CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period
1st January 2025 to December 2025

Charity name: Help Close By Charity registration number: 1190642

Objective and Activities Charitable objects

1. THE PREVENTION OR RELIEF OF POVERTY IN THE UK BY PROVIDING TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS IN NEED AND/OR CHARITIES; WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH STATUTORY AND OTHER RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS AS APPROPRIATE.

2. THE RELIEF OF FINANCIAL HARDSHIP AMONG PEOPLE LIVING OR WORKING IN THE UK BY PROVIDING TECHNOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS FREE OF CHARGE TO SUCH PERSONS AS WOULD BENEFIT FROM BEING CONNECTED WITH LOCAL CHARITABLE SERVICE PROVIDERS TO OBTAIN HELP WHICH THEY COULD NOT OTHERWISE AFFORD THROUGH LACK OF MEANS.

Summary of main activities / Achievements and Performance

Overview

2025's activity at Help Close By can be split into two key areas - community based in-person volunteering and remote based volunteering focusing on the longer term aims of our technology with a view to make this possible at a national scale.

In February 2025 we received a donation from Arnold Clark which allowed us vital funds we could use with our food deliveries. A lot of time in 2024 had been spent finding grants for food funding with little luck, with so many grants not wishing to directly fund food starting from 2024 and the Birmingham council grants evaporating under their bankruptcy status. Surplus supplies had been used previously, but with our partners in those efforts receiving a diminished supply with the heavier monetisation of surplus with the remaining supply likely to be too high-maintainance and cost significantly on waste disposal (a lot of surplus being almost expired food) it wasn't a viable route for supply. The donation allowed us to continue with the supply we had until 2026

where a mix of the lack of funding and storage would eventually close this service. But 2025 we did managed to continue the service and support families with a now very committed set of volunteers recruited largely in the year before.

With the move away from a food service we were minded to have a managed transition to ensure we could support service users with the needs that led them to find food support and support them at a deeper level as the food service closed. Whilst we had not pursued any Community Fund grants the year before, given the food factor, we were encouraged by the National Lottery to reapply for new projects. The project we began is our “Change Programme” which is intended as a way to address needs through local outreach and caseworking. With the grant received at the end of August 2025 we began recruitment. Our initial candidate vanished when we got to running vetting, so recruitment for this and indeed the Change Programme would make its real start in January 2026 with our excellent freelance caseworker Toni.

Outside of direct community efforts, a lot of remote teams were busy working on plans for our eventual national app role out. During this period the full plan for the new app was created, with it’s UI and UX designs and appropriate documentation. Some activity slowed however whilst the Tech team, largely composed of recent graduates, had less capacity to continue and eventually the team got a new lead in 2026. The Data teams continued to do amazing work building up databases of services that would support people, and even before being live actively helped find details for an emergency bit of sign posting around Christmas time. The marketing team evolved into the Comms team, with a need to communicate across a large set of volunteers. Whilst we had a lot of remote volunteers, it was down from the almost unmanageable peak of around 100 the previous year with plans and policies brought into ensure levels of commitment and skill were in place, so as not to have a revolving door for busy team leads trying to induct people and carry out work.

The biggest disappointment was the largest piece of work from the board. We had prepared a bid for £1,000,000 to fund our national plans. Despite almost a years work on the submission, due to the change in model (from our logistics based app, to a directory based app) we lacked the data that would be relevant to the new model and so plans changed to focus on Birmingham and making sure we could develop the next app and the data around that. This is an effort still only likely to be realised in 2027 when the new app has a version that can function out in the world. We believe our plan is scalable and we hope we can find ourselves in a position to have some staff, as to date we’ve had to rely heavily on skilled volunteers whose circumstances can change. Having a level of

staffing would give a backbone and reliable set of leaders that volunteers could turn to. We hope that will eventually be the case.

Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit:

All Trustees have read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and have confirmed that they have done so .

Financial Review

Expenditure was a mix of spending on core costs (insurance, websites, comms), some food funding and the initial devices and setup for the caseworker at the end of the year. At a base level we do not have high core costs at present and indeed can scale these back, as we did at one point in 2025 before quickly gaining some more funding. Core spending is maybe no more than £100 per month, with any other costs associated with specific projects and programmes, typically tied to grants - meaning that overall the charity has little financial exposure at present. Some spending on food this year thanks to donations but this is down from previous years and is a cost we will have concluded into 2026 as a going concern due to the lack of funding for food directly.

Reserves

At present we do not hold reserves as we are not in a position to do so. All funds are committed to costs of delivering our services, running our various volunteer teams and our core costs and activities committed to are funded for the period within which they are expected to run

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name	No (if any)
Help Closy By	

Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01/05/2025		31/12/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	1,025	-	-	1,025	-
Software Refunds	15	-	-	15	-
Grants		19,971	-	19,971	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total *(Gross income for AR)*	1,040	19,971	-	21,011	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	1,040	19,971	-	21,011	-
A3 Payments					
IT & Software Costs	110	65	-	174	-
Food	349		-	349	-
Outreach & Comms	358	118	-	477	-
Insurance	135	58	-	193	-

Data & Mapping	66	903	-	969	-
Device Asset Purchase	-	486	-	486	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	**1,018**	**1,631**	**-**	**2,649**	**-**
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	
Total payments	**1,018**	**1,631**	**-**	**2,649**	**-**
Net of receipts/(payments)	**22**	**18,340**	**-**	**18,362**	**-**
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	**22**	**18,340**	**-**	**18,362**	**-**

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Current	£4,567.00	£18,340.00	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	**4,567**	**18,340**	**-**
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account (s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds	**Restricted funds**	**Endowment funds**

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
Duncan Catterall-Mason	DUNCAN CATTERALL-MASON	13/10/2026