation and Solidarity: valuing mutual support with everyone helping each other to deliver positive social change.

Equity and Fairness: valuing the well-being of everyone and striving to achieve social, economic and environmental justice for all.

Non-Judgemental: valuing everyone for who they are without prejudice or judgement.

Voluntary Action: valuing people and organisations giving their time freely to help other people within our communities.

Willingness to Listen, Learn & Innovate: valuing trying new ideas and new approaches to tackling some of the deep seated socio-economic and environmental challenges that our communities face.

Our Strategic Objectives

Taking Action: Leading and Advocating for Change on things that matter to our communities

Support: Creating collaborations and partnerships to tackle the challenges we face.

Resource: Building the capabilities of individuals, organisations and communities to lead change

Volunteer: Creating an effective volunteer eco-system to support our communities.

Our Outcomes

Socially: To build fairer, more active, more connected and resilient communities.

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Economically: To build an inclusive and mixed economy with higher levels of entrepreneurial activity and a more creative, skilled and productive workforce.

Environmentally: To mobilise our communities to take greater care of our natural world and our climate.

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

The review of activities over the past year is organised under our four strategic objectives.

Action: Leading and Advocating for Change on things that matter to our communities

BwD Community Network & the 6P VCFSE Strategy.

During the year, at the Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM) Conference (held in May 2023), the VCFSE Sector voted on setting up a new partnership to co-ordinate activity across the VCFSE Sector and voted to call it Blackburn with Darwen Community Network. Discussions from the workshops have fed into thinking about developing a new strategic framework to guide and promote the work is being developed and co-produced with the VCFSE Sector through workshops held at the initial TEAM Conference and through the 2nd Conference 'the 6P VCFSE Conference' held in June 2024.

- People
- Prosperity
- Planet
- Peace
- Place
- Participation

The 6P strategy will take forward community led work across all the themes. One example, is the Planet priority which will take forward actions from the **People's Jury on Climate Change** which reported in January 2023 and had education as its number one priority to raise awareness and mobilise communities to be more active around climate change and the natural world.

During the year, at the same time as the above, a development group of +20 VCFSE groups developed the vision, values, principles and functions of the Community Network and developed a recruitment pack for appointing a Board for the Community Network. The application process started in January 2024, interviews held and places filled in February 2024, the board met in shadow format in March and held its 1st formal Board meeting in April 2024 where the constitution was agreed.

Lancashire LOCAL - VCFSE Community Manifesto

During the year, our CEO supported LACVS to submit a successful grant application for £484,636 from the National Lottery Community Fund to drive forward the implementation of the Manifesto – which had been developed with the VCFSE Sector in the previous year. The LACVS team was recruited in Autumn 2023 and a launch event was held on 06th March 2024. The nine priorities of the VCFSE Manifesto are -

- Equality and social justice for all: tackling poverty in Lancashire
- VCFSE Sector as an equal partner
- Economic Model that works for Lancashire
- Community Well-Being and person and community centred public service models
- Green communities
- Pioneer a Lancashire Social Prescribing Model

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- A Safer Lancashire
- Helping people into employment
- Adequate VCFSE Sector resources to play our full part in the future of Lancashire.

The six P strategy within Blackburn with Darwen will align with and support the delivery of VCFSE Manifesto for Lancashire. For example,

- People will support the Equality, Community Well-Being, Social Prescribing
- Prosperity will support the Economic Model and Helping people into employment themes
- Planet will support the Green Communities Theme
- Peace will support the Safer Lancashire theme
- Place will support the equality theme - especially focusing on our most deprived neighbourhoods and on housing and homelessness.
- Participation will support involving the VCFSE Sector as an equal partner, on volunteering and on co-production amongst other things.

Support: Creating collaborations and partnerships to tackle the challenges we face.

Action for Jobs: Strengthening Communities Passport to Health and Employment

Economic Inactivity and Worklessness remain persistent structural challenges within Blackburn with Darwen and the main urban centres of Lancashire such as Blackpool, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle and Preston – which feature amongst the most deprived local authorities in the country. Community CVS led a partnership approach with LACVS partners across Lancashire to help those furthest away from the labour market. The project ended on the 31st December 2023 and through its lifetime achieved the following:

- Supported 859 people who were unemployed or economically inactive residents (108% of our target);
- 285 participants (33%) achieved a positive outcome in terms of gaining employment, moving into education or training or job search (for the economically inactive).
- The majority of participants reported health and well-being improvements.

The characteristics of the participants are as follows:

- 83% lived in a jobless household
- 55% were males and 45% females
- 54% have a level 1 qualification or lower (with 24% having no qualifications and 45% not having an English qualification)
- 49% Have a physical or mental impairment or condition that has a long-term negative impact on their ability to do normal activities
- 45% consider that they have a disability that limits their ability to work
- 34% are in recovery from alcohol or substance misuse
- 31% are from an ethnic minority community
- 26% have dependent children
- 23% are ex-offenders
- 19% were aged 50 or over.
- 15% are lone parents.

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Some of the people supported, who were facing multiple disadvantage also participated on the Changing Futures Programme that aimed to support residents who were in recovery from addiction, had experience of the criminal justice system, had a mental health conditions, were homeless or living in temporary accommodation, and had experience of domestic abuse either as a survivor or as a perpetrator.

Community CVS has a rich history of supporting people who have experience of one or more of the above characteristics – especially in terms of helping people with volunteering and getting involved in community action. This is continuing through the work of the Community Network and the Spark Recovery Collaborative.

Bowel Cancer Screening Programme

Working alongside Blackpool NHS Foundation Trust, GPs across Lancashire and South Cumbria and charities and community groups supporting the most vulnerable in our community, our health promotion team has delivered the following during 2023-2024:

- engaged with 4588 individual non-responders (patients who have not returned a sample when requested)
- 1368 of these were aged 53-60 (30%); 3220 were aged 61 to 74 years old (70%).
- Of these, 684 picked up the phone. (50%)
- 659 accepted the invitation for CFAK. (50%)
- 327 attended the consultation. (50%)
- 312 ordered a test kit. (95%)
- 250 returned a test kit. (80% Uptake rate)
- 8 had a positive test result (2.4% positivity rate)

We continue to work closely with University College London and UCLAN to evaluate the success of our interventions. During the year we distributed a £1500 small grant to East Lancashire Community Action Project to raise awareness of bowel cancer.

Play and Stay Teatime Activities (PASTA)

On behalf of public health, we brought together a partnership of IMO, two local primary schools, a community group and dieticians from East Lancashire NHS Hospitals Trust, to pilot a new approach to working with families with primary school age children living within our most deprived neighbourhoods to improve healthy eating and physical activity amongst these targeted populations in the hope of tackling both child poverty, poor health and obesity within these communities.

During the year, we piloted 3 cohorts of working with families for six weeks within St Lukes and St Philips Primary School, Wensley Fold Primary School and Roots and Wings Home Education Group. 16 families with 25 children engaged and completed the PASTA programme with 3 families leaving early. 90% of the parents who completed the programme reported having a better understanding of the health benefits of certain foods and their ability to use those foods in preparing meals. 35% of families reported an increase in their well-being from participating in the programme. Feedback included:

Parent: 'For the children, it has been a valuable experience and learned lots of stuff about healthy eating and has improved their overall wellbeing'

Young Person: 'Had so much fun here making the food and doing sports, especially with the parents.'

Young Person: 'Enjoyed sports and enjoyed making pasta and cutting the different vegetables and tasting different foods'

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Learning from the pilot – included the following:

1. **Open and Transparent Communication:** The team maintained consistent openness and transparency in communication, facilitating smooth session flows and effective collaboration.
2. **Active Parental Participation:** Roots & Wings, St Lukes and Wensley Fold parents all actively engaged in the project, demonstrating a strong commitment to involvement and contribution. This was lovely to witness as you could see the positive relationships between all which also contributed to the positive experience.
3. **Embracing Suggestions:** The project embraced suggestions from participants, fostering a collaborative environment where ideas were welcomed and considered.
4. **Personalised Parent Conversations:** One-on-one conversations with parents proved highly beneficial, enabling the sharing of life experiences and fostering deeper learning opportunities.
5. **Engaging Discussions on Food Habits:** Stimulating conversations regarding cooking changes and food consumption patterns led to valuable insights and raised awareness among participants.
6. **Successful Introduction of New Foods:** The introduction of new foods like Gimhap (sushi) was well-received, with participants appreciating the opportunity to expand their culinary horizons and develop new skills.
7. **Skills Development through Activities:** Activities embedded with skills development elements significantly contributed to participants' personal growth and competence in various areas.
8. **Encouraging Family Involvement:** Young people became more involved in family shopping and kitchen tasks, showcasing their increased confidence and competence following the learning opportunities provided by the project.
9. **Positive Feedback from Michelle's Visits (the dietician):** Visits from Michelle provided valuable feedback, recipes, and observations, fostering a supportive environment and encouraging experimentation without imposing views onto children.
10. **High Satisfaction among Sessional Staff:** Sessional staff thoroughly enjoyed the sessions, indicating a positive work environment and effective engagement with the project's objectives.
11. **Addressing Nutritional Challenges:** Challenging conversations with parents regarding certain foods, such as crisps, helped raise awareness about their nutritional impact on young people's health.
12. **Community Bonding:** The project fostered community bonding, bringing families together and providing opportunities for mutual support and solidarity beyond the project's confines.

Public Health agreed to continue with the pilot into a 2nd year and CVS has committed to building the partnership approach and looking for other funding opportunities to develop and expand the approach across all the deprived areas within Blackburn with Darwen.

SENDIASS

Working with families with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, local schools and colleges, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and the local integrated healthcare system, our team provides independent, impartial information, advice and support to parents and carers, and professionals across the public and VCFSE sectors. In numbers and percentages, for 2023-2024, the service delivered the following:

- Made 2583 contacts (or 11 per working day) with parents/carers, schools, professionals, etc.
- Received and supported 297 unique new referrals (in addition to anyone supported from the previous year);

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- 81% directly from parents/carers
- 6% from the local authority
- 4% from schools
- 2% from charities or community groups
- 7% unknown
- Types of support provided includes:
 - 23% information sharing
 - 20% E-mail support
 - 17% impartial advice
 - 14% contacting schools
 - 12% contacting professionals
 - 10% attending meetings and other forms of support
 - 4% signposting
- Assistance in meetings - included support with
 - 25% Common Assessment Framework meetings
 - 18% ECHP Submissions or Review Meetings
 - 13% Education Reviews
 - 10% Progress Meetings
 - 9% Team Around the Family Meetings
 - 8% Without Prejudice Meetings
 - 6% Child in Need Meetings
 - 11% Home Visits, Exclusions and other meetings
- The main support themes that parents/carers requested help with regarding their relationship with schools was:-
 - 40% school lack of support
 - 16% transfer to specialist provision
 - 13% school refusal
 - 12% transfer to another school
 - 7% transition
 - 4% exclusion
 - 4% breakdown of communication
 - 4% transport or another school issue
- The main disability or health condition of the children or young person supported (which was declared) was as follows:-
 - 30% undiagnosed / awaiting diagnosis
 - 24% autism
 - 16% ADHD
 - 5% Learning Needs
 - 4% Anxiety
 - 4% Mental Health
 - 3% Global Development Delay
 - 1% or less from each of the following ASD Non Verbal, Cerebral Palsy, Chromosome, Downs Syndrome, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Epilepsy, Hearing Impairments, Speech Impairment, Visual Impairments, ODD, Physical Disability, Social Anxiety, Social Communications Disorder.

The number of children and young people being undiagnosed or awaiting a diagnosis remains high and the general feeling of parents or carers that their child and the family are insufficiently supported continues to rise and the complexity of the support required by their child or young person continues to rise.

Resource: building the capabilities of individuals, organisations and communities to lead change

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CAPACITY BUILDING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

BwD Communities Team

Throughout the year we have advised individuals and community groups about setting up new VCFSE organisations, about improving governance, about grant funding, about recruiting and supporting volunteers, about data protection, cyber security, and lots and lots of other things. In March 2024, we created a dedicated BwD Communities Team to focus on community action and helping communities to organise and help themselves. The team are hoping to deepen the involvement of local communities in collaborative efforts to improve their local areas and contribute to the Community Network's 6P strategy. We will be seeking funds from the NHS, Lottery, charitable trusts and other funders to take forward this important work.

BwD Community Fund

We continue to administer the **BwD Community Fund** on behalf of Brian Mercer Trust. During the year we held three rounds of the fund and approved grants as follows:

- R9 (June 23) – 16 grants approved worth £10,035.
- R10 (Oct 23) – 13 grants approved worth £11,082.
- R11 (March 24) – 19 grants approved worth £16,316
- Total Approved: 48 small grants worth £37,433.

The Community Fund supported the following 46 groups and organisations:

- Arise Restoration Centre
- Arts to Heal
- Autism Friends Group
- Ayub Sultan Trust
- Bastwell Buddies Ladies Group
- Belmont Village Residents Association
- Big Local Community Playgroup
- Blackburn Goalball Club
- Blackburn Over 50's Group
- Blackburn People's Choir
- Blackburn Road Runners
- Blackburn Symphony Orchestra
- BwD Diabetes Support Group
- BwD Youth Darts Academy
- Cook Well Community
- DARE
- Gecko Games Club
- Higher Croft Community Hub
- I Pole
- In Di Go Dedicated Care and Support CIC
- Interpro Football Club

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- Ivy Street Community Centre
- Ladies Together
- Lancashire Community Helpers CIC
- Little Harwood Curry Club
- Mill Hill Community Trust
- Mill Hill Festival and Events Committee
- Mini Hitters
- Net Academy
- Play and Learn Scheme CIC
- Residents of Sunnyhurst Association
- Roots and Wings Ed Group
- Romney Voices
- Sister 4 Sisters
- St Georges Mill Hill Scouts
- St James Ashgrove Community Space, Darwen
- St James Church, Blackburn
- St Stephen's Church, Little Harwood
- St Silas Church, Blackburn
- Sticky Fingers Toddler Group, St Andrews, Livesey
- Symbiosis Health and Well-Being CIC
- Their Stories
- VOICE
- Willows Lodge Angling Club
- Words, Power, Collective
- Young People Together

Spark Recovery Collaborative - Community Assets Fund

Working with the Calico Group, Early Break, IMO, Red Rose Recovery, Roots Community, THOMAS and others, our BwD Communities Team manages the Community Assets Fund on behalf of the Spark Recovery Collaborative to help the recovery community to play a meaningful role within our communities. This is part of our Asset Based Community Development approach to involving communities in their own transformation.

During the year we distributed £30,544 via the Community Assets Fund on behalf of the Spark Recovery Collaborative to the following 15 groups and organisations:

- Arise Restoration Centre
- Bureau Centre for the Arts CIC – Arts Recovery Group
- Offload North West
- Offload North West Women's Hub
- Phoenix Hub
- Prevent to Protect

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- Red Rose Recovery
- Roots Community
- Secret Santa CIC
- Shad Chefs
- Shad Chefs Women's Group
- Sons of Anxiety
- Symbiosis
- VOICE
- Willows Lodge Angling Club.

More generally we work across the Spark Recovery Collaborative and the wider community to help people in recovery from alcohol or substance misuse to become active in the wider community, volunteering, joining activities and community groups, etc.

The Spark Recovery Collaborative takes an asset-based community development approach to help the individual's recovery journey and we work closely with the Roots Community to join and connect people in recovery to the wider community.

BUSINESS TRAINING CENTRE

Business Advice and Economic Development

a) DR!VE

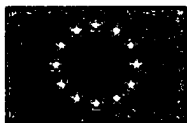
Community CVS was a partner to SELNET's DR!VE project supporting residents, businesses and social enterprises within Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire to become more entrepreneurial. The project ended during the 1st quarter of the reporting year and achieved the following results:

DR!VE

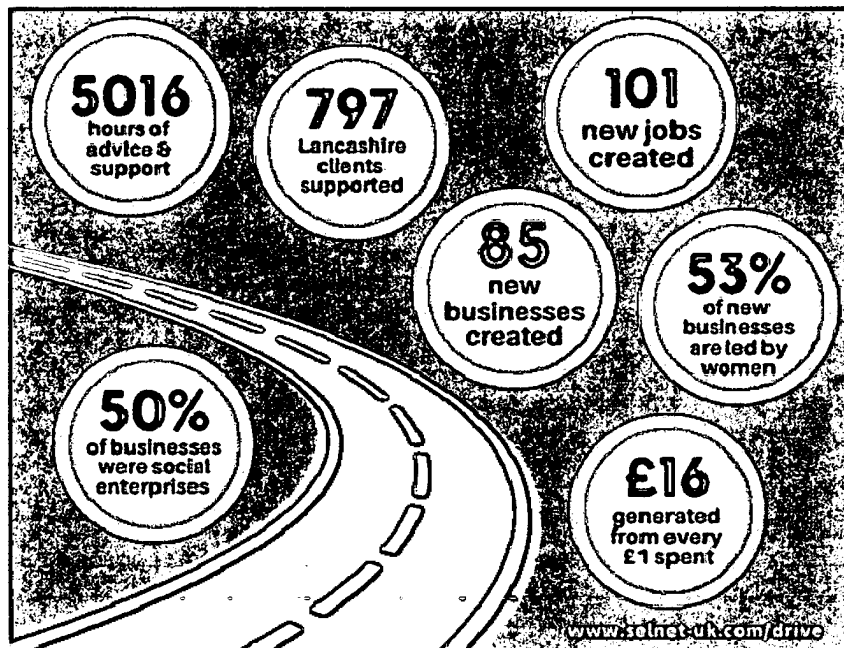
Turning good business plans
into business for good

Completed in 28 months,
increasing Lancashire's
entrepreneurship &
business growth

Professional support
focussing on areas with low
enterprise activity
& underrepresented groups



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



b) Boost Lancashire: Flying Start

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During quarter three, we started to deliver business advice through Boost Lancashire's Flying Start programme with our two qualified business advisors. During the period – we provided business advice to 46 clients, who comprised individuals exploring new business ideas, to business start ups to businesses in their early years wanting to grow and expand their business. Businesses – included sole traders, private businesses and social enterprises and spanned several sectors – especially health, the creative industries and manufacturing. The majority of clients were based in Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn and Pendle.

Training

a) Awareness Training for the Mental Health Workforce Across Lancashire and South Cumbria

During the year, we trained 160 staff and volunteers across the Mental Health Workforce to raise their awareness of the issues that the asylum seeker and refugee community faces in order to prepare them to provide more tailored support to the asylum seeker and refugee community. Towards the end of the year – we secured a grant to continue the work into 2024-2025.

b) Upskilling the Health and Social Care Workforce Across Lancashire

On the 31st December 2023, we completed our Upskilling project, which focused on upskilling Small to Medium Sized Enterprises in the VCFSE or private sectors who contribute towards improved health and well-being in its widest sense (i.e. the wider or social determinants of health). All organisations completed an organisational diagnostic to understand the business needs and priorities. From the diagnostic we worked with the management team to develop a training plan and then delivered training that meets the priorities of the organisation. Through the lifetime of the project we:

- Recruited and trained 2064 employees
- 76% were female; 24% were male
- 50% achieved a full qualification or a unit of a qualification
 - 4% completed an entry level English qualification
 - 74% completed a vocational topic at level 2 or below
 - 22% completed a vocational topic at level 3 or higher
- 50% participated in non-accredited training
- 35% were aged 50 or over
- 33% did not have basic skills (1 in 3)
- 18% were from an ethnic minority background

c) Bootcamp Skills: Aspiring Leaders in Health and Social Care

In September 2023, we started to deliver a 10 week Bootcamp Skills training programme for Aspiring Leaders in Health and Social Care. Due to the success of the first two cohorts, which started in September, the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub commissioned a third cohort to start in January 2024. Throughout the 3 cohorts – we trained 40 employees from the health and social care sector with the majority of them progressing to take on more responsibility or new roles within their businesses.

The provision has been designed to meet business needs and is non-accredited but participants are given the option to register with CMI and pursue a unit of a management qualification if they wish to pursue it.

There are plans to grow the provision in future years to meet the rising demand amongst businesses within the health and social care sector and other sectors to invest in their existing workforce and 'grown their own' leaders.

Volunteer: creating an effective volunteer eco-system to support our communities.

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LEAD VOLUNTEER ORGANISATION

In October 2023, Community CVS was the 1st in the country to be awarded Lead Volunteer Organisation status for our Volunteer Centre within Blackburn with Darwen.

We continue to lead on the strategic development of a strong volunteer eco-system within Blackburn with Darwen. We support residents to volunteer, train existing volunteers for Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) across BwD and support VIOs to recruit volunteers, to provide training to their volunteer organisers and help them develop their systems and procedures to ensure the volunteer experience is a good one.

During the year, we introduced an on-line system – Volunteer Plus - to promote volunteering, we worked with VIOs to co-produce a new volunteer quality standards and worked with partners across Lancashire to develop a Volunteering for Health bid (mentioned later on).

We opened an office in Darwen at the Jubilee Tower Credit Union so that volunteers and community groups in Darwen can access our support more easily.

CHIP IN PARTNERSHIP

Led by the Bureau Centre for the Arts, CVS and the Council, Blackburn with Darwen was one of 19 partnerships nationally to be successful in securing £299,624 to support young adults aged 16 to 30 years old to volunteer within the arts & culture, heritage & the environment or sports and physical activity. We are the only partnership in the North West. The partnership of 19 organisations across the public and VCFSE Sectors offers volunteering opportunities with mentoring support for young people. During the year, partners supported 201 young people to volunteer (1 more than the initial target). 61% of the volunteers lived in the most deprived 10% of wards in the country, 42% were from the Global Majority community, 20% had a disability and 31% had 3 or more intersectionality barriers making it more difficult to access volunteering opportunities. The partnership has engaged young people throughout in designing and choosing a name for the partnership, in designing the volunteer opportunities and the mentoring programme and in developing a digital platform to make volunteering easier. An external evaluator judged 'the learning and development in Chip In has been a success'.

We are looking to continue to develop the partnership and secure new sources of funding going forward from the Arts Council, Lottery, NHS, charitable trusts, etc.

PRESTON VOLUNTEERS

In October 2023, Community CVS secured a contract worth £140,000 to set up a new Volunteer Centre in Preston – which became known as Preston Volunteers. We are working closely with Preston City Council, Preston Community Network, LACVS and Volunteer Centres across Lancashire to develop an integrated and consistent approach to providing volunteer infrastructure across Lancashire.

During the initial six months, we have delivered the following:

- Set up our Volunteer Plus system that can promote volunteering opportunities on-line
- We have held 30 'drop ins' or volunteer events – including 12 at Preston Job Centre and 12 at Preston Town Hall
- 161 residents have been recruited onto our Volunteer Plus system for volunteering and referred to the appropriate partner
- 92 people have been placed by 31st March 2024
 - 57% are from ethnic minorities
 - 23% are disabled
 - 33% are unemployed or not able to work

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- 169 groups and services have been supported to find volunteers
- Delivered a Volunteer Essentials Toolkit training to 12 attendees to get them ready for volunteering
- Delivered quality mark training to 28 attendees from VCFSE organisations
- Launched the Preston Volunteers Forum with 39 attendees
- Provided guidance on volunteering to 83 VCFSE groups

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AWARDS 2023

Our Community Volunteer Awards, which we put on in partnership with the local authority and 18 sponsors, continue to go from strength to strength. We received 713 nominations from residents, VCFSE organisations, public and private sector partners across Blackburn with Darwen for the 20 awards. The winners for 2023 are as follows:-

Health and Well Being Award

Individual – Si Donnelly

Group – Shad Chefs

Environment Award

Individual – Roy Parker

Group – Blackburn Volunteer Lock-Keepers

Grassroots Community Action Award

Individual – Sarah Bernasconi-Parsons

Group – Clifton Arms

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

Prosperity, Learning and Employment Award

Individual – Vicky McGurk

Group – Community and Business Partners CIC

Young People's Award

Individual – Becky Shaw

Group – Blackburn with Darwen Parents in Partnership

Culture, Leisure and Sporting Life Award

Individual – John Clucas

Group – Blackburn Pride Committee

Lindsay Dunn Award (for supporting people with complex needs)

Individual – Sarah Bernasconi-Parsons

Group – Ayup Sultan Trust

Renee Black Award (for supporting community cohesion)

ARC, Blackburn (Asylum Seeker and Refugee Community)

Community Involvement Award

Clifton Arms

Good Neighbour Award

Roy Parker

Volunteer of the Year Award

Sarah Bernasconi-Parsons

Lifetime Achievement Award

Gordon Fairweather

CVS Special Award for Outstanding Service

John East.

Thanks go to our 18 sponsors (below). Without their support we could not put on this important event.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report



VOLUNTEERING FOR HEALTH

In February 2024, Community CVS brought together a partnership of Cumbria CVS, Lancashire Association of CVSs, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Charity, Spring North and Volunteer Centre Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde to submit a proposal for nearly £0.5million to invest in volunteer infrastructure across Lancashire and South Cumbria. In July 2024, we were notified that we are 1 of 12 partnerships nationally to be successful and we have entered a development phase to set up the programme. We plan to develop and roll out a consistent approach to promoting, recruiting, training and supporting volunteer health champions across the integrated health system and to provide quality volunteer infrastructure support to volunteer involving organisations that use volunteers within the integrated health system. This initiative aims to embed volunteering within our health and social care system and support VCFSE and public sector organisations more widely to use the power of volunteering to tackle the social determinants of health and well-being.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Taking Action: Leading and Advocating for Change on things that matter to our communities

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN COMMUNITY NETWORK AND THE 6P VCFSE Strategy for Blackburn with Darwen

Taking forward suggestions from the 2023 TEAM Conference and 2024 6P Conference and the workshops to develop a more collaborative approach across the VCFSE Sector

- People
- Prosperity
- Planet
- Peace
- Place
- Participation

To lead in the co-production of collaborative actions and bids for resources under the six headings to tackle identified local priorities and need within Blackburn with Darwen.

LANCASHIRE LOCAL and the VCFSE Community Manifesto for Lancashire

To support LACVS, to deliver the Lancashire LOCAL project across Lancashire and advocate for change on behalf of local communities and the VCFSE Sector with sub regional bodies such as the forthcoming Lancashire Combined Authority, the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CHANGE

Through our active memberships of Voluntary Sector North West, NAVCA and NCVO to advocate for change at the regional and national levels for the things that matter to the VCFSE Sector and our communities within Blackburn with Darwen.

Support: Creating collaborations and partnerships to tackle the challenges we face.

PEOPLE

To develop collaborative and partnership approaches to meet the following 9 priority population groups:

- Asylum seekers, refugees and ethnic minorities
- Carers
- Disabled people and people with long term physical or mental health conditions
- Faith communities
- People with learning disabilities or autism
- People experiencing one or more causes of multiple disadvantage (homelessness; alcohol, substance misuse, gambling or other addictions; mental health; experience of the criminal justice system; survivor or perpetrator of domestic abuse)
- Older people especially the frail elderly or older people experiencing social isolation.
- Young People – especially Care leavers, children living in poverty or children and families with SEND
- Women – especially those experiencing other disadvantages mentioned above

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

Bowel Cancer Screening Programme Health Promotion and tackling wider health inequalities

Working with health professionals, GP practices and the VCFSE Sector, to develop collaborative and partnership approaches to enhance our approach to Bowel Cancer Screening Programme Health Promotion and widen our approach to other health inclusion groups and health issues that are part of programmes such as Core 20 Plus 5, Population Health, social determinants of health, etc.

PASTA (PLAY AND STAY TEATIME ACTIVITIES)

Working with health professionals, schools and the VCFSE Sector, to develop collaborative and partnership approaches to encouraging children, young people and families to pursue healthier lifestyles (eating, food growing, physical activity, outdoor activities, etc.).

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES, INCLUDING SENDIASS

Working with health professionals, schools and the VCFSE Sector, to develop collaborative and partnership approaches to helping children, young people and families with special educational needs and/or disabilities in all aspects of their life.

PROSPERITY

To develop collaborative and partnership approaches to meet the following priorities:

- Employment
- Enterprise
- Eradicating Poverty, Household Income and the Real Living Wage
- Workforce Development and Skills
- Developing and sustaining Civil Society organisations and the VCFSE Sector as part of the foundational economy for BwD.

PLANET

To develop collaborative and partnership approaches to meet the following priorities:

- Mobilising people, communities and the VCFSE Sector – especially the Population Group previously agreed in the People theme
- Protecting and enhancing Parks, open spaces and the natural world
- Recycling, reuse and the circular economy
- Developing BwD as a Sustainable Food Place
- Developing a sustainable VCFSE Sector

The above will form part of a wider response to climate change and builds on previous engagement through the People's Jury on Climate Change and the two Conferences CVS has held in partnership with the BwD Community Network.

PEACE

Working with local authorities, the criminal justice system and the VCFSE Sector, to develop collaborative and partnership approaches to meet the following priorities:

- Community safety, community resilience and security
- Domestic abuse

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

- Eradicating violence against women and girls
- Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- Celebrating diversity and bridging and connecting communities

PARTICIPATION

Working across the Public, Commercial and VCFSE Sectors, to develop collaborative and partnership approaches to meet the following priorities:

- Co-Production with the targeted population groups and the VCFSE Sector
- Digital Inclusion
- Participation in Arts & Culture; Heritage & the Natural World; Physical Activity, Recreation & Sport; combating social isolation, participating in social activities & mutual support.
- Volunteering and Social Action

PLACE

Working across the Public, Commercial and VCFSE Sectors, to develop collaborative and partnership approaches to meet the following priorities:

- Deprived neighbourhoods (11 of the 17 wards in Blackburn with Darwen are amongst the most deprived 20% within England).
- Heritage
- Housing and homelessness
- Improve our Town Centres

Resource: building the capabilities of individuals, organisations and communities to lead change

- **BUSINESS AND TRAINING CENTRE**

Continue to develop our role in providing business advice and assistance with economic development with Boost Lancashire, local authorities, SELNET

Continue to develop our thinking around new economic models that develop the role of civil society / the social economy as part of the foundational economy.

Continue to develop our growing reputation in leadership and management training – especially focused on aspiring leaders and amongst population groups that are under represented in leadership positions.

Continue to develop and widen the provision within our Training Centre to meet the workforce needs of the VCFSE Sector and complementary sectors such as Health and Social Care, Creative Industries, the Environmental Sector, etc.

- **CAPACITY BUILDING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Continue our work to get more embedded at the neighbourhood level – helping local communities to develop their responses to what matters to them. As well as communities of place, also support communities of identity, interest and/or circumstances to develop pathways and solutions that meet their needs and aspirations.

- **COMMUNITY GRANTS**

Continue to develop our relationships with local authorities, charitable trusts, the NHS and other commissioners and funders to widen the range of grants we can help them distribute to the VCFSE Sector.

Volunteer: creating an effective volunteer eco-system to support our communities.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

• LEAD VOLUNTEERING ORGANISATION / VOLUNTEER CENTRES

Continue to develop volunteer infrastructure in Blackburn with Darwen ('Blackburn Volunteers' and 'Darwen Volunteers') and Preston ('Preston Volunteers') to provide support across the area to residents seeking volunteering opportunities, existing volunteers and volunteer involving organisations (VIOs) across the VCFSE and Public Sectors.

Continue to advocate for the use volunteering as a stepping-stone towards employment and better health and wellbeing and as a way of supporting people experiencing multiple disadvantage or other forms of disadvantage to develop their confidence, skills and experience to improve their life opportunities.

• BWD CHIP IN PARTNERSHIP

Continue to develop and grow the BwD Chip in Partnership as a way of getting more young people aged 16 to 30 years old volunteering and participating in the creative arts sector; heritage and environment sectors; or recreation, sports and physical activity sectors.

• COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Continue to develop and grow our Community Volunteer Awards in partnership with the local authority and our sponsors to celebrate and raise the profile of volunteering within Blackburn with Darwen.

• VOLUNTEERING FOR HEALTH

To establish and embed volunteering generally and volunteer health champion roles in particular within and across the integrated health system at the Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire and south Cumbria levels.

THANK YOU

A BIG Thank you to everyone who supports us

We would like to thank our commissioners, grant funders, sponsors, public sector, VCFSE Sector and Private Sector partners.

Commissioners, Grant Funders and Partners

- Arts Council
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
- Blackburn with Darwen Community Network
- Boost Lancashire
- Brian Mercer Trust
- Bureau Centre for the Arts CIC
- Department for Work and Pensions (European Structural Funds)
- Eric Wright Charitable Trust
- Lancashire Association of Councils for Voluntary Service – LACVS
- Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale CVS
- Hyndburn & Ribble Valley CVS
- Inclusive North (Lancashire BME Network)
- Lancaster District CVS
- Preston Community Network
- Volunteer Centre Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

- West Lancashire CVS
- Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Integrated Care Board
- Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub
- National Lottery Community Fund
- NAVCA
- NHS England and Blackpool NHS Teaching Hospitals Trust
- Preston City Council
- SELNET
- Spark Recovery Collaborative
- Calico Group,
- Early Break,
- IMO,
- Red Rose Recovery Lancashire,
- Roots Community
- Spring North
- Voluntary Sector North West

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

2024 Community Volunteer Awards Sponsors

the **calico** group

wepa | Together
for a better life

Chubb

POWERED BY **API GROUP**

newground
together

PM+M



Financial review

The financial statements show incoming resources of £1.7m (2023: £2m), with resources expended of £1.5m (2023: £2.1m). A surplus was generated on the unrestricted fund of £316k.

The significant financial change in the year was the ending of the two ESF funded projects. Income and expenditure for 2024/25 are expected to be circa £1m.

The trustees are pleased with the performance in the year.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Trustees' Report

Policy on reserves

Community CVS aims to hold free reserves of between 3 and 6 months of the resources expended on the core costs of the charity excluding funding which is primarily passed directly on in grants and specific service level agreements. This will enable current activities and liabilities to be met in the event of a significant drop in funding. The free reserves amount to £652k at the year end.

The CVS Board of Trustees recognise the good progress that is being made in building our reserves and will look to strengthen them during the forthcoming year.

At the year end the following designated funds are held:

Strategic Investment Fund - £250,000 - set aside for future recruitment of senior staff

Business continuity - £150,000 - set aside to cover potential redundancy costs for changes in operations

Buildings Fund - for future capital works on the Boulevard Centre and the Community Hub

Restricted funds at the year end:

Buildings- £374,146 - Boulevard Centre acquisition and works undertaken and funded in previous years less impairment less secured mortgage.

Principal funding sources

During the period, the principal funding was received from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, the NHS and European Social Fund to undertake charitable activities, which are described in the Review of Activities. The European Social Fund grants are due to end on the 31st December 2023. As part of the Strategic Review process, the Senior Management Team are devising strategies, in consultation with staff, and to put before the CVS Board of Trustees for approval to replace these funding sources at the appropriate level to undertake future charitable activities that are linked to our strategy going forward.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each trustee has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information. The trustees confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and of which they know the auditor is unaware.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 16 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
M T Sidat
Trustee

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that can disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising Charities SORP - FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the original financial statements were authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities (set out on page 25), the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures on material balances for which robust, substantive analytical procedures have been undertaken to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



.....
Mark R Heaton FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of KM, Statutory Auditor

1st Floor, Block C
The Wharf
Manchester Road
Burnley
Lancashire
BB11 1JG

16 December 2024

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

**Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024
(Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)**

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	-	-	141	-	141
Charitable activities	4	742,115	817,585	1,559,700	642,007	1,276,636	1,918,643
Investment income	5	48	-	48	40	-	40
Other income	6	149,903	-	149,903	102,182	-	102,182
Total income		892,066	817,585	1,709,651	744,370	1,276,636	2,021,006
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	7	(576,025)	(939,349)	(1,515,374)	(551,724)	(1,188,114)	(1,739,838)
Other expenditure	8	-	-	-	-	(1,002,571)	(1,002,571)
Total expenditure		(576,025)	(939,349)	(1,515,374)	(551,724)	(2,190,685)	(2,742,409)
Net income/(expenditure)		316,041	(121,764)	194,277	192,646	(914,049)	(721,403)
Transfers between funds		(53,034)	53,034	-	98,240	(98,240)	-
Other recognised gains and losses							
Gains/losses on revaluation of fixed assets		-	-	-	117,178	-	117,178
Net movement in funds		263,007	(68,730)	194,277	408,064	(1,012,289)	(604,225)
Reconciliation of funds							
Total funds brought forward		993,761	442,876	1,436,637	585,697	1,455,165	2,040,862
Total funds carried forward	19	1,256,768	374,146	1,630,914	993,761	442,876	1,436,637

The notes on pages 33 to 44 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service
Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024
(Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.
The funds breakdown for 2023 is shown in note 19.

The notes on pages 33 to 44 form an integral part of these financial statements.
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Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

(Registration number: 02668971)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	15	980,000	1,000,000
Current assets			
Debtors	16	138,516	541,955
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>1,062,590</u>	<u>596,375</u>
		1,201,106	1,138,330
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	17	<u>(85,516)</u>	<u>(221,513)</u>
Net current assets		<u>1,115,590</u>	<u>916,817</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		2,095,590	1,916,817
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	18	<u>(464,676)</u>	<u>(480,180)</u>
Net assets		<u>1,630,914</u>	<u>1,436,637</u>
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds			
Restricted funds		374,146	442,876
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		<u>1,256,768</u>	<u>993,761</u>
Total funds	19	<u>1,630,914</u>	<u>1,436,637</u>

The financial statements on pages 29 to 44 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 16 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



.....
M T Sidat
Trustee

The notes on pages 33 to 44 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash income/(expenditure)		194,277	(604,225)
Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items			
Depreciation	8	20,000	(533,221)
Investment income	5	(48)	(40)
Revaluation of land and buildings		-	1,468,608
		214,229	331,122
Working capital adjustments			
Decrease in debtors	16	403,439	233,993
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	17	(135,997)	27,598
Net cash flows from operating activities		481,671	592,713
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest receivable and similar income	5	48	40
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of loans and borrowings	17	(15,504)	(18,802)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		466,215	573,951
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April		596,375	22,424
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		1,062,590	596,375

All of the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the above two periods.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

1 Charity status

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in , and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

The address of its registered office is:

Boulevard Centre
Cathedral Quarter
Blackburn
BB1 1EZ

These financial statements were authorised for issue by the trustees on 16 December 2024.

2 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of preparation

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charity.

Income

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Support costs

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and trustees meetings and reimbursed expenses.

Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Trade debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

Trade creditors

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charity does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Borrowings

Interest-bearing borrowings are initially recorded at fair value, net of transaction costs. Interest-bearing borrowings are subsequently carried at amortised cost, with the difference between the proceeds, net of transaction costs, and the amount due on redemption being recognised as a charge to the Statement of Financial Activities over the period of the relevant borrowing.

Interest expense is recognised on the basis of the effective interest method and is included in interest payable and similar charges.

Borrowings are classified as current liabilities unless the charity has an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least twelve months after the reporting date.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside for specific purposes at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Pensions and other post retirement obligations

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme which is a pension plan under which fixed contributions are paid into a pension fund and the charity has no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions even if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employees the benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when they are due. If contribution payments exceed the contribution due for service, the excess is recognised as a prepayment.

3 Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

Judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both periods.

Key sources of estimation uncertainty

The estimates and assumptions which have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities are as follows.

Depreciation

The depreciation expense is the recognition of the decline in the value of the asset and allocation of the cost of the asset over the periods in which the asset will be used. Judgements are made as to the estimated useful life of the assets. These judgements are regularly reviewed to reflect the changing environment.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Impairment of fixed assets

The charity assesses the impairment of tangible fixed assets subject to depreciation whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable. These judgments are regularly reviewed to reflect the changing environment.

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Contracts and grants	742,115	817,585	1,559,700	1,918,643

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Interest receivable on bank deposits	48	48	40

6 Other income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Training, miscellaneous income	59,328	59,328	8,202
Rental income	90,575	90,575	93,980
	149,903	149,903	102,182

7 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Operational costs, payments to partners	230,512	240,600	471,112	579,351
Depreciation	-	20,000	20,000	49,993
Grants paid	13,328	37,433	50,761	62,641
Staff costs	328,685	603,786	932,471	1,017,094
Governance costs	9	37,530	41,030	30,759
	576,025	939,349	1,515,374	1,739,838

Support costs including staff costs amounted to £100,000 in the year.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

8 Other expenditure

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Impairment of freehold building	-	1,002,571
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,002,571</u>

9 Analysis of governance and support costs

Governance costs

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Audit fees				
Audit of the financial statements	3,500	-	3,500	5,818
Bank loan interest	-	37,530	37,530	24,941
	<u>3,500</u>	<u>37,530</u>	<u>41,030</u>	<u>30,759</u>

10 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year include:

	2024 £	2023 £
Audit fees	<u>3,500</u>	<u>5,818</u>

11 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

No trustees have received any reimbursed expenses or any other benefits from the charity during the year.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

12 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	807,669	884,240
Social security costs	69,434	78,779
Pension costs	55,368	54,075
	<u>932,471</u>	<u>1,017,094</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was as follows:

	2024 No	2023 No
Charitable activities	<u>35</u>	<u>54</u>

During the year, the charity made redundancy and/or termination payments which totalled £11,078 (2023 - £Nil).

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £210,173 (2023 - £222,066).

13 Auditors' remuneration

	2024 £	2023 £
Audit of the financial statements	<u>3,500</u>	<u>5,818</u>

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

14 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

15 Tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings £	Total £
Cost/Valuation		
At 1 April 2023	1,000,000	1,000,000
At 31 March 2024	1,000,000	1,000,000
Depreciation		
Charge for the year	20,000	20,000
At 31 March 2024	20,000	20,000
Net book value		
At 31 March 2024	980,000	980,000
At 31 March 2023	1,000,000	1,000,000

Revaluation

The fair value of the company's Land and buildings was revalued on 31 March 2023 by an independent valuer. Had this class of asset been measured on a historical cost basis, their carrying amount would have been £Nil (2023 - £Nil).

16 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	68,251	72,970
Prepayments	9,432	10,926
Accrued income	59,973	458,059
Other debtors	860	-
	138,516	541,955

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loans	24,000	24,000
Trade creditors	18,288	61,682
Other taxation and social security	-	7,656
Accruals	43,228	128,175
	<u>85,516</u>	<u>221,513</u>

Creditors due within one year includes the following liabilities, on which security has been given by the charity:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loan - Barclays Bank	<u>24,000</u>	<u>24,000</u>

The bank loan is secured on the properties owned by the charity.

18 Creditors: amounts falling due after one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loans	<u>464,676</u>	<u>480,180</u>

Creditors amounts falling due after more than one year includes the following liabilities, on which security has been given by the charity:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Bank loan - Barclays Bank	<u>464,676</u>	<u>480,180</u>

The bank loan is secured on the properties owned by the charity.

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

19 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
<i>General</i>					
General Funds	594,977	892,066	(562,697)	(271,428)	652,918
<i>Designated</i>					
Strategic Investment Fund	101,436	-	-	148,564	250,000
Business continuity	130,170	-	-	19,830	150,000
Buildings fund	50,000	-	-	50,000	100,000
Revaluation reserve	117,178	-	-	-	117,178
	<u>398,784</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>218,394</u>	<u>617,178</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>993,761</u>	<u>892,066</u>	<u>(562,697)</u>	<u>(53,034)</u>	<u>1,270,096</u>
Restricted funds					
Fixed assets	378,642	-	(57,530)	53,034	374,146
ESF – Action for Jobs	-	240,600	(240,600)	-	-
ESF – Upskilling	64,234	539,552	(603,786)	-	-
Brian Mercer Charitable Trust	-	37,433	(37,433)	-	-
	<u>442,876</u>	<u>817,585</u>	<u>(939,349)</u>	<u>53,034</u>	<u>374,146</u>
Total funds	<u>1,436,637</u>	<u>1,709,651</u>	<u>(1,502,046)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,644,242</u>

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Other recognised gains/(losses) £
Unrestricted funds					
<i>General</i>					
General Funds	277,738	744,370	(520,010)	92,879	-
<i>Designated</i>					
Fixed assets	131,103	-	(31,714)	(99,389)	-
Match funding projects	66,856	-	-	34,580	-
Business continuity	100,000	-	-	30,170	-
Boulevard centre	10,000	-	-	40,000	-
Revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	117,178
	<u>307,959</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(31,714)</u>	<u>5,361</u>	<u>117,178</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>585,697</u>	<u>744,370</u>	<u>(551,724)</u>	<u>98,240</u>	<u>117,178</u>
Restricted funds					
Buildings	1,281,302	-	(1,045,791)	143,131	-
Big Local Trust	2,363	(2,363)	-	-	-
ESF – Action for Jobs	-	603,666	(396,258)	(207,408)	-
ESF – Upskilling	105,126	685,995	(685,995)	(40,892)	-
Brian Mercer Charitable Trust	66,374	(10,662)	(62,641)	6,929	-
	<u>1,455,165</u>	<u>1,276,636</u>	<u>(2,190,685)</u>	<u>(98,240)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total funds	<u>2,040,862</u>	<u>2,021,006</u>	<u>(2,742,409)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>117,178</u>

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds	
<i>General</i>	
General Funds	594,977
<i>Designated</i>	
Fixed assets	-
Match funding projects	101,436
Business continuity	130,170
Boulevard centre	50,000
Revaluation reserve	117,178
	398,784
Total unrestricted funds	993,761
Restricted funds	
Buildings	378,642
Big Local Trust	-
ESF – Action for Jobs	-
ESF – Upskilling	64,234
Brian Mercer Charitable Trust	-
	442,876
Total funds	1,436,637

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total funds at 31 March 2024
	General	Designated	£	£
	£	£		
Tangible fixed assets	-	117,178	862,822	980,000
Current assets	916,512	281,606	2,988	1,201,106
Current liabilities	(58,528)	-	(26,988)	(85,516)
Creditors over 1 year	-	-	(464,676)	(464,676)
Total net assets	857,984	398,784	374,146	1,630,914

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total funds at 31 March 2023
	General £	Designated £	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	-	400,000	600,000	1,000,000
Current assets	636,961	281,606	219,763	1,138,330
Current liabilities	(41,983)	(24,000)	(155,530)	(221,513)
Creditors over 1 year	-	(258,822)	(221,358)	(480,180)
Total net assets	<u>594,978</u>	<u>398,784</u>	<u>442,875</u>	<u>1,436,637</u>

21 Related party transactions

Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service is a corporate trustee of three charitable incorporated organisations, Blackburn Community Foundation, Darwen Community Foundation and Neighbourhood Community Action. During the financial year, the following transactions were undertaken between the organisations: Blackburn Community Foundation - Nil (2023 £nil); Darwen Community Foundation received a donation of £100 (2023 - £100); Neighbourhood Community Action £nil (2023 - £Nil). The three charitable incorporated organisations are managed at arms' length of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service.

Roger Duckworth, who was a trustee of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service and was also a trustee of the Brian Mercer Trust. Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service manage a grant fund called the Blackburn with Darwen Community Fund that is supported by the Brian Mercer Trust. Roger Duckworth sat on the grant panel that makes decision on how the grants are allocated. Roger Duckworth resigned as a trustee of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service on the 6th December 2023 and has also resigned from the Brian Mercer Trust. Following those resignations - Roger Duckworth no longer sits on the grants panel.

Sajida Shah, who is a trustee of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service is also a committee member of the Kiran Ladies Group. During the year, the Kiran Ladies Group did not receive a grant but in the previous year they received two grants £nil (2023 £925) from the Community Fund. Sajida was not involved in the grant panel that made that award.

Garth Hodgkinson, CEO of Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service is also a trustee and/or a director of Blackburn Community Foundation, Darwen Community Foundation and Lancashire Association of Councils for Voluntary Service. During the year, Blackburn with Darwen Council for Voluntary Service received Kickstart payments for the young people we have supported from Lancashire Association of Councils for Voluntary Service totalling £3961(2023 £15,878); received payments for VOICE engagement work around the impact of COVID 19 on behalf of NHS England from Lancashire Association of Councils for Voluntary Service totalling £nil (2023 £5601); and, received payments for support of Lancashire Association of Councils for Voluntary Service for their Lancashire LOCAL project worth £5420 (2023 £nil).