

Brecon Volunteer Bureau

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ending 31 March 2025

1. Introduction

The trustees are pleased to present the Annual Report for the Brecon Volunteer Bureau (BVB). This year has seen strong community engagement, continued partnership working, and the delivery of a wide range of activities that support wellbeing, volunteering, and social connection across Brecon. Alongside these achievements, the organisation has faced challenges around funding sustainability, particularly for informal volunteering and core staffing. The trustees remain committed to securing long-term stability to ensure BVB can continue to serve the community effectively.

2. Objectives and Activities

BVB exists to strengthen community life by promoting volunteering, reducing social isolation, and supporting grassroots initiatives. Our charitable aims include:

- Connecting individuals with volunteering opportunities
- Supporting community groups and local projects
- Providing inclusive spaces for social interaction
- Encouraging environmental and wellbeing-focused activities
- Enhancing community resilience through partnership working

All activities undertaken during the year were aligned with these charitable purposes and delivered clear public benefit.

3. Achievements and Performance

3.1 Numeracy Level 2 Funding

BVB secured funding to deliver Numeracy Level 2 activities. Participants engaged enthusiastically, developing their mental maths skills through practical, confidence-building sessions. Feedback highlighted enjoyment, improved numeracy, and increased self-belief.

3.2 Local Places for Nature

The **Brecon Wildlife Habitats Initiative** aimed to enhance biodiversity across Brecon's urban areas by creating and distributing bird boxes, bat boxes, and hedgehog homes. These were placed in private gardens and communal spaces, enabling residents to support local wildlife.

Activities included:

- Designing and creating bug boxes and bee hives

- Commissioned work for **On The Verge** and the **local allotment society**
- Collaboration with BBNPA, local allotments, and Scout and Cub groups
- Hands-on workshops delivered by the Men's Shed ("the Shedders")

These activities strengthened community engagement and increased awareness of local biodiversity.

3.3 Informal Volunteering Pilot Scheme – Social Value Forum (PAVO)

The Informal Volunteering Project supported a wide range of community initiatives over the past year. Volunteers contributed to environmental projects, community events, and one-off tasks that offered tangible outcomes and team-based working.

Volunteer insights:

- Preference for one-off outdoor activities
- Strong interest in environmental and conservation projects
- Limited capacity for indoor or ongoing individual support

Challenges included:

- A smaller pool of volunteers available for individual support
- Inability to cover travel expenses, restricting support to central Brecon
- Occasional inappropriate requests for volunteer assistance

Despite these challenges, the project delivered meaningful community value. Unfortunately, there was no further funding available for this project, so it concluded at the end of March 2025.

3.4 COOP Community Scheme

Funding from the COOP Community Scheme enabled BVB to provide a warm, welcoming space for residents, helping to reduce social isolation and strengthen community connections.

Activities supported included:

- Men's Shed and Repair Café
- Saturday breakfasts, which became a valued weekly gathering
- Creative projects such as cardboard aeroplanes for VE Day
- The thriving Shanty Crew, which continues to grow and enrich Brecon's cultural life

These initiatives fostered camaraderie, creativity, and a strong sense of belonging.

3.5 Powys County Council Warm Space Grant

The Warm Hub at BVB provided a supportive, nurturing environment for individuals seeking warmth, safety, and companionship. The hub has become a model for community wellbeing, offering a refuge during times of hardship and everyday challenges.

3.6 Brecon Town Council

Funding supported the continued development of the **Brecon Men's Shed**, which plays a vital role in reducing social isolation and improving mental wellbeing.

Current and future plans:

- Weekly Saturday morning sessions
- Planned expansion to Wednesday evenings
- Funding to support coordination and utilities
- Development of community projects and member-led initiatives that may generate income

The Men's Shed aligns closely with BVB's mission of strengthening community cohesion.

4. Public Benefit Statement

The trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty to have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. All activities undertaken during the year were designed to support community wellbeing, reduce isolation, promote volunteering, and enhance local environments.

5. Financial Review

Overall income for the year was **£6,000 lower** than in the previous financial year. This reduction reflects both the challenging funding landscape and the timing of grant payments, as several final instalments from current projects will not be received until the **2025/26 financial year**. These delays have created short-term pressure on cash flow, though the trustees expect the outstanding funds to be received as scheduled.

Opportunities for **core funding** remain limited, and this continues to be a significant strategic concern. Core funding is essential for sustaining key staff roles, maintaining the building, and ensuring the continuity of BVB's services. The trustees are actively reviewing the organisation's financial position and exploring additional funding avenues, including partnership approaches, new grant streams, and income-generating activities.

The trustees remain committed to strengthening BVB's long-term financial resilience and will continue to prioritise securing stable, sustainable funding to support the charity's core work.

6. Structure, Governance and Management

Brecon Volunteer Bureau (BVB) is governed by a board of trustees who oversee strategic direction, financial stewardship, and compliance with charity law. Trustees meet regularly

and work closely with staff, volunteers, and partner organisations to ensure that BVB continues to meet community needs effectively.

During the year, trustees held extensive discussions about the organisation's long-term sustainability and the importance of developing a **joint working approach** with other local charities. Organisations such as MIND, along with other community partners, were identified as potential collaborators for shared funding bids, coordinated service delivery, and joint community initiatives. Trustees agreed that partnership-based funding models may offer greater stability in an increasingly competitive funding environment.

A significant focus of governance discussions centred on the ongoing challenge of securing **core funding**, which remains essential for sustaining key staff roles, particularly the BVB manager. Trustees noted that more reliable core funding would create the opportunity to establish a full-time post, providing much-needed continuity and capacity. This would also enable BVB to expand its services, including offering evening sessions for community groups and increasing the availability of hireable space. Additional income from room hire could contribute to the long-term sustainability of BVB's core services.

Trustees also emphasised the need to undertake **comprehensive research and data gathering** to better understand what the local community would like to see delivered or funded at BVB. This evidence-based approach will ensure that future services reflect genuine community need. Once the research is completed and a report compiled, the findings will be incorporated into a detailed business plan to support applications for continued core funding.

Across all governance discussions, the trustees reaffirmed that the organisation's **primary strategic priority** is to secure long-term core funding to safeguard BVB's future and ensure the continuation of its vital community services.

7. Plans for the Future

The key priority for the coming year is to secure **long-term core funding** to support essential staff roles and ensure the sustainability of BVB's services. This includes:

- Completing community research and data gathering
- Developing a comprehensive business plan
- Strengthening partnerships with local organisations
- Exploring opportunities to expand room hire and evening activities
- Continuing to support grassroots community initiatives



BRECON VOLUNTEER BUREAU

(CHARITY No 514686)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2025**

Administrative Information

Elected Trustees: John Powell
Michelle Talbot – resigned February 2025

Chair: Susie Kinghan, appointed February 2025
Vice-Chair: Michael Evans, appointed February 2025
Treasurer: Cerian Martin
Secretary: Kirsten Jones

Mortan Keet (Chair) resigned December 2024
Liam Fitzpatrick was appointed Chair December 2024, resigned February 2025

Accounts Approved by Board on 27th June 2024

Financial Accounts for the year 2024-2025 – Brecon Volunteer Bureau

The statement of Financial Activities is shown on the following pages for the year ended 31st March 2025. The overall position is a deficit of £7,754. The reporting to the Board through the year has been to monitor spend against grant funds and provide periodic reports to the funding bodies. The Balance Sheet is a consolidated account.

Core Business

The Core Business of Brecon Volunteer Bureau is the running of the office, which includes rent and associated office overheads, as well as costs for one office manager. As noted last year, funding was received as part of an Informal Volunteering initiative to cover an additional twenty hours per week of staff time. This commenced October 2023 and ran for a period of eighteen months. The level and timing of the funding was not sufficient to cover the full salary costs in 2024/2025, with the final instalment not being received until the end of the initiative in April 2025. In addition, BVB successfully applied for a grant from Local Places for Nature Funding to recover expenditure incurred during the year but again the funding was not received during the 2024/25 accounting period. Both these timing differences contributed to the recorded deficit. During the year BVB received funding from several other sources including PAVO, Powys County Council, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, Powys Teaching Health Board, and Brecon Town Council. However, due to a non-recurring grant from the National Lottery the previous year, the level of funding in 2024/25 decreased significantly.

Signed: Bri Kerley

Date: 25 June 2025

Name: Bri Kerley

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Report to the Trustees of Brecon Volunteer Bureau – Charity No 514686

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed. I have examined the accounts provided to me under section 145 of the Charities Act, and followed the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement My review was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:

- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

Signed:

Bri Kerley

Date

25 June 2025

Name

Bri Kerley FCCA

Address

Sutherland Beck, Didcot, Oxon

BRECON VOLUNTEER BUREAU, INCLUDING COMMUNITY KITCHEN**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

2023-24	2024-25
£ INCOME	£
Grants	
3,092 Powys County Council	3,120
4,114 BBNP	1,044
7,983 Other via PAVO	9,483
0 Powys Teaching Health Board	1,433
5,402 Lottery	0
7,681 Informal Volunteering	7,681
2,000 Brecon Town Council	2,184
1,173 Accommodation Sharing/vault hire	420
31,445	25,365
Other	
194 Repair Café	400
6,289 Community Kitchen	5,935
138 Bank Interest	200
160 Petty Cash	80
250 Other - catering	0
0 Donations - Men's Shed/Shanty Group	891
2,257 Donations	1,659
9,288	9,166
40,733 TOTAL INCOME	34,531
EXPENDITURE	
Salary and Associated	
16,219 Salaries	27,045
0 Debt Recovery	325
16,219	27,370
Running Costs	
3,675 Electricity, Heat & Light	4,085
3,350 Rent	3,675
437 Insurance	482
59 Photocopy & Stationery	25
384 Telecomms	804
0 Local Places for Nature Funding	3,016
130 Advertising & Promotion	68
86 Other	127
165 Training	0
7,959 Fixtures & Fittings	1,579
246 Repair café	154
1,784 Community Kitchen Food Purchases	899
27 Refreshments	0
18,302	14,915
34,520 TOTAL EXPENDITURE	42,285
6,213 NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(7,754)

BRECON VOLUNTEER BUREAU, INCLUDING COMMUNITY KITCHEN

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 March 2025

2023-24	2024-25
£ Current Assets	£
15,990 Lloyds Current Account	13,869
5,318 Investment - Monmouthshire	0
0 Debtors	0
154 Repair Café Petty Cash	0
172 CORE Petty Cash	12
<hr/> 21,635	<hr/> 13,880
<u>Current Liabilities</u>	
0 Accruals/Creditors	0
<hr/> 0	<hr/> 0
21,635 CURRENT ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	13,880
<u>Capital and Reserves</u>	
15,422 Balance brought forward	21,635
Net Surplus/(Loss) for the Year	
6,213 Core Business	(7,754)
21,635 FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	13,880