

THE BEARR TRUST

England & Wales · Charity number 1011086

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1992-05-18

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address The BEARR Trust
Voluntary Action Islington
200A Pentonville Road
London
N1 9JP

Phone 02079227849

Email info@barr.org

Website www.barr.org

Activities

Objects: TO RELIEVE POVERTY,ADVANCE EDUCATION AND PROMOTE SUCH OTHER PURPOSES AS ARE IN OR MAY HEREAFTER BE DEEMED BY ENGLISH LAW TO BE CHARITABLE AND IN PARTICULAR BUT WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE GENARALITY OF THE FOREGOING TO ADVANCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING WHETHER ACADAMIC OR VOCATIONAL TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE GOOD HEALTH WHETHER PHYSICAL OR MENTAL AND TO RELIEVE AND REHABILITATE PERSONS SUFFERING FROM ANY FORM OF PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HANDICAP IN RUSSIA AND THE REPUBLICS BEING THE TERRITORIES OF THE FORMER UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS.

Activities: The BEARR Trust is a UK-based organisation set up to help children and other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. We believe the best way to do this is to help small civil society organisations (CSOs) working in health and social welfare in the region to build knowledge, know-how, skills and contacts, including with those doing similar work in the UK.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies

Geography

- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Georgia
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Moldova
- Russia
- Tajikistan
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- Uzbekistan

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£147,292	£183,478	-	-
2023-12-31	£244,576	£236,620	-	-
2022-12-31	£450,617	£415,881	-	-
2021-12-31	£82,557	£69,982	-	-
2020-12-31	£58,328	£62,878	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
NICOLA FRANCES ELIZABETH RAMSDEN	Chair	1997-03-12
ANN LEWIS CMG		1997-03-12
Charles Garrett		2023-12-07
Clare Brooks		2024-04-04
Dr Michael Rasell		2013-04-30
Helen Goodman		2023-12-07
JANET GUNN CMG		2010-10-07
MEGAN BICK		
Marcia Levy		1997-03-12
ROSS EDWARD ROBERT GILL		2015-10-22
Sam Thorne		2023-12-07

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England & Wales - Charity number 1011086

Accounts

October 2025

Annual Report and Accounts 2024

Unaudited



BEARR
THE BEARR TRUST

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Letter from the Chair

For over thirty years, The BEARR Trust has supported community-based organisations working to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In the context of Russia's continued war against Ukraine and challenging political and economic conditions across many of the countries in which we operate, grassroots groups making a practical difference in their communities are more important than ever.

In 2024, we continued to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to displaced people and others in need in Ukraine and Moldova. From the start of our Ukraine Emergency Appeal in 2022 to the end of 2024, we sent over £550,000 in small grants to community organisations – many of which were working close to the frontline and were often able to reach vulnerable people more quickly than larger aid agencies. Increasingly, our funds have been used for mental health support, as war has continued. Building on the Ukraine Emergency Appeal, we also concluded a project funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, which provided grants to community groups delivering therapeutic support in Ukraine as well as support for the resilience and wellbeing of their volunteers and staff.

Our annual Small Grants Scheme focused in 2024 on the integration of displaced people across the ten countries in which we operate. Beyond grant support, we continued to provide a source of information on civil society, through our website, newsletter and social media channels. Our annual conference focused on innovation in health and social welfare at a time of crisis, sharing the experience and knowledge of our partners with a wider audience, and we were delighted to host lectures by Olesya Khromeychuk and Sir Lawrence Freedman.

As The BEARR Trust continued to grow, we invested in 2024 in our own policies and systems. We welcomed a new trustee to our board, and we embarked on the development of a new five-year strategy, which we will conclude in 2025. We also thanked Nicola Ramsden for her leadership and support over six years as chair of The BEARR Trust. Alongside this, we maintained our cost-effective, volunteer-led model which keeps us focused on the community groups and the people we seek to support.

All our work is made possible by the generosity of charitable trusts and many individual donors, friends and volunteers. We are very grateful: thanks to all those who support us, we will continue to help those making a difference in their communities.

Ross Gill

Chair, The BEARR Trust

1. Introduction

This report sets out The BEARR Trust's activities and finances in 2024. It explains the difference we have made in supporting communities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where our funding comes from and how we use it, how we ensure good governance, and our plans for the future.

Introducing The BEARR Trust

- 1.1** The BEARR Trust is a UK-registered charity that aims to **support and strengthen community-based organisations (CBOs) working to improve the health and social wellbeing of vulnerable people across Eastern Europe and Central Asia**. Established in the early 1990s, we support cooperation between CBOs focused on health and wellbeing in the region, and we help to build connections with those doing similar work in the United Kingdom. We are the only British charity working in Eastern Europe and Central Asia that combines grant-giving and networking activity. We promote locally led initiatives, believing that small grass-roots organisations have the potential strength and resilience to help vulnerable people and to solve local problems most effectively.
- 1.2** We are funded by charitable contributions. Our work is enabled by an active Trustee Board and a network of volunteers, and by an Information and Administration Officer, a freelance Small Grants Scheme Officer and a freelance translation and website assistant.

Our activity in a changing context

- 1.3** The BEARR Trust has three main strands of activity:
- Directly supporting small and innovative grass-roots health and social wellbeing projects in the region through an annual **Small Grants Scheme**. We believe that small, community-based organisations can make effective use of modest grants to develop new approaches and build partnerships.
 - Sharing **information and good practice** through a range of services designed to promote networking, exchange experience, build partnerships and support organisations committed to reform in the health and social wellbeing sectors.
 - Supporting community-based organisations in Ukraine in response to Russia's ongoing war. In February 2022, established a **Ukraine Appeal**, supporting refugees and other vulnerable people impacted by the war, through our partners in Ukraine and Moldova. The Ukraine Appeal is established as a Restricted Fund for accounting purposes, with all donations to the Appeal going directly to community organisations on the ground.

- 1.4** In 2024, we also concluded delivery of a programme known as **From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion**. Funded with £50,000 from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) through the British Embassy in Kyiv, this built on our experience of the Ukraine Appeal, supporting our established partners in helping people cope with the psychological stresses of the war, and bringing them together to build partnerships and share their experiences.

Where we work

- 1.5** Our work is focused on the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.
- 1.6** Until 2022, we also offered grants to organisations in Russia or Belarus. This stopped following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, we continue to report on health and social welfare developments in those countries in our newsletters and on our website.

The impact of conflict and the political situation

- 1.7** **Russia's invasion of Ukraine has led to a sustained social and humanitarian crisis..** Communities closest to the frontline, in Kharkiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk regions have faced the most extreme needs, although the war impacts the whole country. Community-based organisations have played a vital role in protecting the most vulnerable, ensuring that assistance is distributed effectively and supporting social cohesion.
- 1.8** Beyond Russia's war against Ukraine, **the wider political context has been challenging across much of Eastern Europe and Central Asia**. This includes the aftermath of the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2023, the consequences of war and economic sanctions on labour migration, and the implementation in some countries of restrictive measures on civil society organisations (such as the application of 'foreign agents' laws in Georgia and Kyrgyzstan). Funding has also been very challenging for many of our partners: although outside the scope of this review, this has been exacerbated in the first months of 2025 by the ending of USAID support and increased pressure on those remaining international donors.
- 1.9** In this context, The BEARR Trust's ongoing support for grassroots community organisations making a real and practical difference on the ground remains more important than ever.

Public benefit

- 1.10** When planning our activities for the year, the Trustees have considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

The Global Goals

- 1.11** Our work also sits within the broader framework of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (the Global Goals), which emphasise collaboration across all sectors of government

and society. The seventeen Global Goals are interrelated, and BEARR's work is relevant to several:

- Good Health and Wellbeing
- Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- Reduced Inequalities
- Partnerships for the Goals

Report structure

1.12 The remainder of this report is structured in nine sections:

- Section 2 reports on our **Small Grants Scheme** in 2024, summarising the projects we supported and what they have delivered.
- Section 3 reports on our **Ukraine Appeal**, covering both delivery in 2024 and the cumulative activity since the Appeal was launched.
- Section 4 reports on our **FCDO-funded project**, which concluded in 2024, building on our earlier experience.
- Section 5 turns to our **networking and information** sharing activity, including our programme of lectures and conferences.
- Section 6 sets out our approach to **evaluation** and building our understanding of what is needed and how BEARR can help.
- Section 7 explains **how The BEARR Trust is managed**, how we are investing to improve our systems, and our approach to future strategy development.
- Finally, Sections 8-10 set out our **financial review, statement of financial activities** and the report of our independent examiner.

2. The Small Grants Scheme

In 2024, The BEARR Trust supported 16 community-based organisations in Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine through our Small Grants Scheme. Projects focused on the community integration of displaced people, especially those who are additionally vulnerable. We also provided funding to partners in Ukraine to support the resilience and wellbeing of their staff and volunteers working in the context of ongoing war.

2.1 Our annual Small Grants Scheme is a major part of our activity, enabling us to provide direct support to projects that are delivered by grassroots organisations in the region, encourage partnership development and contribute to wider knowledge exchange.

2.2 Each year, we select a theme, which is published on the BEARR website alongside application details and funding criteria. Applications are then reviewed by BEARR Trustees, and we will match fund up to half of a project's costs, within a maximum agreed grant value.

The 2024 Small Grants Scheme

2.3 In 2024, we made grants available through two strands:

- **Strand A: Projects that supported the community integration of displaced people,** with a maximum grant of £4,000. This theme is highly relevant in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine – there were around 3.7 million internally displaced people in Ukraine at the end of 2024¹. But it is also important throughout Central Asia and Eastern Europe, for example as a result of the war in Nagorno-Karabakh and recent border clashes in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The focus on displaced people included those who have been internally displaced as a consequence of violence and war, as well as those who have sought refuge in other countries.

Strand A was open to applicants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Applications were sought from two or more community-based organisations working together. As in previous years, we aimed to support displaced people who are especially vulnerable, for example as a result of disability or age.

Strand B: Activities to improve the welfare of organisations' own staff and volunteers and to improve organisational resilience, with a maximum grant of £1,000.

¹ In addition to some 6.9 million refugees from Ukraine living in other countries, including in Moldova and elsewhere in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Source: UNHCR

This strand was only open to organisations in Moldova and Ukraine that had previously received a grant from us, either through the Small Grants Scheme or the Ukraine Appeal. Strand B projects were funded from the restricted Ukraine Appeal fund.

- 2.4** In line with our principle of supporting locally designed initiatives, we encouraged a wide variety of responses to both strands, relevant to local need, and we ran a **webinar for prospective applicants** in January 2024, explaining the process and criteria and offering tips on how to write a strong application.

Applications and grants awarded

- 2.5** We received **82 applications in total**. These included applications from all countries in which the scheme was open, with the exception of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

- 2.6** We awarded 16 grants, with a total value of £40,821. Of this, £36,321 was for 11 projects in Strand A, and funded from the General Fund. Including the 2024 grants, **BEARR has supported 122 projects since 2016, with a total grant value over these eight years of over £310,000.**

- 2.7** The 2024 Small Grants Scheme Strand A projects are summarised below:

- **Contribution to Women and Children** (Armenia): Craft-based skills development bringing together women displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh with local women in the Tavush region of Armenia, accompanied by psychological support.
- **Mutabor** (Armenia): Integration of displaced women through economic empowerment, involving training, mentoring and support in small-scale entrepreneurship.
- **Imedi** (Georgia): Bringing together internally displaced people (mainly from Abkhazia) to understand their rights in relation to healthcare, housing, employment, etc., and become advocates for change in their local communities.
- **Oasis** (Kyrgyzstan): Developing resource centres for social workers, providing training and new resources for social workers and teachers on victim-centred and trauma-informed approaches in working with at-risk children and young people.
- **Educational Assistance** (Ukraine): Raising awareness of the challenges facing deaf people and people with hearing difficulties through drama and discussion.
- **ASSA** (Ukraine): Providing art therapy, playback theatre and video production to help children and adults express and release their emotions in a community subject to frequent shelling and aerial attack.

- **Ukrainian Sisters are Kidfriendly** (Ukraine): Delivering a course for IDP women based on the principles of non-violent communication and effective group work, helping participants to manage their emotions and creating a peer-support network.
- **Country of Goodwill** (Ukraine): Integrating psychological, medical, legal, educational and career support for women in a rural community. This was especially focused on women experiencing crisis, and provided the first safe space in the community to welcome transgender women.
- **Tvory Dobropillya** (Ukraine): Helping displaced women and elderly people who had lost their homes integrate into a new community through creative workshops and psychological support.
- **Voznesensk Community Foundation** (Ukraine): Helping displaced people find new opportunities for self-employment through small-scale agricultural activity.
- **The Leader** (Ukraine): Supporting communication and integration between displaced people and local residents. This supported adults through psycho-emotional recovery and motivational sessions, and children and teenagers through educational programmes.

2.8 In addition, five grants under Strand B of the Small Grants Scheme helped volunteers and staff in community-based organisations in Ukraine overcome stress and emotional burnout.

2.9 Based on monitoring reports submitted by partners, **funding from BEARR via Strand A directly supported at least 1,520 people**, through counselling, art therapy and other forms of emotional and mental health support, training and support in accessing economic activity, access to crisis facilities, and other activities. This equates to a notional 'cost per beneficiary' of £24. The number of indirect beneficiaries (such as family members and the wider public benefiting from greater awareness) is likely to be substantially greater. Beyond beneficiary numbers, projects delivered significant wider benefits, as the case studies on the following pages illustrate:

Integration through creativity in Ukraine

Kharkiv constantly experiences shelling, but is home to approximately 1.2 million residents, and internally displaced persons from settlements close to the front lines are constantly arriving. These include many elderly people, people with disabilities, and children who have lost their homes, their usual way of life, and sometimes their loved ones. They are all experiencing stress, so the issues of psychological support and socialisation in their new place of residence are becoming key. Support from Strand A of the Small Grants Scheme helped ASSA, a local community organisation, and the Kharkiv Volunteer Centre to address these problems through creativity.

Art therapy sessions were conducted for children and adults, with yoga and relaxation sessions, collage and colour therapy and intuitive drawing, for children and their parents. Teenagers created short videos up to a minute long on their smartphones, expressing and releasing the emotions that have accumulated. Participants also became familiar with and engaged in Playback Theatre.



Training sessions on community cohesion and civic engagement were also conducted with the aim of socialising internally displaced people, involving them in community activities and joint initiatives with existing residents and exploring opportunities in relation to social entrepreneurship, volunteering and community work and media literacy and countering propaganda.

Empowering displaced people in Georgia

With support from Strand A of the Small Grants Scheme, Imedi, a small community-based organisation in Zugdidi, western Georgia, has turned limited resources into a powerful engine of empowerment for Georgia's internally displaced people, mostly from Abkhazia.

The initiative has supported **92 displaced people** from five major IDP settlements, enabling them to better understand their rights, speak up more confidently at community meetings, and draft proposals to fund ideas that benefit others like them.

Imedi organized 15 information meetings, equipping IDPs with the knowledge they need to claim their rights—covering crucial topics such as housing, employment, healthcare, and education. It also facilitated a **round-table discussion** that brought together IDPs, civil society experts, and local representatives. This opened up new channels of communication and mutual understanding at a time when relations between NGOs and the government have become increasingly strained. Through **local-level collaboration** and maintaining a non-political, community-centred approach, the project established a model of resilience and flexibility that others can follow.



Perhaps the most inspiring aspect of the project has been the **leadership and advocacy training** provided to **15 women and young people**. Participants gained the tools to champion their rights and support their communities—skills that strengthen not only individuals, but also the entire social fabric of the displaced population. The project also looked inward, focusing on sustainability. Training in **project proposal development** was provided to 15 staff members and volunteers, boosting the organisation's capacity to carry forward its mission beyond the lifespan of this grant.

Taking care of mental health to overcome stress, prevent emotional burnout and regain self-confidence

The **Association of Mothers and Wives of Defenders of Ukraine** secured funding from BEARR through Strand B of the Small Grants Scheme for a project to support the psychological health of its members and volunteers, and through that, to support the resilience of the organisation.

The project aimed to help women overcome stress, prevent emotional burnout, and regain self-confidence. Thanks to the grant, the Association was able to hire a professional psychologist who conducted 60 hours of counselling for 23 women from different regions of Ukraine.

The counselling sessions provided a safe environment where women were able to open up and share painful feelings. In some cases, they talked about their experiences for the first time. For many of them, this was the first step towards recovery. One of the participants admits that for the first time in a long time she felt calm and able to focus on herself:

"Working with a psychologist gave me not only self-help techniques, but also the strength to get back to life. I realised that my emotions are important and I can work with them. I realised that my feelings are normal. That I can be sad and cry. Because before that I had only heard: "Be strong. Hold on." And where do you get that strength from? Now I know that any emotions are normal. Now I know how to take care of myself."

The self-help techniques mastered by the participants included breathing exercises, relaxation techniques, and self-reflection. They helped participants to reduce anxiety and stress, and to regain a sense of control over life. Increased emotional resilience became the basis for improving teamwork and efficiency throughout the organisation.

"Sometimes it seems that no one needs you. Your pain, your worries. And it's unbearable. And then I saw women like me. Who, despite their losses, do not give up. This pain gives them strength. And they don't wait for someone to do something for them... I gained some self-confidence. Felt that I could do the same. That my fellow villagers will support me. Plus, I learned how to write appeals, monitor responses, and generally communicate with the authorities."

The Association now plans to introduce annual retreat sessions for the teams from the regional centres and head office. This will allow women to immerse themselves in an atmosphere of peace and restore emotional balance away from everyday worries and challenges.

3. The Ukraine Appeal

In 2024, we supported 25 organisations in Ukraine and Moldova to provide emergency humanitarian assistance in response to Russia's war against Ukraine. This was distributed in 53 small grant payments to community-based organisations distributing food, medicine and hygiene products to vulnerable people and providing vital mental health support.

- 3.1** In February 2022, shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we launched an **Emergency Appeal for Ukraine and Moldova**. The Ukraine Appeal led to a significant expansion of BEARR's work as the war led to an ongoing humanitarian crisis.
- 3.2** At the start of the Appeal, we asked former Small Grants Scheme beneficiaries in Ukraine and Moldova (which was receiving large numbers of refugees from Ukraine) whether they were active in providing humanitarian support, making grants of up to £2,500 available based on a simple application form². Subsequently, we have supported several other groups delivering vital humanitarian work on the ground, many of which made contact with us through our networks. The Appeal has especially focused on supporting people who are vulnerable (for example, because of age or disability) and on supporting small organisations that are rooted in their communities.
- 3.3** The Ukraine Appeal is treated as a restricted fund. All donations that we receive for the purposes of the Appeal are used to fund partners delivering practical support in Ukraine and Moldova, with all of BEARR's administration costs (including financial transfer costs) paid for from our general funds.

The Ukraine Appeal in 2024

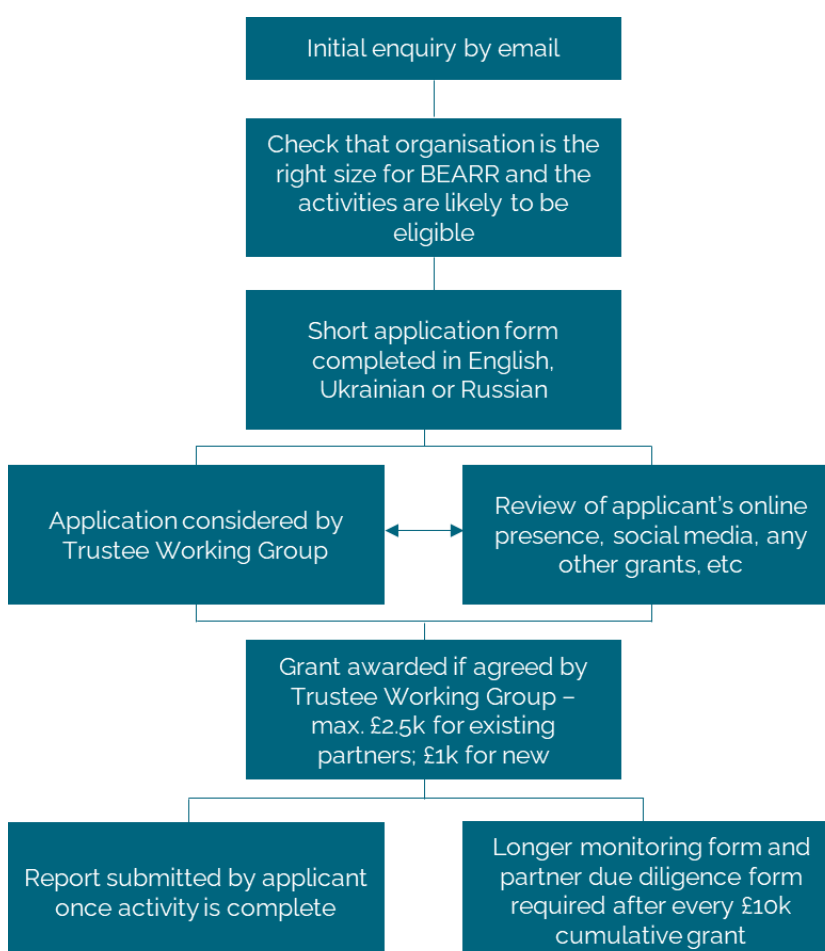
- 3.4** In 2024, we distributed £94,885 in grant payments to partners (in addition to £4,500 on Strand B of the Small Grants Scheme, already discussed in the previous section). This means that between the start of the Appeal and the end of 2024, we had spent a total of £555,123 on the Ukraine Appeal – all of which had gone direct in emergency support to partners on the ground.
- 3.5** Expenditure in 2024 supported 25 organisations through 53 individual grants, meaning an average grant payment of £1,790. Our partners are all small community-based organisations, and include some partners with whom we have been working since before the start of the war, and who we have funded several times, and groups that are new to us, but which have sometimes been working alongside established partners. As funding

² Or a maximum of £1,000 (\$1.3k) for organisations with which we have not had a previous relationship.

has become more challenging for all working in humanitarian assistance in Ukraine, we have frequently been approached by larger organisations seeking funds, but we see our role as supporting smaller groups that are active in their communities, and which are likely to remain active after the war ends.

3.6 Throughout the Appeal, we have sought to strike a balance between ensuring an application process that is accessible and swift, while also making sure that we carry out appropriate due diligence and monitoring. Over the course of 2024, we continued to strengthen our processes, and we sought feedback from our partners in doing so. A summary of the application journey is illustrated below:

Figure 3-1: Ukraine Appeal partner application journey



3.7 Of grant recipients in 2024, 23 were in Ukraine and two in Moldova. Increasingly, our grant support has been focused on eastern Ukraine, in those areas close to the front line and often furthest away from other sources of international assistance. We continued to fund the delivery of food, hygiene products and other emergency aid to vulnerable, often older people, and one of our regular partners made frequent trips to bring aid to people in de-occupied villages. Increasingly, we funded mental health and other therapeutic activities, such as art therapy for children and adults, as the pressures of living with war grew. We

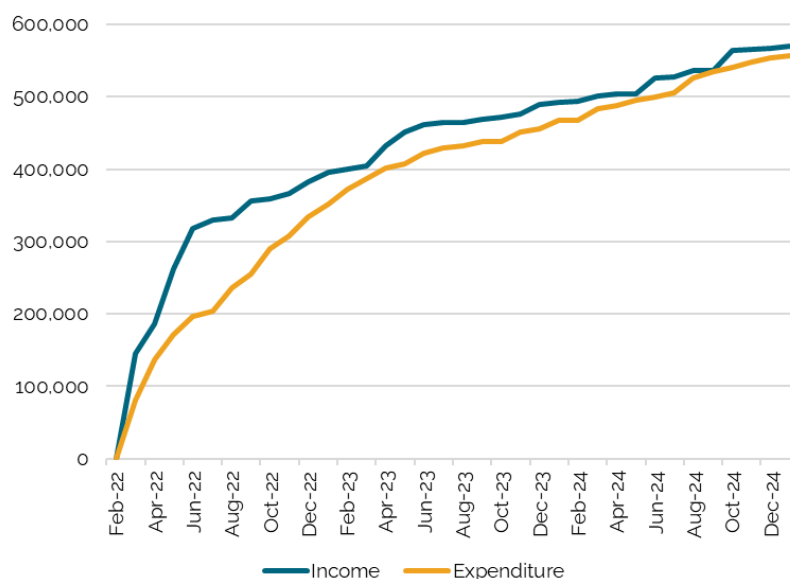
also supported activities that brought displaced people together with existing communities, continuing the theme of the 2024 Small Grants Scheme. Some examples of the projects that we supported are given at the end of this section.

Raising funds for the Ukraine Appeal

3.8 We raised £61,933 into the Ukraine Appeal in 2024. This came from a variety of sources, including around £29,800 from three charitable trusts and a range of smaller donations from trustees, friends of BEARR and other members of the public. We were especially grateful to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which agreed to match a staff fundraising initiative: in total, this raised £12,226 for the Ukraine Appeal. We also relaunched the Appeal in March 2024, with an online lecture by Dr Olesya Khromeychuk (see Section 5 for more details).

3.9 Despite these fundraising efforts, expenditure on the Appeal substantially exceeded income in 2024, as we continued to respond to a steady stream of requests. This was supported by an accumulated balance going into 2024, which enabled us to sustain our activities, and we were also able to continue to run the Appeal into 2025. **Figure 3-2** below illustrates how income and expenditure has cumulated over time:

Figure 3-2: Ukraine Appeal cumulative income and expenditure from launch to December 2024 (£)



3.10 In May 2025, we launched a new **Ukraine Community Resilience Fund** to replace the Appeal, with an increased focus on responding to the demand for first-line mental health support: at the time of writing, we have been successful in raising new funds for this initiative and we have issued our first grants. We will report on this further next year.

Supporting humanitarian relief in Kharkiv

Kharkiv, in northeastern Ukraine, is close to the front line and has been subject to constant shelling and aerial attack. There are also around half a million displaced people in Kharkiv region, forced to leave their homes as a result of the war.

The BEARR Trust has been working with a partner organisation in Kharkiv since 2022, providing regular small grant payments. It has 18 regular staff and, when necessary, hires additional staff for specific projects. They found out about BEARR through an article in the media and we have built up an ongoing relationship with them.

Figure 3-3: Distributing aid to displaced people in Kharkiv region



Ivan, the head of the charity, explains that in the region, there is a strong community of about 400 civil society organisations (CSOs) coordinated in a "humanitarian cluster". These clusters have been established in each region in Ukraine, and bring together local and international relief workers and local administrations. The local CSOs also coordinate among themselves and have a regional coordination centre established by local activists.

To decide which community to help, they contact the local authorities to find out what assistance has been received, consult about needs, and then they go to the humanitarian cluster to obtain approval for meeting the request. This is to ensure there is a genuine need and to check for duplication. The BEARR Trust was one of the first donors to this CSO, and its small grants help them not only to deliver assistance but also to obtain partner funding to cover operating costs – they can go to other donors and say "we have a grant for this project, will you fund our salaries and other costs (petrol etc)?" But most of them have ongoing problems raising funds to cover core costs.

The CSO has four current priorities: humanitarian assistance – food, hygiene kits etc (with hygiene products a high priority because of the hot weather and risk of illness); mental health and psychological support; reconstruction of homes and other buildings; and sports events and holidays for children.

4. From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion

In 2024, we concluded delivery of a £50,000 project funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. As part of this, we worked with nine Ukrainian community-based organisations to increase therapeutic support to displaced and other vulnerable people and support the resilience and wellbeing of those community groups providing services.

- 4.1** In 2023, The BEARR Trust secured £50,000 from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Conflict, Stability and Security Fund via the British Embassy in Kyiv for a project known as *From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion*. This built on our experience of the Ukraine Appeal, working with nine partner organisations in Odesa, Zaporizhzhia and western Ukraine, all of which had received support through the Ukraine Appeal and had provided detailed reports on their activities.
- 4.2** *From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion* focused on approaches to addressing the psychological stresses of the war. The aim was to demonstrate how community-based organisations can increase their therapeutic support to displaced people and other vulnerable groups, while also building their capacity and skill-sharing networks so that these groups can be better represented in local decision-making and resource allocation processes.
- 4.3** The project involved small grant payments to support the participating partners' work. Exchange of experience and practice was also a key element, and the project included a retreat and workshop in the Carpathian Mountains in western Ukraine, facilitated by BEARR Trustee Megan Bick. While most of the activity delivered as part of the project took place in 2023, it concluded in the first quarter of 2024, and we submitted our final report and received our final payment in March 2024.

Key outcomes

- 4.4** BEARR has effectively facilitated the formation of a CBO network supporting more marginalised groups and individuals in a more inclusive and cooperative manner:
- We worked with nine grassroots organisations in identifying challenges facing people uprooted by war and facing multiple disadvantages, helping them find some relief from the traumas they have faced, meet local like-minded people, create better ties in community and gain improved access to services. Each of the nine CBOs who received one or two grants worked with a minimum of 100 children and 100 adults: in total, grant support reached over 4,000 people experiencing trauma across Ukraine. New

beneficiaries to group therapy sessions included: women affected by domestic violence, women that had been newly widowed, veterans and their families, as well as ethnic and sexual minorities.

- Partners are now regularly conducting therapeutic classes to reduce the consequences of psychological trauma from combat (optimisation of self-esteem, self-doubt, stabilisation of emotional state, organisation of personal boundaries, search and maintenance of resources, partnerships, conflict resolution, etc.) and reported that by learning from each other, they have grown in confidence. There are examples of new projects being developed, such as the 'Mental Brunch' café in Odesa, which makes it easier for people to drop in to access support not labelled as counselling. Another group in Odesa have started a programme for pre-school children and for mothers of children with special needs traumatised by war.

"One of the main things we taught our staff was how to look after their own mental health while working intensively with people who have suffered. 32 members of staff benefited, most of them members of mobile teams helping hundreds of people in rural areas across southwestern Ukraine. Our main target group are families of displaced persons forced to leave their homes in conflict zones. Due to poor rural infrastructure people in villages do not have access to psychological support. The mobile teams use the knowledge and skills they received as part of this project training.

By learning more about maintaining mental well-being ourselves we plan to extend this as fully as possible with new colleagues, particularly those in a formerly occupied region."

- Most of our partners reported that they are working more collaboratively with each other as well as with local authorities and promoting the needs of vulnerable groups to them and international stakeholders. Linked with this, they have expanded their work geographically into neighbouring regions with mobile teams visiting those in need in rural areas of Kherson, Mykolaiv and Dnipro as well as the regions in which they are based.

Key lessons learned

4.5 Our final report to the project funders identified three key lessons, which will be important for our future activity, and will hopefully inform the approaches taken by international funders in working with community-based organisations in Ukraine:

- The importance of **a bottom-up approach** - setting up channels to listen to those doing the real work. We heard from those providing humanitarian assistance the great need to provide non-medicalised, easily accessible therapeutic activity as well as aid. Each

partner ran their own local programme to suit the differing needs of the people coming to them for support, nothing was prescribed or centralised, only the collection of data and sharing of issues. By stressing downward accountability, the CBO leaders retain ownership and remain in touch with the needs of the beneficiaries and work to support them, rather than their donors.

- The importance of **cooperation** is particularly relevant for smaller groups who can benefit from each other's successes and failures – small groups feel stronger when part of the bigger picture. To maintain the spirit of the network and cooperation has been challenging for our partner CBOs working nearer to the frontline, many of which have suffered from office or home damage, stress and various health problems due to rising demand for services and more regular bombardments. Voluntary sector cooperation is reportedly much improved since the war began and our partners continue to make themselves better known and respected in their regions with IDPs, their communities, local authorities and larger NGOs.
- The importance of **investing in people** – both those doing the work and the organisations themselves. The Carpathian sojourn was both a workshop and a retreat, participants all left refreshed and valued with renewed vigour to make their respective organisations stronger and more effective in supporting new groups of vulnerable people. By encouraging partner CBOs to appreciate the various skills they have within their staff and volunteers they have become stronger, reallocating roles and developing new approaches.

"Overall, we have improved the psychological welfare of our staff, their ability to deal with stress, and their stamina to continue work in a difficult situation. We were also able to improve the delegation of authority and division of responsibilities within the organisation, as staff members discovered organisational skills that surprised even themselves... We have noticed that giving our staff the chance to be creative at work has a positive effect on their psychological well-being and enhances their commitment to our charity."

- 4.6** The project was also a new approach for BEARR, involving direct delivery of the workshop and retreat and ongoing dialogue with partners as their activities developed. The insights from the project have been important in informing our approach to the new Ukraine Community Resilience Fund, which we launched in 2025 and our emerging strategy for the next five years.

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with the
support of



5. Partnerships, networking and sharing

An important part of BEARR's work involves sharing good practice and building partnerships between community-based organisations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and with organisations in the UK, through our annual conference, regular lectures, webinars and our newsletters and social media presence. Through this, we have raised awareness of the Small Grants Scheme and the Ukraine Appeal and the role of smaller CBOs, as well as raising further funds.

Annual Conference

- 5.1** BEARR's annual conference took place on 29 November on the subject of **"civil society innovation in health and social welfare at times of crisis in the BEARR Trust region"**. It brought together civil society organisations from Eastern Europe and Central Asia to share innovative responses to recent crises – including the pandemic and economic and political dislocation, as well as war. Once again, the conference was a hybrid event, held in London and online and delivered in English, Ukrainian and Russian, and it attracted over 60 participants. We were especially pleased to welcome representatives of one of our Ukrainian partner organisations to London.



- 5.2** Several recent and current BEARR partners contributed their views and experiences to the conference. The first panel discussion explored **innovation in supporting vulnerable and marginalised groups**. Gulrukhsor Abdullaeva from Tajikistan described the Gulrukhsor Women's Centre, which has provided a confidential helpline, shelters and support to victims of domestic violence since 1996. She especially highlighted the need for economic independence and peer support for women. Armen Alaverdyan of Unison in Armenia discussed efforts to improve accessibility and employment for people with disabilities, including during the COVID-19 and Nagorno-Karabakh crises. Ivan Vostroknutov from Ukraine shared how Kharkiv City Boxing Club provided humanitarian aid and psychological

support to internally displaced people and those in frontline areas, stressing the importance of coordination and long-term planning.

- 5.3** The second panel focused on **strategies to maximise civil society impact**. Daria Rybalchenko from Ukraine's National Network of Local Philanthropy Development advocated for empowering local CSOs and reducing bureaucracy in international aid. She highlighted some of the challenges of working with larger aid agencies, which sometimes lacked the agility to respond quickly on the ground. Iryna Los from Open Doors in Nikopol described the mental and physical toll on volunteers working under constant shelling, and the importance of retreats for recovery. Meerim Osmonalieva from Oasis in Kyrgyzstan discussed the challenges of responding to more restrictive laws on civil society.

Annual Lecture

- 5.4** The 2024 Annual Lecture was given in October by Sir Lawrence Freedman, Emeritus Professor of War Studies at King's College London, on the subject of 'Ukraine: What next?', with the lecture moderated by the former British ambassador to Moscow, Sir Roderic Lyne. The Annual Lecture is important in raising awareness of and funds for BEARR: once again, we are grateful to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which hosted us at their offices in Canary Wharf, and generously provided refreshments.



Other events

- 5.5** In March 2024, we relaunched the Ukraine Appeal with an online talk by Dr Olesya Khromeychuk, director of the Ukrainian Institute in London and author of *The Death of a Soldier Told by his Sister*. Entitled 'Loss, defiance and the fight for justice', the talk marked two years since Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the launch of the Appeal. The talk focused on the powerful stories of three women in Ukraine and their experiences of the war.
- 5.6** In January, we ran a webinar introducing our **Small Grants Scheme** and explaining the theme for 2024 and what we are looking for when we assess an application. The webinar was helpful in supporting the quality of applications and in demonstrating our friendly and accessible approach. We ran the webinar again for the 2025 SGS and intend to continue running support webinars for the SGS in future years.

Website, newsletter, social media and Annual Review

- 5.7** Our website and regular newsletters are crucial in driving awareness of our work and in raising the profile of community-based organisations and health and welfare in the region. Our newsletter mailing list is substantially higher than it was before the war, and we also ran Twitter/X, Facebook and Instagram accounts, as well as a YouTube channel, which is important in disseminating our lectures and webinars to a wider audience.
- 5.8** In 2024, we increased the content in Ukrainian on our website, greatly assisted by the appointment of a new Ukrainian and Russian-speaking translator and website assistant.
- 5.9** As well as our regular reporting materials, we produced an **Annual Review** in 2024, covering the previous year, which we distributed at the Annual Lecture and Conference, and which provides a more accessible and engaging way of explaining BEARR's objectives and achievements.

Networking activity in the region and the UK

- 5.10** Within Eastern Europe and Central Asia, a BEARR Trustee contributed to a mental health conference in Kyiv in 2024, organised by one of BEARR's patrons.
- 5.11** Technology has also meant that we have been able to widen participation to all our events: about half of the attendees at our Annual Conference joined remotely, mainly from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Improved simultaneous translation has also aided participation. We have also been able to keep in touch with partners on a more frequent basis, and we have had regular dialogue via Zoom with established partners.
- 5.12** Within the UK, BEARR trustees and officers have regularly attended lectures and other events at Chatham House and elsewhere. We also had a stand at the 2024 British Association of Slavonic and East European Studies conference in Cambridge, and trustees and other friends of BEARR have given a number of talks and participated in several events within their local communities.
- 5.13** In 2024, we also progressed discussions with a number of potential strategic partners. In Ukraine, these include the National Network of Local Philanthropy Development (Daria Rybalchenko spoke at our conference on their behalf), and we have provided references to other international aid organisations on behalf of some of our established partners. We also began a dialogue with Rotary Great Britain and Ireland, which has progressed further in 2025.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

We encourage an honest and open approach to considering 'what works': one that welcomes acceptance of mistakes and things that did not go well, as well as successes, with the aim of focusing on accountability to local communities, not to international funders. We continue to improve our reporting systems as our grant schemes expand, while remaining non-bureaucratic and accessible to small community-based organisations.

6.1 Our approach to evaluation is described as follows:

"The BEARR Trust sees evaluation as much an ethical issue about power and purpose as a technical exercise. When asking for project reports, we try to demystify the process and encourage an open and honest approach that welcomes acceptance of mistakes made. We aim to thus improve the learning process and encourage greater ownership of both evaluation findings and subsequent project changes.

While we carry out evaluations to provide evidence to funders of the impact of their investment, we believe that the evaluation process should have as much (if not greater) justification in raising the profile of project achievements and providing downward accountability to the communities being worked in".

Monitoring and evaluation in practice

6.2 We have followed this approach in measuring the effects of the Small Grants Scheme, Ukraine Appeal and the FCDO-funded *From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion* project. In the case of the latter, we explicitly reported on 'downwards accountability' in our final report to the funders (cited in more detail in Chapter 4). We also sought to strengthen our processes in 2024.

6.3 Day-to-day **monitoring** of all projects is carried out by our Information and Administration Officer, who keeps in regular contact with our partners:

- For the **Small Grants Scheme**, we ask grantees to complete projects within six months if they can, and to provide us with regular updates and photos for our newsletter, website, and social media. We also ask for a report at the end of the project, for which we provide a standard template.
- For the **Ukraine Appeal**, we request evidence of the activities that were carried out: for single grant awards, we have been flexible in the form that this should take, although partners have generally provided evidence of purchases (receipts, etc.), photographs

of activities, and a short written report. For cumulative grants of £10,000 and for each additional cumulative £10k thereafter, we also ask partners to complete a standard monitoring form that asks for further detail on the activities delivered and the people who benefited, as well as more information on how these activities align to other initiatives locally, and how BEARR's funding adds value to funding that the partner may have sourced from elsewhere.

- For the **From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion** project, we supplemented project reports from partners with structured discussions facilitated by BEARR. We also provided standard quarterly monitoring information to our funders at FCDO.

6.4 Evaluation is based on partner reporting, online discussions and (in the case of the FCDO-funded project) the workshop and retreat in the Carpathians, which provided an opportunity to reflect on what had worked in project delivery and in partners' wider operations. Insights from the 2024 Small Grants Scheme project reports suggest a number of ways in which BEARR's support has helped to make a difference, including:

- Bringing communities together in ways that would not otherwise have happened, but which can be sustained in the longer term. In 2024, this included projects that enabled in-person interaction between children and families (often difficult in parts of Ukraine where education has to be via remote delivery and many people are displaced), and in developing practical activities that bring IDPs and 'host' communities together.

"Children formed a real-life community through training sessions – something rare among displaced families who often only connect via Telegram. This physical, social support network remains even after project completion."

Partner in Ukraine

"[The project] showed that the need for 'soft' psychological support does not decrease. Many people do not go to psychologists, despite their mental state. But they are happy to attend creative art therapy".

Partner in Ukraine

- Providing the initial tools and capacity for self-employment and small-scale economic activity, increasing self-belief and a sense of belonging, in addition to practical economic benefits.
- Providing better evidence of the effectiveness of services offered by community-based organisations, especially in reaching vulnerable people who may be less likely to trust and interact with government bodies.

"We have also presented analyses showing that victims of violence and exploitation are more likely to seek assistance from non-profit organisations rather than government agencies. This indicates that crisis centres and charitable organisations often serve as valuable partners, providing crucial support to the country".

Partner in Kyrgyzstan

- 6.5** Evaluation visits to partners have been challenging to organise, given the current situation. However, our Small Grants Scheme officer visited Moldova in September 2024 to meet with four SGS and Ukraine Appeal partners. This highlighted the significant reductions in funding that local organisations are experiencing – both in relation to support for Ukrainian refugees and vulnerable Moldovans – and the shifting need away from basic humanitarian aid towards help in navigating health systems, accessing employment, etc.
- 6.6** We also maintain relations with other organisations and individuals in the UK who have regular contact with local CBOs. In particular, Anna Bowles, a UK-based freelance writer who spends extended periods in eastern Ukraine supporting local groups, has introduced us to several partners and has been a valuable source of information.

Future approaches to monitoring and evaluation

- 6.7** Looking to the future, we have had discussions with one of our larger funders about a 'Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning' (MEAL) approach that it has been exploring. This will require us to develop more systematic systems for reporting outputs consistently (such as the number of beneficiaries and categorising that by demographic and need). Our recent investment in the Salesforce customer relationship management system (discussed in the next section) ought to help with this, as will the strengthened approach to reporting that we have introduced for the new Ukraine Community Resilience Fund.

Civil society survey

- 6.8** In 2024, we ran a **civil society organisation survey**, building on previous surveys that we carried out in 2020, 2021 and 2022.
- 6.9** 250 CSOs responded to the survey. As in previous years, many (70%) reported reliance on international funding: a major challenge given current pressures. 76% reported an increase in the demand for their services over the past two years; 75% reported an increase in the number of clients seeking psychological help; and 49% reported burnout among volunteers and staff (compared with 31% in the 2021 survey). This gives an indication of the pressures that our partners are under – although 52% said that attitudes to CSOs in wider society had improved in recent years.

7. Managing BEARR and planning for the future

The BEARR Trust has an active board of trustees, supported by a network of special advisors, patrons and volunteers and by our Information and Administration Officer and freelance staff. In 2024, we invested in our IT infrastructure and systems to improve security and efficiency, and we have also made strong progress in developing our next five-year strategy for 2026-30.

Constitution and regulation

- 7.1** The BEARR Trust is constituted by a Declaration of Trust dated 27 April 1992 and Supplemental Deed of Variation dated 14 December 1995.
- 7.2** The BEARR Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales. Its registered charity number is 1011086.
- 7.3** We are also registered with the Fundraising Regulator

Trustees

- 7.4** At the end of 2024, BEARR had 13 **trustees**. In December, Nicola Ramsden stood down as chair after six years of leading BEARR through a period of significant change and expansion, including the launch of the Ukraine Appeal. Ross Gill, who has been a trustee since 2015 and, more recently, BEARR's treasurer, took over the role of chair.
- 7.5** We welcomed Clare Brooks as a new trustee in 2024. Clare has over 30 years' experience of working with community foundations and grant-making trusts.
- 7.6** Trustees who served at any point in 2024 are:
 - Megan Bick
 - Clare Brooks (appointed April 2024)
 - Jane Ebel
 - Charles Garrett
 - Ross Gill (chair from December 2024)
 - Helen Goodman
 - Janet Gunn
 - Ali Lantukh (resigned July 2024)

- Ann Lewis
- Marcia Levy
- Nicola Ramsden (chair until December 2024)
- Michael Rasell
- Sam Thorne
- Sabrina Vashisht (resigned February 2025)

Appointment and training of trustees

7.7 Trustees are appointed by a resolution of the Trustees. Potential Trustees are sought through recommendation by existing Trustees, or through advertising.

7.8 Trustees are appointed for a period of three years, renewable by mutual agreement.

7.9 All Trustees are given a copy of the Charity Commission publication, 'The Essential Trustee: An Introduction', and are referred to the full version of this document on the Charity Commission website and to The BEARR Trust's annual report and accounts.

7.10 New Trustees are given an induction pack consisting of The BEARR Trust's governing documents, minutes of the most recent meetings of Trustees, and policies and process notes prepared by Trustees and volunteers, describing all aspects of BEARR's operations.

Trustee meetings and roles

7.11 Meetings of the full Trustee Board are held every two months.

7.12 Trustees frequently take responsibility for specific areas of work, such as the conference and the website. In 2022, we established a Ukraine Appeal Working Group to assess applications to the Appeal and maintain track of progress. We also continued to operate an editorial sub-group for the Newsletter, and a Trustee led our review of IT systems.

Patrons

7.13 The BEARR Trust is supported by 11 patrons, who are senior figures in public life. Our patrons in 2024 were:

- Vladimir Ashkenazy
- Elena Bashkistrova Barenboim
- Robert Brinkley CMG
- Lady Ellen Dährendorf
- Myra Green OBE

- Bridget Kendall MBE
- Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG
- Michael McCulloch
- Mike Simmonds
- Dr Robert van Voren, PhD, FRCPsych (Hon)
- Sir Andrew Wood GCMG

7.14 We are grateful to one of our patrons, Sir Roderic Lyne, for introducing Sir Lawrence Freedman at our Annual Lecture and for moderating the subsequent discussion.

Special advisors and volunteers

7.15 **Volunteers** make an important contribution to news research, translation, social media and financial supervision. We estimate that voluntary work, including by trustees, is worth around £60,000 each year to BEARR.

7.16 Three volunteer '**special advisors**' support the work of the trustees. These are Charlie Walker, Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay, and Armorer Wason. Our special advisors help us to draw on a wider range of expertise in working with CBOs in the region and academic research, reflecting BEARR's increased activity.

Staff

7.17 We welcomed Valdonė Šniukaitė as BEARR's **Information and Administration Officer** in January 2024, succeeding Alexia Claydon. Over the course of the year, we increased the hours of our Information and Administration Officer, reflecting BEARR's increasing volume of work.

7.18 Anna Lukanina-Morgan continued to support BEARR on a freelance basis, especially in relation to the Small Grants Scheme. We also welcomed Oksana Yurchenko as a Ukrainian and Russian language translator and website assistant, also working for us on a freelance basis.

Infrastructure

7.19 In 2024, we moved our London office to new space at Voluntary Action Islington, where we are fortunate to work alongside a number of other charities. VAI also once again hosted our conference.

7.20 We also carried out two major infrastructure projects in 2024. We undertook a comprehensive **review of our IT systems and cybersecurity** protections and processes, addressing a key issue on our risk register at the start of the year. As well as improving data security, this has also meant much greater efficiency in storing and accessing documents.

We also invested in a new **Salesforce** CRM (customer relationship management) system to keep better track of partners and donors, and to enable us to gather further insights into the beneficiaries we have helped. We have continued to develop this during 2025.

Policies

7.21 The BEARR Trust has the following policies in place, all of which are subject to regular review:

- Code of Conduct for Trustees
- Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Data and Cybersecurity Policy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Expenses and Reimbursements Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Sanctions, Financial Abuse and Terrorism Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Safeguarding

7.22 The BEARR Trust adopted a Safeguarding Policy in 2021. This is regularly reviewed, and we approved a revised policy in 2024, which is published on the BEARR website.

7.23 Our Safeguarding Policy is shared with all partners. We ask all partners in receipt of grant to act in accordance with the principles our policy sets out. We also encourage partners to develop their own safeguarding policies, recognising the challenges that many face in operating within different legal frameworks. We are committed to promoting the adoption of robust approaches to safeguarding in a way that can be genuinely embedded within the operations of community-based organisations.

7.24 We also take measures to safeguard our partners. For example, we do not publish the names or specific locations of partners in Ukraine, other than with their explicit consent. The examples used in this report have all been published by BEARR with the agreement of the organisations concerned.

Risk management

7.25 The Trustees have considered the main risks that might prevent BEARR from fulfilling its charitable objectives. Our approach has been reviewed and updated in the light of the

increase in BEARR's activities since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. Alongside the Risk Management Policy, a consolidated risk register is in place and is regularly reviewed by the Trustees.

Looking to the future

7.26 Our current five-year framework runs to the end of 2025. In 2024, we began the process of preparing a new five-year strategy, for 2026-30. This process began with a strategy workshop in August, to discuss BEARR's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with trustees, advisors and patrons. Subsequently, we prepared an initial draft strategy in the autumn, which has been substantially developed in 2025.

7.27 The current draft strategy sets five **strategic objectives**, which are to:

- Improve our **fundraising capabilities and increase income**, enabling us to increase the number of high-quality projects that we are able to fund through the Small Grants Scheme, and to maintain and expand our support for partner organisations in Ukraine.
- Improve the **efficiency and effectiveness of our grant making activities**, with the aim of increasing the proportion of SGS applicants that are successful.
- Increase **partners' voices in BEARR planning** and decision making.
- Strengthen our **approaches to evaluation and knowledge exchange**, improving the way in which we gather and analyse information and use it to inform the design of our grant schemes and other activities.
- Raise our **profile and extend our reach**, promoting both BEARR's work and that of our partners to a wider audience.

7.28 We are continuing to develop the new strategy, which will be finalised by the end of 2025.

7.29 In the meantime, we responded in the first half of 2025 to the changing needs of our partners in Ukraine and the challenging funding context by launching our new **Ukraine Community Resilience Fund**, which replaced the Ukraine Appeal from May 2025. This builds on the learning set out earlier in this report: we anticipate that we will raise around £48k into the new Fund in 2025, and we will be able to report on this next year.

8. Financial review

In 2024, The BEARR Trust secured income of £147.3k. Expenditure was £183.5k, resulting in a deficit for the year of £36.2k. This deficit was entirely due to restricted funds, and mostly due to the absorption of the accumulated balance on the Ukraine Appeal.

- 8.1** The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the current statutory requirements and comply with the Charity's governing document and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued in January 2019.

Financial performance

- 8.2** The financial performance of the Charity for the year is set out in the Statement of Financial Activities.

- 8.3** Total income for the Charity was £147,292 (2023: £244,576). Although lower than in 2022 and 2023, income remained substantially higher than in the years before the start of the Ukraine Appeal. In 2024, income consisted of:

- £80,299 (2023: £77,328) in unrestricted funds (known as the 'General Fund').
- £61,993 (2023: £122,248) in a restricted fund for the Ukraine Appeal. Of this, £36,405 was received in the form of grants from charitable bodies, and the remainder from individual donations and fundraising events.
- £5,000 in a restricted fund from the UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund managed by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. This was the final payment of a £50,000 grant awarded in 2023 to support our project 'From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion' in Ukraine.

- 8.4** Total expenditure for the year was £183,478 (2023: £236,620). This consisted of:

- £70,652 (2023: £78,334) in unrestricted expenditure. Of this, £36,501 (2023: £36,431) was on the Small Grants Scheme³.
- £99,395 (2023: £121,349) in restricted expenditure on the Ukraine Appeal. It should be noted that all restricted expenditure was on direct grant payments to civil society

³ Including the costs of transfers and monitoring and evaluation

organisations for humanitarian activity in Ukraine and Moldova, with all administrative costs paid for from unrestricted funds.

- £13,441 (2023: £36,937) in restricted expenditure on the FCDO-funded 'From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion' project. This included a contribution to administrative costs, as set out in the application to the FCDO and the final claim.

8.5 Consequently, the Charity made an overall deficit of £36,186 (2023: surplus of £7,956) in the year. This consisted of:

- A surplus in unrestricted funds of £9,647 (2023: deficit of £1,006).
- A deficit on the restricted Ukraine Appeal of £37,392 (2023: surplus of £899). This substantial deficit reflects erosion of the surpluses in 2022 and 2023, as need remains great despite the challenges of securing continued funding.
- A deficit on the FCDO-funded project of £8,441 (2023: surplus of £8,063), as per the final claim.

8.6 Cash at bank and in hand on 31 December 2024 was £72,405 (2023: £87,904).

Reserves policy

8.7 The Trustees seek to maintain an adequate level of reserves to enable the Charity to carry on its activities in the event of financial difficulties, to enable restructuring if necessary and the avoidance of unplanned closure. To support this, the Trustees seek to hold unrestricted reserves equivalent to at least six months of annual General Fund expenditure, excluding grant payments. Based on expenditure in 2024, this would equate to £17,075.

8.8 This level of reserves had been achieved at the end of the year. Total unrestricted funds on 31 December 2024 were £50,015 (2023: £40,386). There were no tangible assets with a value greater than £2,000.

8.9 The view of the Trustees at the end of 2024 was that the overall position of the Charity and the balance of funds were sufficient to enable the Charity to operate, and that there were sufficient liquid assets to enable restricted and unrestricted funds to be applied as necessary.

Fundraising

8.10 The BEARR Trust is reliant on grants and donations from a wide range of charitable trusts, philanthropic organisations and private individuals. To support our efforts, we operate a Friends scheme, to encourage regular donations, and we run an annual conference and a programme of lectures, which also encourages donations. In 2024, this included a lecture generously hosted by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as well as our annual conference and an online lecture in support of the Ukraine Appeal.

8.11 The Charity is registered with the Fundraising Regulator; consequently, everyone who supports us may be assured that we comply with the regulatory standards for fundraising. All our fundraising activities are managed in-house, and we do not pay for fundraising advice.

8.12 In 2024, £56,704 (2023: £59,664) was received from a private trust as the fourth instalment of a five-year unrestricted annual grant. The Trustees would also like to acknowledge the generous support of the following organisations, all of which have provided larger donations:

- The Mulberry Trust
- Just Trust
- British East West Centre

8.13 The Trustees are also grateful to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which matched donations to the Ukraine Appeal through a staff fundraising initiative. This raised £12,226.

8.14 Many other donors and benefactors have also supported the Charity, including church groups, private donors and charitable trusts which have asked that we respect their anonymity by not including them in this report. Some of these have made multi-year pledges, which will also ensure funding in 2025. Many private donations were enabled by a link to CAF Donate via our website. £17,753 was secured in donations to the Ukraine Appeal via CAF Donate.

8.15 We also benefited in 2024 from a donation of £15,000 from a private trust via the CAF American Trust Fund, which was granted in 2023 (and was therefore included in the 2023 accounts), but received in the following year.

8.16 Fundraising for the Ukraine Appeal was more challenging in 2024 than in the two previous years, despite a great need for funds to be directed towards those community-based organisations that are responding to local needs. While we maintained sufficient funds to continue to respond to a steady stream of applications, fundraising will be a high priority in 2025, especially as we enter the final year of our major five-year grant agreement.

8.17 The Trustees are very grateful for the generosity of all our donors, especially during the ongoing need to support community-based organisations at a time of war.

Bankers and independent examiners

8.18 The BEARR Trust's bankers are:

CAF Bank

25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

8.19 Our independent examiner is:

Lucy Hammond BSc FCA

Kreston Reeves LLP

9 Donnington Park, 85 Birdham Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 7AJ

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

8.20 The Trustees 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).

8.21 The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

8.22 The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

8.23 Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees on 2 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Ross Gill, Chair

9. Statement of Financial Activities

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure accounts) for the year ending 31 December 2024

		2024			2023
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income from:	2				
Donations and legacies		77,306	66,993	144,299	240,115
Charitable activities		2,344	-	2,344	3,541
Investments		649	-	649	921
Total income		<u>80,299</u>	<u>66,993</u>	<u>147,292</u>	<u>244,576</u>
Expenditure on:	3				
Raising funds		2,820	-	2,820	3,173
Charitable activities		67,832	112,826	180,658	233,447
Total expenditure		<u>70,652</u>	<u>112,826</u>	<u>183,478</u>	<u>236,620</u>
Net movement in funds		<u>9,647</u>	<u>- 45,833</u>	<u>- 36,186</u>	<u>7,956</u>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		40,368	56,666	97,034	89,077
Net movement in funds		<u>9,647</u>	<u>- 45,833</u>	<u>- 36,186</u>	<u>7,956</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>50,015</u>	<u>10,833</u>	<u>60,848</u>	<u>97,034</u>

Balance sheet at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024		Total this year	2023
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds		Total
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Debtors	8	1,476	-	1,476	15,270
Cash at bank and in hand	10	61,572	10,833	72,405	87,904
Total current assets		63,048	10,833	73,881	103,174
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	13,033	-	13,033	-
Net current assets/(liabilities)		50,015	10,833	60,848	97,034
Total assets less current liabilities		50,015	10,833	60,848	97,034
Total net assets or liabilities		50,015	10,833	60,848	97,034
Funds of the Charity	12				
Restricted income funds		-	10,833	10,833	56,666
Unrestricted funds		50,015	-	50,015	40,368
Total funds		50,015	10,833	60,848	97,034

- 9.1** The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 2 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Ross Gill, Chair

Notes to the financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2024

Note 1: Accounting policies

Basis of preparation of financial statements

- 9.2** The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - 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) (effective 1 January 2019).
- 9.3** The BEARR Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.
- 9.4** The financial statements are prepared in British Pounds (£) and are rounded to the nearest Pound.

Going concern

- 9.5** The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held for 12 months from authorising these financial statements.

Income

- 9.6** 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 income receivable can be measured reliably.
- 9.7** Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet.
- 9.8** No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.
- 9.9** No legacies were received during the accounting period.
- 9.10** One Government grant, of £5,000 from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), was received during the accounting period. This was the final instalment of a £50,000 grant awarded in 2023.

Gift Aid

- 9.11** Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.

- 9.12** In practice, most donations from private individuals are received via CAF Donate, which processes Gift Aid on the Charity's behalf. CAF Donate Gift Aid receipts are therefore included within the overall donation value.

Donated goods and services

- 9.13** No donated goods or services were received in the accounting period.

Voluntary help

- 9.14** The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts. However, the Charity relies on significant in-kind support from volunteers and trustees. Volunteer time is estimated at around 100 hours per year. Trustee time is substantially in excess of this, although we do not formally maintain timesheet records.

Expenditure

- 9.15** Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.
- 9.16** Expenditure is classified by activity. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.
- 9.17** Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities.
- 9.18** Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.
- 9.19** All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Interest receivable

- 9.20** Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

Tangible fixed assets

- 9.21** Tangible fixed assets costing £2,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably. However, the Charity held no tangible fixed assets with a value of that amount or greater in 2024.

Debtors

9.22 Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount.

Cash in bank and in hand

9.23 Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a maturity of three months or less. In practice, this applies to all the Charity's cash assets.

Fund accounting

9.24 The General Fund is an unrestricted fund which is available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which is not designated for other purposes.

9.25 Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. In 2024, the Charity maintained two restricted funds:

- The Ukraine Appeal, established to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to people in Ukraine and Moldova who have been impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This was established following the Russian invasion in 2022.
- A restricted fund to manage the grant from the FCDO's UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund.

Note 2: Analysis of income

		2024		2023
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
		£	£	£
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	11,713	25,588	37,301
	Gift Aid	473	0	473
	Legacies	0	0	0
	General grants provided by government/other charities	65,120	41,405	106,525
	Other	-	-	-
Total		77,305	66,993	144,299
Charitable activities:	Lectures and conferences	2,344	-	2,344
	Total	2,344	-	2,344
Income from investments:	Interest income	649	-	649
	Total	649	-	649
Total income		80,299	66,993	147,292

Note 3: Analysis of expenditure

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Expenditure on raising funds						
Incurred seeking donations	1,226	-	1,226	1,304	-	1,304
Incurred seeking grants	1,226	-	1,226	1,304	-	1,304
Staging fundraising events	368	-	368	565	-	565
Total	2,820	-	2,820	3,173	-	3,173
Expenditure on charitable activities						
Small Grants Scheme	36,501	-	36,501	36,431	-	36,431
Ukraine Appeal	792	99,385	100,177	850	121,349	122,199
FCDO project	-	13,441	13,441	-	36,937	36,937
Information and Networking	4,422	-	4,422	4,981	-	4,981
Administration and Governance	26,117	-	26,117	32,897	-	32,897
Total	67,832	112,826	180,658	75,160	158,286	233,447
Total expenditure	70,652	112,826	183,478	78,334	158,286	236,620

Breakdown of expenditure on charitable activities:

	2024				2023			
	Direct activities £	Grant funding £	Support costs £	Total £	Direct activities £	Grant funding £	Support costs £	Total £
Small Grants Scheme	-	36,321	180	36,501	-	35,946	485	36,431
Ukraine Appeal	-	99,385	792	100,177	-	121,349	850	122,199
FCDO project	-	9,500	3,941	13,441	9,661	26,000	1,276	36,937
Information and networking	2,358	-	2,064	4,422	3,554	-	1,428	4,981
Administration and governance	-	-	26,117	26,117	-	-	32,897	32,897
Total	2,358	145,206	33,094	180,658	13,215	183,295	36,937	233,447

Note 4: Analysis of support costs

9.26 Support costs are apportioned as follows:

2024

	Small Grants Scheme £	Ukraine Appeal £	FCDO project £	Information & networking £	Admin & governance £	Total £	Basis of allocation
Small Grants Scheme - Monitoring & Evaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	Actual costs of monitoring and evaluation incurred
Small Grants Scheme - Finance costs	180	-	-	-	-	180	Actual costs in transferring funds to SGS beneficiaries
Ukraine Appeal - Finance costs	-	792	-	-	-	792	Actual costs incurred in transferring funds to Ukraine Appeal beneficiaries
FCDO - Finance costs	-	-	40	-	-	40	Actual costs incurred in transferring funds to FCDO project beneficiaries
Information and networking	-	-	-	2,064	-	2,064	80% of funds spent on website and IT costs (the remaining 20% are allocated to Fundraising)
Administration and governance - Small Grants Scheme	5,176	-	-	-	-	5,176	100% of time of SGS Support Officer
Administration and governance - FCDO project	-	-	3,901	-	-	3,901	Information & Admin Officer and office costs in Q1 as per final FCDO grant claim
Administration and governance - General	-	-	-	-	20,941	20,941	90% of remainder of Information & Admin Officer time, plus all workstation rent, insurance and governance costs.
Total	5,356	792	3,941	2,064	20,941	33,094	

2023

	Small Grants Scheme £	Ukraine Appeal £	FCDO project £	Information & networking £	Admin & governance £	Total £	Basis of allocation
Small Grants Scheme - Monitoring & Evaluation	355	-	-	-	-	355	Actual costs of monitoring and evaluation incurred
Small Grants Scheme - Finance costs	130	-	-	-	-	130	Actual costs in transferring funds to SGS beneficiaries
Ukraine Appeal - Finance costs	-	850	-	-	-	850	Actual costs incurred in transferring funds to Ukraine Appeal beneficiaries
FCDO - Finance costs	-	-	170	-	-	170	Actual costs incurred in transferring funds to FCDO project beneficiaries
Information and networking	-	-	-	1,428	-	1,428	80% of funds spent on website and IT costs (the remaining 20% are allocated to Fundraising)
Administration and governance - Small Grants Scheme	4,114	-	-	-	-	4,114	100% of time of SGS Support Officer
Administration and governance - FCDO	-	-	1,106	-	-	1,106	Costs associated with Activity 1 (Support) for the FCDO funded project (other than finance costs)
Administration and governance - General	-	-	-	-	28,784	28,784	90% of remainder of Information & Admin Officer time, plus all workstation rent, insurance and governance costs.
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	4,599	850	1,276	1,428	28,784	36,937	

Note 5: Fees for the examination of the accounts

- 9.27** The cost of independent examination of the accounts for 2024 is £2,340 (2023: £2,160) including VAT. This will be paid in 2025 and is included in the accounts as a creditor.

Note 6: Paid employees

- 9.28** The Charity employs a part-time Information and Administration Officer.
- 9.29** Total costs of employment in 2024 were:

	2024
	£
Salaries and wages	18,036
Social security costs	-
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	354
Other employee benefits	-
Total staff costs	18,389

Note 7: Grants

- 9.30** In 2024, the Charity paid £145,206 (2023: £183,295) in grants to third party organisations. These were made up of:
- Grants via the Small Grants Scheme: £36,321 (2023: £35,946). This consisted of 11 grants (2023: 10) to support partnerships between two or more civil society organisations promoting the health and welfare of vulnerable people.
 - Emergency humanitarian assistance grants via the main Ukraine Appeal: £94,885 (2023: £112,927). This consisted of 52 individual grants (2023: 66).
 - Grants to support the organisational resilience and staff welfare of civil society organisations funded through the Ukraine Appeal: £4,500 (2023: £8,423). This consisted of 5 grants (2023: 8), funded via the restricted Ukraine Appeal
 - Grants through the FCDO-funded project, From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion: £9,500 (2023: £26,000). This consisted of 4 grants (2023: 12). This concluded the FCDO project, bringing total grant payments across the project to £35,500.

Note 8: Debtors

- 9.31** Total debtors were £1,476 (2023: £15,270). These were made up of Gift Aid claims due (£743) and donations made via CAF Donate in December 2024 which were received in 2025 (£734).

Note 9: Creditors

- 9.32** Total creditors were £13,033 (2023: £6,141). These were made up of employee costs for work carried out in December 2024, payments to suppliers for goods received in 2024, expense claims relating to 2024 and received after the end of the year, grant payments made in 2024 and processed in 2025, and the cost of independent examination of the accounts.

Note 10: Cash at bank and in hand

- 9.33** Cash at the bank and in hand was as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash at bank and on hand	72,060	87,558
Other	345	345
Total	72,405	87,904

- 9.34** 'Other' cash relates to £345 held in a dormant PayPal account.

Note 11: Exposure to financial risk

- 9.35** The Charity's exposure to financial risk is assessed as follows:

- **Credit risk:** Low. The only outstanding debtors relate to Gift Aid payments yet to be claimed. No payments have been advanced against this funding.
- **Liquidity risk:** Low. There is no liquidity risk in relation to the Ukraine Appeal, since no grants are issued unless funds are already received. BEARR's Reserves Policy sought to maintain six months' core expenditure less the costs of the Small Grant Scheme.
- **Market risk:** Zero. The BEARR Trust has no investments. All funds are held in CAF Bank accounts, or in accounts with international payment providers (in the case of the latter, only a minimal amount is held to meet immediate needs).

Note 12: Funds analysis

9.36 Movement within The BEARR Trust's restricted and unrestricted funds is set out below:

2024

Fund	Restricted/ unrestricted	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Fund balances carried forward £
General Fund	Unrestricted	No restrictions	40,368	80,299	- 70,652	50,015
Ukraine Appeal	Restricted	Restricted to use on direct support for humanitarian assistance to people in Ukraine and Moldova impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine	48,603	61,993	- 99,385	11,211
FCDO - UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund	Restricted	Restricted to the implementation of project 'From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion' funded by the FCDO	8,063	5,000	- 13,441	378
Total Funds			97,034	147,292	- 183,478	60,848

2023

Fund	Restricted/ unrestricted	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Fund balances carried forward £
General Fund	Unrestricted	No restrictions	41,373	77,328	- 78,334	40,368
Ukraine Appeal	Restricted	Restricted to use on direct support for humanitarian assistance to people in Ukraine and Moldova impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine	47,704	122,248	- 121,349	48,603
FCDO - UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund	Restricted	Restricted to the implementation of project 'From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion' funded by the	-	45,000	- 36,937	8,063
Total Funds			89,077	244,576	- 236,620	97,034

Note 13: Transactions with Trustees and related parties

9.37 No Trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with the Charity or a related entity.

9.38 £3,483 (2023: £14,860) was received by Trustees in reimbursements. This consisted of:

- Trustee expenses and reimbursements for goods and subscriptions purchased:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Travel	313	728
Subsistence	-	210
Accommodation	-	349
Other	667	4,419
Total	980	5,706

- Reimbursement for grants paid to beneficiaries of the Ukraine Appeal: £2,503 (2023: £9,155). This applied to two Ukraine Appeal grant payments, where Trustees arranged

initial payment and were subsequently repaid, both in circumstances where it was not possible to use Convera, the charity's usual international payments provider.

9.39 At the end of the year, the charity owed £1,668 to trustees in reimbursements due.

9.40 Trustees made direct donations of £10,965 in 2024, including Gift Aid.

10. Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The BEARR Trust

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 29 to 43.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: *Kristen Reeves LHP*

Name: Lucy Hammond BSc FCA

Address: 9 Donnington Park, 85 Birdham Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 7AJ

Date 31 October 2025



Voluntary Action Islington
200a Pentonville Road
London N1 9JP
UK

info@bearr.org
www.bearr.org

Charity registered in England and Wales
No. 1011086



The BEARR Trust is a UK-based charity committed to strengthening community-based organisations and civil society across Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Since 1992, we have partnered with over 500 grassroots organisations in twelve countries – mobilising resources, building capacity and connecting local leaders with international expertise in health and social development.

A strong civil society is the foundation of resilient, thriving communities. In a region shaped by diverse political systems, complex transitions and persistent social challenges, local organisations are lifelines for vulnerable and marginalised groups. They promote social cohesion and deliver essential services where they are needed the most. In the context of war in Ukraine and mounting social pressures, their role has never been more critical.

By strengthening local partners, we help to foster long term change, giving communities the tools they need to adapt, thrive and advocate for themselves.

THE BEARR TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1011086

Accounts

Annual Report and Accounts 2023

Unaudited



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The BEARR Trust

Supporting vulnerable people in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus

Voluntary Action Islington, 200a Pentonville Road, London N1 9JP

+44 (0)20 7922 7849 | info@bearr.org | www.bearr.org

Patrons: Vladimir Ashkenazy, Elena Bashkistrova Barenboim, Robert Brinkley CMG, Lady Ellen Dahrendorf, Myra Green OBE, Bridget Kendall MBE, Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG, Michael Simmonds, Michael McCulloch, Dr Robert van Voren, Sir Andrew Wood GCMG

Trustees: Nicola Ramsden (Chairman), Megan Bick, Clare Brooks, Jane Ebel, Charles Garrett, Ross Gill, Helen Goodman, Janet Gunn, Marcia Levy, Ann Lewis, Dr Michael Rasell, Sam Thorne, Sabrina Vashisht

Special Advisers: Dr Charlie Walker, Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay, Armorer Wason

Registered Charity No. 1011086

Letter from the Chairman

In 2023, our emergency aid to Ukraine and Moldova helped us to build on BEARR's unique position as a charity that provides grants, information and networking opportunities to civil society organisations (CSOs) in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Our focus is health and social welfare. When BEARR was founded in 1991-2 we delivered emergency medical supplies to Russia and other newly independent countries following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Thirty years later, following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, we sent money to many of the community-based organisations we now knew in Ukraine and Moldova to provide emergency supplies and mental health support to displaced people and others in need. Between February 2022 and mid-2024 we raised more than £600,000 in donations, pledges and a UK government grant for this purpose. We responded quickly to requests for help, reaching people on the ground faster than larger international charities did – evidence that small and local grant-making plays a part in emergencies.

Our belief in the power of small grants has underpinned our work for many years and we target grants at smaller organisations where they are likely to make the most difference. In addition to funding new approaches to health and welfare issues, we foster partnerships and contacts between civil society organisations. Taking part in evaluation conversations and webinars, or speaking at our annual conference, are opportunities to learn and to build skills necessary to influence public attitudes and policy. In 2023 we designed our Small Grants Scheme specifically to encourage partnerships. As well as Ukraine and Moldova, we also supported organisations in Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

In 2023 we continued to provide information through our website, social media posts and bi-monthly newsletters. One of our patrons, Dr Robert van Voren, gave a public lecture on the long term consequences for mental health of the war in Ukraine, while Trustees developed our understanding of mental health through various academic collaborations.

BEARR is managed by its Trustees, with part-time administrative support. This low-overhead model maximises funds available for our partners and depends on a skilled and experienced board. In 2023 and early 2024 we were delighted to recruit five new Trustees from senior diplomatic, government, charity and higher education backgrounds. With a strong team of people to cover both governance and operational responsibilities, BEARR entered 2024 in good shape.

I would like to thank the trusts and foundations and individual donors who have supported us in recent years: I hope that you will be encouraged by BEARR's achievements and potential.

Nicola Ramsden

Chairman 2018-2024

1. The BEARR Trust's objectives and activities

The BEARR Trust is a UK-based, English-registered charity that helps vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The history of The BEARR Trust

The BEARR Trust was formed in 1991 in response to healthcare problems in the last years of the Soviet Union's existence, and to shortages of medical supplies in the economic crisis following its sudden collapse. The founders of The BEARR Trust, led from Moscow by Lady Jill Braithwaite (whose husband, Sir Rodric Braithwaite, was British Ambassador to the USSR), coordinated deliveries by lorry of emergency humanitarian and medical supplies from the UK to various cities in Russia, to Dagestan, and to Georgia. BEARR originally stood for *British Emergency Aid to Russia and the Republics*.

The BEARR Trust was formally constituted in 1992 to act as a bridge between the health and welfare sectors in Britain and the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union. During the 1990s The BEARR Trust became a pioneering support organisation for new grass-roots voluntary groups in the region, sharing knowledge, skills and contacts with the formal aims of:

- protecting and preserving good health, both physical and mental
- relieving and rehabilitating those suffering from physical or mental disabilities
- advancing education and training, both academic and vocational, for those involved in the voluntary sector.

Since then, The BEARR Trust has aimed to promote and support cooperation between civil society organisations (CSOs) working to improve health and social welfare within the region, and with those doing similar work in the UK. We remain the only British charity working in the region that combines grant-giving and networking services. We promote locally led health and welfare initiatives, believing that small grass-roots organisations have the potential strength and resilience to help vulnerable people and to solve local problems most effectively.

The focus of our activity today

The BEARR Trust has three main strands of activity:

- **Directly supporting small and innovative grass-roots health and social welfare projects** in the region through an annual **Small Grants Scheme**. We believe that small, community-based organisations can make effective use of modest grants.
- **Sharing information and good practice** through a range of services designed to promote networking, exchange experience, build partnerships and support organisations committed to reform in the health and social welfare sectors.

- **Supporting community-based organisations in providing emergency humanitarian support following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.** In February 2022, The BEARR Trust established a Ukraine Appeal, supporting refugees and other vulnerable people impacted by the war, through our partners in Ukraine and Moldova. This led to a significant increase in expenditure which we maintained throughout 2023. Building on this experience, we also delivered a programme in Ukraine, called **From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion**, funded by the UK Government through the British Embassy in Kyiv.

Where we work

Today, our work focuses on the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Until 2022, we also offered grants to organisations in Russia or Belarus. This stopped following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, we continue to report on health and social welfare developments in those countries in our newsletters and on our website.

The impact of conflict and the political situation

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has led to a social and humanitarian crisis. Community-based organisations have played a vital role in protecting the most vulnerable, ensuring that assistance is distributed effectively and supporting social cohesion.

In addition conflict has also affected other parts of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, with severe impacts on communities. This included the displacement of people in Nagorno-Karabakh following the Azerbaijani offensive in September 2023. Central Asia and the Caucasus continue to be affected by the impacts of war and economic sanctions on labour migration. Overall, conflict has changed the context for BEARR's work, but has reinforced the value of working with grassroots organisations delivering community support on the ground.

Public benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Trustees have considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

The Global Goals

Our work also sits within the broader framework of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (the Global Goals), which emphasise collaboration across all sectors of government and society. The seventeen Global Goals are interrelated, and BEARR's work is relevant to several:

- Good Health and Wellbeing
- Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- Reduced Inequalities
- Partnerships for the Goals.

2. Achievements and performance in 2023

The Small Grants Scheme

Our annual Small Grants Scheme is a major part of our activity, enabling us to provide direct support to projects that are delivered by grassroots organisations in the region, and which can contribute to wider knowledge exchange.

Each year, we select a theme, which is published on the BEARR website alongside application details and funding criteria. Applications are then reviewed by BEARR Trustees, and we will match fund up to half of a project's costs, within a maximum agreed grant value.

The 2023 Small Grants Scheme

In 2023, we made grants available through two strands:

- **Strand A: Projects that promoted long-term partnership between two or more CSOs supporting vulnerable people in any area of health or social welfare**, with a maximum grant of £4,000. This strand was open to applicants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The emphasis was on building partnerships, with the maximum grant higher than in previous years to reflect costs across two partner organisations.
- **Strand B: Activities to improve the welfare of organisations' own staff and volunteers and to improve organisational resilience**, with a maximum grant of £1,000. This strand was only open to organisations in Moldova and Ukraine that had previously received a grant from us, with the aim of ensuring that grants were complementary with the support offered through the Ukraine Appeal. Strand B projects were funded from the restricted Ukraine Appeal fund.

In line with our principle of supporting locally designed initiatives, we encouraged a wide variety of responses to both strands, relevant to local need. We ran a **webinar for prospective applicants** in February 2023, explaining the process and criteria and offering tips on how to write a strong application.

We received 101 applications in total, of which 67 were for Strand A and 34 were for Strand B. These included applications from all countries in which the scheme was open, with the exception of Turkmenistan.

We awarded 18 grants, with a total value of £44,499 (including transfer costs). Of this, £36,076 was for Strand A, and funded from the General Fund.

The 2023 Small Grants Scheme Strand A projects are summarised on the next page. Reflecting the breadth of the call for projects, partners supported a wide range of vulnerable people, including migrants, people at risk of trafficking, women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence and people with disabilities and their families.

In some cases, partners had to be flexible to changing needs in a volatile political environment. For example, one of our partners in Armenia adapted its services to respond to the needs of displaced people from Nagorno-Karabakh following the war in autumn 2023.

Small Grants Scheme 2023: Project summaries

Strand A: Promoting long-term partnership between two or more CSOs supporting vulnerable people in any area of health and social welfare

- **Oasis**, delivered in conjunction with the Union of Educational Institutes (Kyrgyzstan): Supporting 'social orphans' (i.e., young people without parental care) who are at risk of human trafficking, by enabling access to education, safe employment opportunities, legal assistance and psychosocial support.
- **Partnership for Education and Communication**, delivered in conjunction with the Women's Democracy Network (Georgia): Improving the mental health of young people through emotional resilience.
- **Unison**, delivered in conjunction with the Family Counselling Centre (Armenia): Delivering interactive workshops for families of people with disabilities focused on strategies for managing family life. This included an expansion of activities to support the families of people with disabilities who were displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh in autumn 2023.
- **Gulrukhsor**, delivered in conjunction with Ghamkhori (Tajikistan): Amplifying the voices of women suffering from domestic violence and building the capacity of civil society organisations to support and advocate for them.
- **Crisis Centre Chance**, delivered in conjunction with five other NGOs (Kyrgyzstan): Delivering a pilot project to test a new approach to supporting victims of intimate partner violence in rural Kyrgyzstan, adapting the 'WINGS' approach (a screening, intervention and referral to treatment methodology to reduce the risk of domestic violence) that had previously been piloted in urban locations in the country.
- **Taldykorgan**, delivered with two other regional organisations (Kazakhstan): Improving access to services for children with disabilities.
- **Parastor**, delivered with two other women's organisations (Tajikistan): Providing skills, micro-business development and financial training for vulnerable women and girls.
- **Almaz**, delivered with Zaroni Komyob and Sadoi Kuhsor (Tajikistan): Providing information centres for rural people who had previously been labour migrants but who had been affected by the war in Ukraine.
- **Rushdi Inclusia**, delivered with Zaroni Komyob (Tajikistan): Providing financial, family counselling and legal support for families with children with disabilities.
- **Korgan-M**, delivered in conjunction with the women's centre Sogdiana (Kazakhstan): Offering counselling and information services to labour migrants.

Monitoring and evaluation of the 2023 Small Grants Scheme

Monitoring and evaluation are vital if we are to help promote good practice and understand 'what works' in a wide range of different community and cultural settings. Our concept of evaluation is set out in the box below:

BEARR's approach to evaluation

"The BEARR Trust sees evaluation as much an ethical issue about power and purpose as a technical exercise. When asking for project reports, we try to demystify the process and encourage an open and honest approach that welcomes acceptance of mistakes made. We aim to thus improve the learning process and encourage greater ownership of both evaluation findings and subsequent project changes.

While we carry out evaluations to provide evidence to funders of the impact of their investment, we believe that the evaluation process should have as much (if not greater) justification in raising the profile of project achievements and providing downward accountability to the communities being worked in".

Day-to-day monitoring of projects is carried out by our Information Officer, who keeps in regular contact with our grantees. We ask grantees to complete projects within six months if they can, and to provide us with regular updates and photos for our newsletter, website, and social media. All projects funded through the 2023 SGS have now been completed.

Project reports from many of the projects supported are now published on the BEARR website. The boxes below highlight three of them:

Parastor, Tajikistan

Parastor has partnered with local community councils to support women who are victims of violence, unemployed women and women with disabilities.

A major local problem is unemployment, with many women previously employed in local garment and cement factories. Following an initial survey and discussions, Parastor developed a project that would enable vulnerable women to produce something that could provide a viable livelihood, without the need for higher-level skills. The project helped 30 vulnerable girls gain baking skills, as well as the raw materials for the production of the first batches, together with an oven and a mixer.

Parastor also conducted a long-running embroidery master class for girls with disabilities, and has submitted applications to other organisations for funding.

Oasis (with Union of Educational Institutes), Kyrgyzstan

UNICEF estimates that around 277,000 children in Kyrgyzstan live without parental care. Oasis's own survey shows that almost half of these 'social orphans' plan to migrate to another country on leaving care – but most do not have the skills to protect themselves from violence or exploitation.

With BEARR's support, the Oasis Foundation implemented a project focused on support for victims of child trafficking and gender-based violence. This worked with 41 survivors, providing access to education and safe job opportunities, psychosocial support, legal assistance and other services. Most also participated in workshops on future planning, mental health support, sports activities and team-building.



Oasis also ran workshops to provide information and training to people working in social services, schools and other NGOs. This supported 38 social workers and teachers in learning how to identify victims of violence and trafficking and about psychological trauma and attachment theory. Almost all participants said that they had not engaged in similar training before, and most valued the session about attachment theory, which highlights the importance of a child's emotional bond with their primary caregivers.



Building on the project. Oasis is currently developing a Support centre for victims of violence among at-risk young people and children. This will provide direct assistance and improve referral mechanisms, with financial support from the Swiss Embassy and Kairesh Foundation.

Unison, Armenia

Families of people with disabilities often encounter prejudice and discrimination. But family members are a key source of services and support helping people to remain living at home and in the community.

BEARR's grant helped 60 families of people with disabilities through six workshops focused on how to keep their families strong and how to cope with stressful situations etc. Workshops were interactive and included signposting to other sources of support.

In the middle of the project, war with Azerbaijan resulted in around 100,000 people from Nagorno-Karabakh being displaced to Armenia. While Unison considered suspending the project to focus on providing emergency humanitarian relief, they decided to expand activities instead to involve displaced people from Nagorno-Karabakh: *"The workshop gave them hope for a better future and a return to normal life"*.



The informal methods used during the workshops helped the participants to relieve stress and anxiety, to express and communicate more freely, make friends, exchange contacts and keep in touch later. Unison was also able to connect some participants with participants from previous programmes – for one participant resulting in access to a hairdressing course and subsequently a job. Collaboration also took place with Yerevan city council, the Office of Human Rights Defenders of Armenia and other disability NGOs.

Physical evaluation visits are very challenging given resources and the geopolitical situation. However, we have made better use of technology in maintaining dialogue with SGS partners, and for the 2024 Small Grants Scheme, we intend to run a series of Zoom calls with each partner organisation. We have also embarked on a longer-term **review of the Small Grants Scheme** since it was established in 2006, with the aim of finding out more about how partner organisations have evolved, how they have adapted to the changing external context and how they are working with other organisations. We should be able to report on this further next year.

Designing the 2024 Small Grants Scheme

We agreed that the Small Grants Scheme should continue the practice of having two strands. The 2024 SGS was launched in late 2023, with Strand A focused on the community integration of displaced people, and Strand B focused on projects in Ukraine and Moldova to support the welfare of staff and volunteers, and to improve the organisation's overall resilience.

The Ukraine Appeal

In February 2022, shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we launched an **Emergency Appeal for Ukraine and Moldova**. As set out in last year's report, the Ukraine Appeal led to a significant expansion of BEARR's work as the war led to an ongoing humanitarian crisis.

At the start of the Appeal, we asked former Small Grants Scheme beneficiaries in Ukraine and Moldova (which was receiving large numbers of refugees from Ukraine) whether they were active in providing humanitarian support, making grants of up to £2,500 available based on a simple application form¹. Subsequently, we have supported several other groups delivering vital humanitarian work on the ground, many of which made contact with us through our networks. The Appeal has especially focused on supporting people who are vulnerable (for example, because of age or disability) and on supporting small organisations that are rooted in their communities.

The Ukraine Appeal is treated as a restricted fund. All donations that we receive for the purposes of the Appeal are used to fund partners delivering practical support in Ukraine and Moldova, with all of BEARR's administration costs (including financial transfer costs) paid for from our general funds. **This means that donors to the Appeal can be confident that 100% of their money is going directly to communities.** This is especially important: despite the volume of international assistance pledged to Ukraine following the invasion, only a very small proportion has reached community-based organisations².

Supporting partners through the Ukraine Appeal in 2023

In 2023, we distributed £112,926 in grant payments to community-based partners³. This was distributed in 65 individual grants to 29 organisations. Combined with activity in 2022, this meant that by the end of 2023, BEARR had dispatched some £454,739 to organisations in Ukraine and Moldova through the Appeal.

Our funding has been used in a variety of ways, enabling partners to respond to local conditions. In many cases, funds have purchased emergency supplies of food and household goods for people who have been displaced and for those who live near the front line, but who have been unable to move. We have also helped with the distribution of medicines and food, helping volunteers to deliver to rural areas, away from the main centres, and we have funded supplies to local hospitals. Increasingly, we have seen a need for therapeutic support, for example in providing art therapy for children and enabling people to talk about their experiences. We have also responded to specific needs created by the war, for example in providing water pumps and a mobile laundry to communities affected by flooding following the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam.

Funds from the Ukraine Appeal have been distributed to all parts of Ukraine. Several regular partners are based in the east of the country, around Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia, which have faced the worst of the conflict. But we have also supported communities in the west and centre, to which many people have been displaced.

¹ Or a maximum of £1,000 for organisations with which we have not had a previous relationship.

² Sharetrust/ Center for Disaster Philanthropy/ Refugees International (2024), *Passing the Buck: The economics of localising aid in Ukraine*

³ In addition to £8,423 through Strand B of the Small Grants Scheme, discussed earlier.

Partner reports

Supporting vulnerable people near the front line

Between Kharkiv and the border with Russia, many elderly people in rural communities have had to be evacuated from their homes to keep them safe. For many of them, care homes are the only places that can house them, so they are naturally reluctant to leave their animals, houses, gardens and their independence. Our partners have been providing them with basic provisions, hygiene kits and other supplies.

One civil society organisation reported feedback on their supplies to one village, saying: *"We distributed 150 hygiene kits with essential supplies, including soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, sanitiser, and other hygiene products. The results of the project have exceeded our expectations: we have received enthusiastic feedback and gratitude from local residents who have noted a significant improvement in their living conditions and a reduction in illnesses as a result of your assistance. Importantly, your generous donation has had a direct impact on the lives of people in the settlement. We have seen a community blossom when its members feel cared for and protected."*

Planting roots in new communities for internally displaced people

In western Ukraine, an organisation we support has been helping displaced people from the Donbas to adapt to rural life and get to know their host community better, by helping them to grow their own food, something that almost all Ukrainians do. Even city dwellers have some relative with a village house and plot where they keep chickens and grow fruit and vegetables, which they preserve for the winter. It is now the third spring for the newcomers – in the first we supplied seeds and tools, now they need more seeds and fruit bushes to plant for the next harvest. This activity is good for their mental health and develops relationships between locals and incomers.

More sustainable solutions to emergency food relief

A partner organisation in Kharkiv asked us for funds to buy chicks, chicken feed and vegetable seeds for people living in formerly occupied territory, where there are few functioning shops and much destruction. As a result of our donation 100 residents of one village received day-old chicks (10 each), chicken feed (25 kg each) and seeds (20 packets each).

The partners told us *"this help was received with gratitude and joy. Thanks to this, each of the 100 residents will be able to get about 20 kg of meat and many kilos of vegetables, which will help them survive during this difficult period."*

The BEARR Trust has long sought to bring partners together. Many of our partners are collaborating with other groups of volunteers and the local authorities to coordinate support to the people who need it the most, and we have encouraged the sharing of ideas between partners through our FCDO-funded project, described in the next chapter. For many partners, BEARR's initial support has also been important in enabling them to build a track record which

has subsequently helped them to secure funding from other international donors, and we have supported partners in applying to organisations such as Crown Agents.

Ukraine Appeal partners delivering art therapy for children



Raising funds for the Ukraine Appeal

At the start of 2023, we anticipated that funds in the Ukraine Appeal would gradually taper down. However, we have continued to raise funds in response to the urgent situation. We relaunched the Appeal following the first anniversary of the full-scale invasion, and regular updates on the Appeal and a programme of events led to a steady stream of donations via BEARR's website. In addition, we benefited from two significant private fundraising initiatives led by BEARR supporters: sponsorship for the Rotterdam Marathon by Flora Hudson and a sale of original art by Ray Postill; as well as grants from the Mulberry Trust and the Network for Social Change Charitable Trust and a donation via the CAF American Donor Fund committed in 2023 but received in 2024. We also received £500 from the Ukrainian community in Salisbury, part of some £3,500 raised locally to support aid efforts in Ukraine.

In total, £122,248 was received into the Ukraine Appeal in 2023, bringing the total to £504,341 since the start of the Appeal. This means that by the end of 2023, we had spent around 90% of all funds received on direct support to Ukraine and Moldova.

Approvals, monitoring and evaluation of the Ukraine Appeal

Grant approvals through the Ukraine Appeal are delegated to a sub-group of BEARR Trustees, with detailed reports made to the full Trustee Board every two months (and, in practice, more frequently). All CSOs applying for funds are asked to complete a short proforma: our focus has been on ensuring that it strikes a balance between accessibility and simplicity and an appropriate level of information for us to make decisions and allocate funds.

Our approach to monitoring and evaluation follows the same principles as those adopted for the Small Grants Scheme. We recognise that, in the circumstances of the war, many CSOs are unable to manage complex reporting procedures – and we know from feedback from our beneficiaries (and wider independent reviews of the aid landscape) that international

assistance is often inaccessible to smaller community organisations on the ground because of onerous due diligence and monitoring requirements.

In all cases, however, we required reports from recipients. Reports were received from partners in respect of all grants issued in 2023. We also ask partners in regular receipt of funds from us to complete a Partner Information Form requesting further details on governance and finances, and we also ask partners who have received several grants to report in greater detail. While we are careful not to publish identifiable information about our beneficiaries, given the risks that some may face, we can provide further monitoring information on request.

From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion

Building on our experience of the Ukraine Appeal, The BEARR Trust secured £50,000 from the UK Government via the British Embassy in Kyiv for a project known as *From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion*. (£45,000 of which was received in 2023).

Through the project, small grants were given to seven partner organisations in Ukraine, all of which had received support through the Ukraine Appeal and had provided detailed reports. These grants were focused on approaches to addressing the psychological stresses of the war and were paid in an initial tranche in summer 2023 and a second tranche at the end of the year:

Project examples

In **southern Ukraine**, a group led by Roma women received a grant to help them manage the stress levels and burnout of their own staff, so that they can most effectively support the wider community.

Before the war, the group had been focused on supporting Roma women into work, and was relatively isolated. Following the Russian invasion, they supported a wider range of beneficiaries, including those arriving in the community from the east. As a result, they have raised the profile of the Roma community, and the group has almost doubled in size.

Using funding from BEARR, the group was able to look at the needs of its staff and raise their skills in protecting their own well-being while carrying out frontline work.

In **western Ukraine**, there are many families from the east who have fled their homes, but are poorly integrated with the local community and are often having to deal with trauma from the war. A lack of integration makes many feel unwanted and un-connected.

BEARR supported a group in a town in west-central Ukraine to bring together displaced people and the host community through joint events for children and families, led by the community. The projects received local publicity, have improved local relations, stimulated rural communities to hold more events and helped some IDPs feel more at home in this area.

An integral part of *From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion* was an extended workshop which brought participants together from across Ukraine, held in a remote rural hostel in the Carpathians, and facilitated by a BEARR Trustee, Megan Bick. This gave partners the chance

to share experiences and provided a rare opportunity to relax. One of the participants gives their reflections on the workshop and their own experience of project delivery below:

Partner reflections

The workshop was very useful for us – it was the first one we had attended where we didn't have to be up early organising it all but could instead switch off from the usual demands. Having the chance to be away from the daily pressure enabled us to understand better the constant stress we had been under. We learned about the ways that other organisations work and understood better that they were facing similar difficulties to us.

Our main target group is families of displaced persons forced to leave their homes in conflict zones. Due to poor rural infrastructure people in villages do not have access to psychological support. Our mobile teams use the knowledge and skills they received as part of this project training, helping specialists to use games to understand how clients are feeling as well as understanding their behaviour, gestures and facial expressions.

One of the main things we taught our staff was how to look after their own mental health. 32 members of staff benefited, most of them members of mobile teams helping people in rural areas across southwestern Ukraine. By learning more about maintaining mental well-being we plan to extend this with new colleagues, particularly those in a formerly occupied region where the battles have been hardest fought.

Seeing new strengths in members of staff, we are keen to help them develop these further. One of our successes is a psychologist with our mobile brigades, whom we supported to apply for and win the post of programme coordinator in a psychological wellbeing programme. In addition, she has been appointed an adviser to the regional governor on psychological wellbeing. We all felt part of her achievement! These days we are so used to sharing stories of woe that we have forgotten how important it is to feel proud of the success of others.

Whilst we have been working, the number of vulnerable groups has been increasing, particularly one new group: the mothers, wives and children of those killed in the war, taken prisoner or lost without trace. With each month, the number of requests grows for support from widows or wives of prisoners of war or wives whose husbands have been wounded and have returned home almost as strangers unable to get back into civilian life.

Working with these groups requires specific skills and a high level of resilience. There are so many nuances that you have to consider when planning group therapy with different groups of beneficiaries. For example, it is not a good idea to include in one group IDPs together with widows whose husbands died in the area where the IDPs came from.

Many women are embarrassed to see a psychologist and say, "how can a psychologist help me with my problems, they aren't going to bring my husband back to me!" We need to conduct informal work to make it more acceptable to see a psychologist. So we plan a project called "Mental Brunch" – informal meetings with psychologists, life coaches and art therapists in a café over a cup of coffee where the specialists will talk about their work to help people preserve their mental health and stabilise their emotional welfare.

Workshop in the Carpathians, October 2023



From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion was still running at the end of 2023, with partners implementing the second phase of their projects (the project finished at the end of March 2024). BEARR is exploring how the work initiated through the grant can be developed and continued.

Sharing: Building partnerships, sharing knowledge and networking

An important part of BEARR's work involves sharing good practice and building partnerships between CSOs in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, and with organisations in the UK, through our annual conference, regular lectures, webinars and our newsletters and social media presence. In 2023, the Ukraine Appeal continued to provide a major focus for our networking activity, with our events and newsletters raising awareness of our Appeal and the role of smaller CSOs, as well as helping us to raise further funds.

Annual conference

BEARR's annual conference took place on 17 November on the subject of **Ukraine: Community support for mental health, resilience and recovery**. Discussions showcased the inspiring work being done by small, local organisations to address the huge challenges of providing health

and social support for millions of people who have been internally displaced and otherwise damaged by the war. The conference was a hybrid event, with about 70 participants joining online, from Ukraine and other countries, and 40 people attending in person at Voluntary Action Islington in London. There were two panel sessions and a plenary discussion, moderated by BEARR Trustees.

Annual conference 2023



Panellists from Ukraine discussed a variety of innovative, community-based projects, many enabled by funding from BEARR's Ukraine Appeal. These included:

- Use of 'seed boxes' to help internally displaced people (IDPs) adapt to rural life in Western Ukraine
- Art therapy workshops for children of families who have been displaced
- Provision of long-term accommodation and support services for IDPs in Dnipro
- Mental health and other support services for various vulnerable groups in Odesa
- A helpline dedicated to averting suicides among veterans and the wider community.

Panellists described how their thinking was evolving, from the day-to-day survival mode of 2022 to more strategic planning for the next year and beyond. There was a general recognition among them that even if the war stopped tomorrow, the recovery – and the need for their services – would take many years: a generation or more. Some historical perspective on this was provided by looking at the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina and lessons that could be learned from that country's reconstruction and development after war in the 1990s. The conference also highlighted the role of *From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion* in raising the importance of protecting the mental health and morale of staff and volunteers who run vital services.

Lectures and webinars

30th Anniversary Lecture

2022 was The BEARR Trust's thirtieth anniversary year. While an anniversary ought to be a time of celebration, 2022 saw Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the return of war to Europe and

a humanitarian crisis. BEARR has once again supported emergency assistance, as we did in the early 1990s – this time through a network of civil society organisations in Ukraine and Moldova which are providing relief and rebuilding.

In March 2023, Sir Malcolm Rifkind - the UK's Defence Secretary and Foreign Secretary during BEARR's early years in the 1990s - gave our anniversary lecture, with questions chaired by Sir Roderic Lyne, the former British Ambassador to Moscow. The lecture was held at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's new headquarters at Canary Wharf: like BEARR, the EBRD was also established in the early 1990s, and we have been grateful for the Bank's support over many years.

30th Anniversary Lecture



Spring and autumn lectures

Regular lectures are important in engaging with a wider audience, as well as in raising funds. In September 2023, **Professor Robert van Voren** gave our autumn lecture on the theme of “War in Ukraine and mental health: the long-term consequences”, with funds raised split between BEARR and the Human Rights in Mental Health – FGIP Foundation.

Webinars and other events

In February, we ran a webinar introducing our **Small Grants Scheme** and explaining the theme for 2023 and what we are looking for when we assess an application. The webinar was helpful in supporting the quality of applications and in demonstrating our friendly and accessible approach. We ran the webinar again for the 2024 SGS and intend to continue running support webinars for the SGS in future years.

We have also engaged with a range of different audiences through talks and events with other partners. For example, BEARR's chairman, Nicola Ramsden, spoke on our work in supporting the humanitarian front in Ukraine in a podcast from the Centre for Eastern European and Eurasian Studies at the University of Southampton.

Website, newsletters and social media

Our website and regular newsletters are crucial in driving awareness of our work and in raising the profile of community-based organisations and health and welfare in the region. Nearly 17,800 people visited the website in 2023 – somewhat fewer than the 20,700 in 2022, perhaps

reflecting the prominence of the invasion of Ukraine and the early months of the Appeal. Our newsletter mailing list is substantially higher than it was before the war, and we also run Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts, as well as a YouTube channel, which is important in disseminating our lectures and webinars to a wider audience.

Networking activity in the region

The core of our networking activity in the region was via *From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion* and the workshop linked with it, described earlier. In addition, a BEARR Trustee, Jane Ebel, and BEARR's Information Officer travelled to Moldova in spring 2023, visiting a number of partners.

In recent years, we have been unable to deliver a conference in the BEARR region, given the impact of Covid-19 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, we would like to run a further conference, building on the success of previous conferences held in Lviv and Chisinau, and we have started to discuss potential options.

Developing new collaborations

BEARR Trustees have continued to engage with conferences and other events run by other organisations, including Chatham House and the Global Fund for Community Foundations and we have also sought to extend our understanding of the international aid provided by other agencies, especially to Ukraine and Moldova. In addition, several Trustees have been engaged in local partnerships to support Ukraine within their own communities and networks, and this has enabled us to provide advice and benefit from funding opportunities.

We have built a positive relationship with the British Embassy in Kyiv, as a result of *From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion*. We had extensive dialogue with them during the project and they were very interested in its progress. We have also had more contact with other organisations working in Ukraine, which might potentially offer funding support to partners. This includes a discussion with a UK-based church group working in Dnipro, and we were able to provide references on behalf of partners to international donors.

3. Governance and management

Constitution and regulation

The BEARR Trust is constituted by a Declaration of Trust dated 27 April 1992 and Supplemental Deed of Variation dated 14 December 1995.

The BEARR Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales. Its registered charity number is 1011086.

The BEARR Trust is registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

Trustees

At the end of 2023, BEARR had 13 **Trustees**, including our Chairman, Nicola Ramsden.

Trustees who served at any point in 2023 are:

- Megan Bick
- Jane Ebel
- Charles Garrett (appointed December 2023)
- Ross Gill
- Helen Goodman (appointed December 2023)
- Janet Gunn
- Ali Lantukh (resigned July 2024)
- Ann Lewis
- Marcia Levy
- Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay (resigned December 2023)
- Nicola Ramsden
- Michael Rasell
- Sam Thorne (appointed December 2023)
- Sabrina Vashisht (appointed December 2023)
- Charlie Walker (resigned December 2023)

During the year, two Trustees resigned at the end of their terms of office, but retained their links with BEARR as Special Advisers. Following a recruitment round in the autumn, we were pleased to welcome four new Trustees in December. In addition, Clare Brooks joined us as a Trustee in April 2024.

Our new Trustees bring a wealth of experience, from Parliament, the diplomatic service, journalism, higher education and the international aid sector, and these new appointments ensure that we continue to refresh BEARR's focus and develop new thinking.

Appointment and training of Trustees

Trustees are appointed by a resolution of the Trustees. Potential Trustees are sought through recommendation by existing Trustees, or through advertising.

Since 2014, new Trustees have been appointed for a period of three years, renewable by mutual agreement.

All Trustees are given a copy of the Charity Commission publication, 'The Essential Trustee: An Introduction', and are referred to the full version of this document on the Charity Commission website and to The BEARR Trust's annual report and accounts.

New Trustees are given an induction pack consisting of The BEARR Trust's governing documents, minutes of the most recent meetings of Trustees, and policies and process notes prepared by Trustees and volunteers, describing all aspects of BEARR's operations.

Trustee meetings and roles

Meetings of the full Trustee Board are held every two months.

Trustees frequently take responsibility for specific areas of work, such as the conference and the website. In 2022, we established a Ukraine Appeal Working Group to assess applications to the Appeal and maintain track of progress. We also continued to operate an editorial sub-group for the Newsletter. At the end of the year, we launched a new review of our IT infrastructure, led by a new Trustee: this will take place in 2024 and will support BEARR's ongoing resilience.

Patrons

The BEARR Trust is supported by 11 Patrons, who are senior figures in public life. Our Patrons in 2023 were:

- Vladimir Ashkenazy
- Elena Bashkistrova Barenboim
- Robert Brinkley CMG
- Lady Ellen Dahrendorf
- Myra Green OBE
- Bridget Kendall MBE
- Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG
- Michael McCulloch

- Mike Simmonds
- Dr Robert van Voren, PhD, FRCPsych (Hon),
- Sir Andrew Wood GCMG

Volunteers

Volunteers make an important contribution to news research, translation, social media and financial supervision. We estimate that voluntary work, including by Trustees, is worth some £60,000 each year to BEARR.

We aim to ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers, whether a Trustee or the Information Officer. BEARR provides interesting opportunities for volunteers of any age and at any stage of their career, including students and recent graduates. We particularly welcome volunteers with knowledge of the region and/or of its languages.

A significant amount of BEARR's work is also done by Trustees who manage operations *pro bono* in addition to their trustee duties.

In 2023, we appointed three volunteer Special Advisers, supporting the work of the Trustees. These are Charlie Walker, who finished his term as a Trustee in 2023 and will become BEARR's Academic Adviser, building links with the research community; Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay, who also completed her Trustee term in 2023 and will advise on long-term strategy; and Armorer Wason, who has extensive experience of working with CSOs and managing projects in the region. The Special Adviser role is a new one, and reflects BEARR's increased activity and our desire to draw on a wide range of expertise.

Staff

Historically, BEARR has been supported by a freelance Information and Administration Officer. In view of the increased workload following the Ukraine Appeal, we transitioned this to a permanent, part-time position, directly employed by The BEARR Trust. Alexia Claydon held this role during 2023, and was succeeded by Valdonė Šniukaitė in early 2024. In addition, Anna Lukanina-Morgan, a former Information Officer, has continued to provide invaluable support on a freelance basis, especially in support of the Small Grants Scheme and the annual conference.

Networks

Networking is a key aspect of BEARR's charitable work, which depends on maintaining an active network of Trustees, Patrons, supporters and volunteers.

We connect with other charities involved with countries in our area of interest through our website, newsletters, annual and regional conferences, and workshops. Online events since 2020 have enabled participation from a much wider area than was possible previously.

We aim to develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including organising joint events where possible. Our academic Trustees help to design our

CSO surveys and are able to use some of the findings in their own research and publications. We were pleased to welcome several academics to our London conference in 2023.

Policies

In response to The BEARR Trust's increased size and complexity and the need to meet the requirements of a wider range of donors, we adopted several new policies in 2023. Including policies already adopted, our full suite of policies at the end of 2023 was:

- Code of Conduct for Trustees
- Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Expenses and Reimbursements Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Sanctions, Financial Abuse and Terrorism Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

These policies are all subject to regular review.

Risk management

The Trustees have considered the main risks that might prevent BEARR from fulfilling its charitable objectives. Our approach has been reviewed and updated in the light of the increase in BEARR's activities since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. Alongside the Risk Management Policy, a consolidated risk register is in place and is regularly reviewed by the Trustees.

Independent examiner

Lucy Hammond

Kreston Reeves LLP

9 Donnington Park, 85 Birdham Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO20 7AJ

Bankers

CAF Bank

25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

4. Financial review

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the current statutory requirements and comply with the Charity's governing document and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued in January 2019.

Financial performance

The financial performance of the Charity for the year is set out in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Total income for the Charity was £244,576 (2022: £450,617). Although lower than in the previous year, income remained substantially higher than in the years before the start of the Ukraine Appeal. In 2023, income consisted of:

- £77,328 in unrestricted funds (known as the 'General Fund') (2022: £68,524).
- £122,248 in a restricted fund for the Ukraine Appeal (2022: £382,093). Of this, £43,190 was received in the form of grants from charitable bodies, and the remainder from individual donations and fundraising events.
- £45,000 in a restricted fund from the UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund managed by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (2022: nil). This supported our project 'From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion' in Ukraine.

Total expenditure for the year was £236,620 (2022: £415,881). This consisted of:

- £78,334 in unrestricted expenditure. Of this, £36,431 was on the Small Grants Scheme (2022: £44,473)⁴.
- £121,349 in restricted expenditure on the Ukraine Appeal (2022: £334,389). It should be noted that all restricted expenditure was on direct grant payments to civil society organisations for humanitarian activity in Ukraine and Moldova, with all administrative costs paid for from unrestricted funds.
- £36,937 in restricted expenditure on the FCDO-funded 'From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion' project (2022: nil)

Consequently, the Charity made an overall surplus of £7,956 in the year (2022: £34,735). This consisted of:

- A deficit in unrestricted funds of £1,006 (2022: deficit of £12,968).
- A surplus on the restricted Ukraine Appeal of £899 (2022: surplus of £47,704).
- A surplus on the FCDO-funded project of £8,063 (all of which must be spent as a condition of grant by 31 March 2024).

Cash at bank and in hand on 31 December 2023 was £87,904 (2022: £88,285).

⁴ Including the costs of transfers and monitoring and evaluation

Reserves policy

The Trustees seek to maintain an adequate level of reserves to enable the Charity to carry on its activities in the event of financial difficulties, to enable restructuring if necessary and the avoidance of unplanned closure. To support this, the Trustees seek to hold unrestricted reserves equivalent to at least six months of annual General Fund expenditure, excluding grant payments. Based on expenditure in 2023, this would equate to £20,988.

This level of reserves had been achieved at the end of the year. Total unrestricted funds on 31 December 2023 were £40,386 (2022: £41,373). No funds were held as fixed assets.

The view of the Trustees at the end of 2023 was that the overall position of the Charity and the balance of funds were sufficient to enable the Charity to operate, and that there were sufficient liquid assets to enable restricted and unrestricted funds to be applied as necessary.

Fundraising

The BEARR Trust is reliant on grants and donations from a wide range of charitable trusts, philanthropic organisations and private individuals. To support our efforts, we operate a Friends scheme, to encourage regular donations, and we run an annual conference and a programme of lectures, which also encourages donations. In 2023, this included The BEARR Trust's 30th anniversary lecture (generously hosted by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), as well as our annual conference and an online lecture.

The Charity is registered with the Fundraising Regulator; consequently, everyone who supports us may be assured that we comply with the regulatory standards for fundraising. All our fundraising activities are managed in-house, and we do not pay for fundraising advice.

In 2023, £59,664 was received from a private trust as the third instalment of a five-year unrestricted annual grant. The Trustees would also like to acknowledge the generous support of the following organisations, all of which have provided larger donations:

- The Mulberry Trust
- The Network for Social Change Charitable Trust
- Just Trust

In addition, we benefited from two significant private fundraising initiatives led by BEARR supporters: sponsorship for the Rotterdam Marathon by Flora Hudson and a sale of original art by Ray Postill. Many other donors and benefactors have also supported the Charity, including church groups, private donors and charitable trusts which have asked that we respect their anonymity by not including them in this report. Some of these have made multi-year pledges, which will also ensure funding in 2024 and 2025. Many private donations were enabled by a link to CAF Donate via our website. £49,071 was secured in donations to the Ukraine Appeal via CAF Donate.

Grants and donations committed in 2023 include a donation of £15,000 from a private individual via the CAF American Donor Fund. This was subsequently received in 2024.

The Trustees are very grateful for the generosity of all our donors, especially during a great ongoing need to support community-based organisations at a time of war.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees 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).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees on 1 October 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Ross Gill, Treasurer



Nicola Ramsden, Chairman

5. Statement of Financial Activities

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account) for the year ending 31 December 2023

		2023			2022
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income from:	2				
Donations and legacies		74,082	166,033	240,115	448,713
Charitable activities		2,325	1,215	3,541	1,571
Investments		921	-	921	332
Total income		<u>77,328</u>	<u>167,248</u>	<u>244,576</u>	<u>450,617</u>
Expenditure on:	3				
Raising funds		3,173	-	3,173	3,353
Charitable activities		75,160	158,286	233,447	412,528
Total expenditure		<u>78,334</u>	<u>158,286</u>	<u>236,620</u>	<u>415,881</u>
Net movement in funds		<u>- 1,006</u>	<u>8,962</u>	<u>7,956</u>	<u>34,735</u>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		41,373	47,704	89,077	54,342
Net movement in funds		- 1,006	8,962	7,956	34,735
Total funds carried forward		<u>40,368</u>	<u>56,666</u>	<u>97,034</u>	<u>89,077</u>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Balance sheet at 31 December 2023

		2023			2022
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total this year	Total
	Note	£	£	£	£
Current assets					
Debtors	8	270	15,000	15,270	5,179
Cash at bank and in hand	10	46,238	41,666	87,904	88,285
Total current assets		46,508	56,666	103,174	93,465
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	6,141	-	6,141	4,387
Net current assets/(liabilities)		40,368	56,666	97,034	89,077
Total assets less current liabilities		40,368	56,666	97,034	89,077
Total net assets or liabilities		40,368	56,666	97,034	89,077
Funds of the Charity	12				
Restricted income funds			56,666	56,666	47,704
Unrestricted funds		40,368		40,368	41,373
Total funds		40,368	56,666	97,034	89,077

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 1 October 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Ross Gill, Treasurer



Nicola Ramsden, Chairman

Notes to the financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2023

Note 1: Accounting policies

Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - 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) (effective 1 January 2019).

The BEARR Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in British Pounds (£) and are rounded to the nearest Pound.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The Trustees have considered the level of funds held for 12 months from authorising these financial statements.

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 income receivable can be measured reliably.

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet.

No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

No legacies were received during the accounting period.

One Government grant, from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), was received during the accounting period.

Gift Aid

Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.

In practice, most donations from private individuals are received via CAF Donate, which processes Gift Aid on the Charity's behalf. CAF Donate Gift Aid receipts are therefore included within the overall donation value.

Donated goods and services

No donated goods or services were received in the accounting period.

Voluntary help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts.

However, the Charity relies on significant in-kind support from volunteers and Trustees. Volunteer time is estimated at around 100 hours per year. Trustee time is substantially in excess of this, although we do not formally maintain timesheet records.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets costing £2,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably. However, the Charity held no tangible fixed assets in 2023.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount.

Cash in bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less. In practice, this applies to all of the Charity's cash assets.

Fund accounting

The General Fund is an unrestricted fund which is available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which is not designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. In 2023, the Charity maintained two restricted funds:

- The Ukraine Appeal, established to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to people in Ukraine and Moldova who have been impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This was established following the Russian invasion in 2022.
- A restricted fund to manage the grant from the FCDO's UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund. This was awarded for the first time in 2023.

Note 2: Analysis of income

		2023			2022
		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £
Donations and legacies:	Donations and legacies				
	Donations and gifts	7,146	77,843	84,989	276,829
	Gift Aid	382	-	382	365
	General grants provided by other charities and Government bodies	65,544	88,190	153,734	171,520
	Other	1,010	-	1,010	-
	Total	74,082	166,033	240,115	448,713
Charitable	Charitable activities				
	Lectures and conferences	2,325	1,215	3,541	1,571
	Total	2,325	1,215	3,541	1,571
Income from investments:	Investments				
	Interest income	921	-	921	332
	Total	921	-	921	332
Total income:	Total income	77,328	167,248	244,576	450,617

Total restricted income in 2022 was £382,093

Note 3: Analysis of expenditure

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Expenditure on raising funds						
Incurred seeking donations	1,304	-	1,304	1,162	-	1,162
Incurred seeking grants	1,304	-	1,304	1,162	-	1,162
Staging fundraising events	565	-	565	1,029	-	1,029
Total	3,173	-	3,173	3,353	-	3,353
Expenditure on charitable activities						
Small Grants Scheme	36,431	-	36,431	44,473	-	44,473
Ukraine Appeal	850	121,349	122,199	718	334,389	335,107
FCDO project	-	36,937	36,937	-	-	-
Information and Networking	4,981	-	4,981	4,067	-	4,067
Administration and Governance	32,897	-	32,897	28,882	-	28,882
Total	75,160	158,286	233,447	78,140	334,389	412,528
Total expenditure	78,334	158,286	236,620	81,493	334,389	415,881

	2023				2022			
	Direct activities	Grant funding	Support costs	Total	Direct activities	Grant funding	Support costs	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Small Grants Scheme	-	35,946	485	36,431	-	43,725	748	44,473
Ukraine Appeal	-	121,349	850	122,199	1,000	333,389	718	335,107
FCDO project	9,661	26,000	1,276	36,937	-	-	0	0
Information and networking	3,554	-	1,428	4,981	3,443	-	624	4,067
Administration and governance	-	-	32,897	32,897	-	-	28,882	28,882
Total	13,215	183,295	36,937	233,447	4,443	377,114	30,972	412,528

Note 4: Analysis of support costs

Support costs are apportioned as follows:

2023

	Small Grants Scheme £	Ukraine Appeal £	FCDO project £	Information & networking £	Admin & governance £	Total £	Basis of allocation
Small Grants Scheme - Monitoring & Evaluation	355					355	Actual costs of monitoring and evaluation incurred
Small Grants Scheme - Finance costs	130					130	Actual costs in transferring funds to SGS beneficiaries
Ukraine Appeal - Finance costs		850				850	Actual costs incurred in transferring funds to Ukraine Appeal beneficiaries
FCDO - Finance costs			170			170	Actual costs incurred in transferring funds to FCDO project beneficiaries
Information and networking				1,428		1,428	80% of funds spent on website and IT costs (the remaining 20% are allocated to Fundraising)
Administration and governance - Small Grants Scheme	4,114					4,114	100% of time of SGS Support Officer
Administration and governance - FCDO			1,106			1,106	Costs associated with Activity 1 (Support) for the FCDO funded project (other than finance costs)
Administration and governance - General					28,784	28,784	90% of all Information & Admin Officer time, plus all workstation rent, insurance and governance costs.
Other						-	
Total	4,599	850	1,276	1,428	28,784	36,937	

2022

	Small Grants Scheme £	Ukraine Appeal £	FCDO project £	Information & networking £	Admin & governance £	Grand total £	Basis of allocation (Describe method)
Small Grants Scheme - monitoring and evaluation	748			-	-	748	Actual costs of monitoring and evaluation incurred
Ukraine Appeal - Finance costs		718				718	Actual costs incurred in transferring funds to Ukraine Appeal beneficiaries
Website and IT costs				624	-	624	Actual costs incurred on website and IT costs
Administration and governance	1,680			-	27,202	28,882	Est. 10% of Information & Administration Officer time to Fundraising; 90% to Admin & Governance. SGS Support time 100% support costs to SGS. Remaining workstation rent, insurance and governance costs as actual.
Other	-	-		-	-	-	
Total	2,428	718	-	624	27,202	30,972	

Note 5: Fees for the examination of the accounts

The cost of independent examination of the accounts for 2023 is £2,160 including VAT (2022: £1,980). This will be paid in 2024 and is included in the accounts as a creditor.

Note 6: Paid employees

From February 2023, the Charity employed a part-time Information and Administration Officer. Previously, this role had been fulfilled by a self-employed freelancer.

Total costs of employment in 2023 were:

	2023
	£
Salaries and wages	20,185
Social security costs	-
Pension costs	418
Other employee benefits	-
Total staff costs	20,604

Note 7: Grants

In 2023, the Charity paid £183,295 in grants to third party organisations (2022: £377,114). These were made up of:

- Grants via the Small Grants Scheme: £35,946 (2022: £43,725). This consisted of 10 grants to support partnerships between two or more civil society organisations promoting the health and welfare of vulnerable people.
- Emergency humanitarian assistance grants via the main Ukraine Appeal: £112,927 (2022: £333,389). This consisted of 66 individual grants.
- Grants to support the organisational resilience and staff welfare of civil society organisations funded through the Ukraine Appeal: £8,423. This consisted of 8 grants, funded via the restricted Ukraine Appeal
- Grants through the FCDO-funded project, From Group Therapy to Community Cohesion: £26,000. This consisted of 12 grants.

Note 8: Debtors

Total debtors were £15,270 in 2023 (2022 £5,179). These were made up of Gift Aid claims due (£270) and a donation from a private individual held at the end of the year within the CAF American Donor Fund (£15,000), which will be received in 2024.

Note 9: Creditors

Total creditors were £6,141 in 2023 (2022: £4,387). These were made up of employee costs for work carried out in December 2023, payments to suppliers for goods received in 2023, expense claims relating to 2023 and the cost of independent examination of the accounts.

Note 10: Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at the bank and in hand was as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash at bank and on hand	87,558	87,940
Other	345	345
Total	87,904	88,285

'Other' cash relates to £345 held in a dormant PayPal account.

Note 11: Exposure to financial risk

The Charity's exposure to financial risk is assessed as follows:

- **Credit risk:** Low. The only debtors relate to Gift Aid payments yet to be claimed, and a donation currently held by the CAF American Trust Fund which we have yet to receive. No payments have been advanced against this funding.
- **Liquidity risk:** Low. There is no liquidity risk in relation to the Ukraine Appeal, since no grants are issued unless funds are already received. BEARR's Reserves Policy sought to maintain a year's core expenditure less the costs of the Small Grant Scheme.
- **Market risk:** Zero. The BEARR Trust has no investments. All funds are held in CAF Bank accounts, or in accounts with international payment providers (in the case of the latter, only a minimal amount is held to meet immediate needs).

Note 12: Funds analysis

Movement within The BEARR Trust's restricted and unrestricted funds is set out below:

2023

Fund	Restricted/ unrestricted	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Fund balances carried forward £
General Fund	Unrestricted	No restrictions	41,373	77,328	-	40,368
Ukraine Appeal	Restricted	Restricted to use on direct support for humanitarian assistance to people in Ukraine and Moldova impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine	47,704	122,248	-	48,603
FCDO - UK Conflict, Stability and Security Fund	Restricted	Restricted to the implementation of project 'Fron Group Therapy to Community Cohesion' funded by the	-	45,000	-	8,063
Total Funds			89,077	244,576	-	236,620

2022

Fund names	Restricted/ unrestricted	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Fund balances carried forward £
General Fund	Unrestricted	No restrictions	54,342	68,524	-	41,373
Ukraine Appeal	Restricted	Restricted to use on direct support for humanitarian assistance to people in Ukraine and Moldova impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine	-	382,093	-	47,704
Total Funds			54,342	450,617	-	415,881

Note 13: Transactions with Trustees and related parties

No Trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with the Charity or a related entity.

£14,860 was received by Trustees in reimbursements (2022: £145,524). This consisted of:

- Trustee expenses and reimbursements for goods and subscriptions purchased:

	2023 £	2022 £
Travel	728	656
Subsistence	210	75
Accommodation	349	297
Other	4,419	2,313
Total	5,706	3,341

- Reimbursement for grants paid to beneficiaries of the Ukraine Appeal: £9,155 (2022: £142,183). This applied to six Ukraine Appeal grant payments, where Trustees arranged initial payment and were subsequently repaid.

At the end of the year, the charity owed £531 to Trustees in reimbursements due.

The much lower volume of Trustee reimbursements in 2023 is explained by the improved systems adopted since the Ukraine Appeal was established, enabling the great majority of grants to be transferred through the Charity's main international payments provider, Convera.

Trustees made direct donations of £660 in 2023, in addition to contributions to the Ukraine Appeal made via CAF Donate.

There were no other related party transactions in 2023.

6. Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The BEARR Trust

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

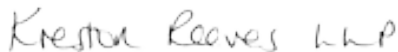
Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

This report is made solely to the Charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.

Signed: 

Dated: 29 October 2024

Lucy Hammond Bsc FCA

Kreston Reeves LLP

Chartered Accountants

9 Donnington Park, 85 Birdham Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 7AJ

The BEARR Trust

Voluntary Action Islington

200a Pentonville Road

London N1 9JP

+44 (0)20 7922 7849

info@bearr.org | www.bearr.org

Charity registered in England and Wales No. **1011086**

THE BEARR TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1011086

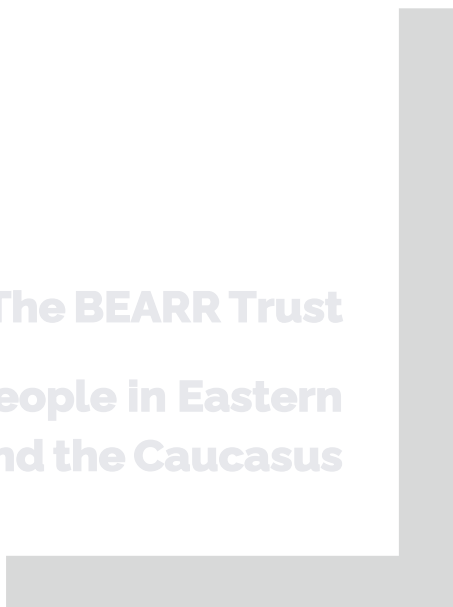
Accounts



THE BEARR TRUST ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS 2022

The BEARR Trust

**Supporting vulnerable people in Eastern
Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus**



Highlights of 2022

- Our Ukraine Emergency Appeal, funded by more than 1,000 donors, provided almost £340,000 for local partners in Ukraine and Moldova to buy emergency supplies and provide care and shelter for vulnerable people. Emergency funding continued in 2023, with the Appeal fund exceeding £500,000 by mid-year.
- We awarded a record 21 grants under a redesigned Small Grants Scheme, for projects to improve the social welfare of migrant workers and the wellbeing of their families, and for projects to improve the organisational resilience and to support the wellbeing of staff and volunteers in small civil society organisations.
- We held our first hybrid-format annual conference on the theme of civil society response to the war in Ukraine, with speakers joining online – sometimes under difficult conditions – from Ukraine and Moldova.
- Online discussions and lectures by trauma surgeon David Nott, BEARR Patron Bridget Kendall, and journalist Edward Lucas raised funds for BEARR's Ukraine Appeal and for the Nott Foundation.

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Contact Information

Registered charity number 1011086

Letter from the Chairman

The BEARR Trust's activities in 2022 were dominated by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the launch of our Ukraine Emergency Appeal in response. By May 2023 the Ukraine Emergency Appeal fund, including pledges, had passed £500,000. We are still raising funds and we are grateful to donors who have already pledged money for future years. This will help us to develop our support for the community-based organisations that are playing a key role in providing humanitarian aid to vulnerable people.

In the thirty years since The BEARR Trust was established in 1991, and formally registered as a charity in 1992, we have worked only in a context of peace. Like many other organisations active in Eastern Europe, the war has transformed our role and has expanded our operations significantly. It is remarkable that we managed a ten-fold increase in numbers of grants sent to local partners in 2022 without major organisational change and while maintaining our regular Small Grants Scheme for other countries in the region as well as our information and networking services.

That we have done so is testimony to the experience of our Trustee team, who already managed the charity as volunteers and who stepped up their commitment overnight to run the Ukraine Appeal in addition to BEARR's other activities. In turn, the Trustees could not have done this without the administration and communication skills of our Information Officer – a post that passed from Louisa Long to Alexia Claydon in February 2022. Recognising how integral to BEARR's operations the Information Officer role had become, we made it a formal part-time employee position from 2023. So far, this is the only administrative adjustment we have made to cope with the scaling-up of our work.

This is not BEARR's first experience of providing humanitarian aid, because the charity's initial activities in 1991-2 involved transporting medical supplies following the collapse of the Soviet Union. This time, however, our humanitarian aid is being delivered by the small, local, community-based organisations that were in their infancy thirty years ago. In that sense, our method of providing humanitarian relief is based on the underlying evolution of our approach and is consistent with our core principles – trusting local people to know what is needed and giving them the means to try out new ideas and to cooperate with each other.

I would like to thank my colleagues, the many hundreds of donors who have supported BEARR, and our partners in Ukraine, Moldova and elsewhere for their generosity. In 2022 we deepened our relationships with existing partners and established new contacts. What has been achieved so far demonstrates what small community-based organisations can do. I hope that a strengthening civil society will shape an eventual peace.

Nicola Ramsden, Chairman

The BEARR Trust's Objectives and Activities

The BEARR Trust is a UK-based, English-registered charity that helps vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

History of The BEARR Trust

The BEARR Trust was formed in 1991 in response to healthcare problems in the last years of the Soviet Union's existence, and to shortages of medical supplies in the economic crisis following its sudden collapse. The founders of The BEARR Trust, led from Moscow by Lady Jill Braithwaite (whose husband, Sir Rodric Braithwaite, had become British Ambassador to the USSR in 1988), coordinated deliveries by lorry of emergency humanitarian and medical supplies from the UK to various cities in Russia, to Dagestan, and to Georgia. *BEARR* originally stood for *British Emergency Aid to Russia and the Republics*.

The BEARR Trust was formally constituted in 1992 to act as a bridge between the health and welfare sectors of Britain and the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union. During the 1990s The BEARR Trust became a pioneering support organisation for new grass-roots voluntary groups in the region, sharing knowledge, skills and contacts with the formal aims of:

- protecting and preserving good health, both physical and mental
- relieving and rehabilitating those suffering from physical or mental disabilities
- advancing education and training, both academic and vocational, for those involved in the voluntary sector.

Since the 1990s The BEARR Trust has aimed to promote and support cooperation between civil society organisations (CSOs) working to improve health and social welfare within the region, and with those doing similar work in the UK.

In 2006 The BEARR Trust inaugurated its Small Grants Scheme in order to further strengthen support for CSOs in the region. The Small Grants Scheme has developed into one of the key planks of our approach, encouraging local decision-making and autonomy. The network of partnerships established over the years was unexpectedly turned to effective use for the delivery of emergency supplies to Ukraine and Moldova in 2022 following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In contrast to 1991 and 1992, The BEARR Trust does not organise physical deliveries of aid itself but sends funds to local partners to enable them to quickly provide help where it is needed most urgently.

Where and how we work

Until 2022 our work focussed on the following countries of the former Soviet Union: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan. In 2022 we stopped offering grants to organisations in Russia or Belarus, although we continue to report on

health and social welfare developments in those countries in our newsletters and on our website.

The BEARR Trust has two main strands of activity, which we characterise as **supporting** and **sharing**. Our **supporting** activities are based on grants for small-scale health and social welfare projects. Our **sharing** activities consist of networking and information services, including regular newsletters linked to content on our website, conferences, lectures, and workshops. Our partners include CSOs, academics, research institutions, health professionals, and students.

Our supporting and sharing activities are connected and mutually reinforcing through our system of project reports and evaluation, and follow-up conferences or workshops. They are designed to:

- encourage innovation, imagination and independence in organisations committed to reform in the health and social welfare sectors
- provide flexible and light-touch small grants to assist selected organisations to launch or extend partnerships
- share connections and help organisations working in the region to identify potential partners
- share experience, ideas, good practice, and lessons learned
- lobby with and on behalf of organisations that share our aims.

Although The BEARR Trust was not involved in emergency relief for almost three decades until 2022, we have adapted and built on our fundamental principles of supporting and sharing to enable local CSOs to provide emergency supplies and care to vulnerable people within Ukraine and Moldova. As this work continues in 2023 we are encouraging CSOs to work together to improve their effectiveness and increase their influence with local authorities and government.

The BEARR Trust is the only UK-based charity working in this region that combines grant-giving and networking services: BEARR was a pioneer and remains unique.

Public Benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Trustees have considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

The Global Goals

Our work also sits within the broader framework of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (the Global Goals), which emphasise collaboration across all sectors of government and society. The seventeen Global Goals are interrelated, and BEARR's work is relevant to several:

- Good Health and Wellbeing
- Quality Education

The BEARR Trust Annual Report and Accounts 2022

- Gender Equality
- Reduced Inequalities
- Partnerships for the Goals.

Achievements and Performance in 2022

The BEARR Trust Ukraine Emergency Appeal

We launched our Ukraine Emergency Appeal on 27 February 2022, just three days after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Origin of the Appeal: BEARR's network of contacts in Ukraine and Moldova

The day after the invasion, we published a statement of sadness and solidarity with our partners in Ukraine, their families, and the people they support. One of our partners in Ukraine responded immediately, *"You have no idea how important it is for us to feel that we are not alone ..."* and offered cooperation to distribute aid.

BEARR's Trustees quickly realised that our network of links with more than 40 civil society organisations in Ukraine and Moldova (which was receiving large numbers of refugees), could be a fast and efficient channel for assistance to people in need. We organised a working group of Trustees and the Information Officer to design an Appeal and start contacting our local partners. Meanwhile, two Trustees prepared to travel to Moldova to support our partners there and to understand what was happening on the ground.

Donations to the Appeal: overwhelming generosity

Donations to the Appeal multiplied in the hours following its launch. BEARR Patron Robert Brinkley had mentioned BEARR's work with small civil society organisations in a radio interview, which helped to raise our profile. We believe that donations were subsequently encouraged by our commitment to run the Appeal as volunteers and to charge no costs to the Appeal, unless by prior agreement with a specific donor. This meant that we could spend 100% of funds raised on direct emergency aid distributed by our local partners.

In the early months, when very little international aid reached local organisations¹, our partners told us that BEARR's money was often the first to arrive and was sometimes the only source of emergency funds. We believe that evidence of our nimble and targeted response, reported on regularly on our website and social media, also encouraged donations.

As the war ground on, and Russian missiles targeted Ukraine's energy infrastructure, we made a renewed appeal in October 2022 for funds to provide winter support for vulnerable people. By the end of 2022 we had received donations and pledges for future years of some £460,000. Although the initial

¹ https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/Ukraine_review_June_2022

surge in donations inevitably did not maintain the same pace, fundraising has continued in 2023. The Appeal fund passed £500,000 in May 2023.

Ukraine Emergency Winter Appeal

BEARR is raising funds to buy emergency supplies for vulnerable people in Ukraine and Moldova throughout winter 2022-2023.

Every penny donated will be passed on quickly to our partners — local, grassroots NGOs who have been working tirelessly since February to provide food, shelter, clothing, medicine, transport and trauma support for hundreds of displaced and vulnerable people.

**BEARR is paying for any administrative costs and transfer fees itself.
100% of funds donated will be sent to our local partners in Ukraine and Moldova.**



Please **donate** via **BEARR.org**,
<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/19892>,
or scan the **QR code**.



Management of the Appeal: rapid response to local needs

The working group established in February 2022 has maintained regular communication with our partners, who numbered over 50 at end-2022. Trustees and the Information Officer have also made further visits to Moldova to support partners and collect detailed information on local needs.

Initially we worked through organisations we already knew and trusted: former recipients of grants from our Small Grants Scheme and participants in our regional conferences in Lviv (2016) and Chisinau (2019). We then extended our network through recommendations from contacts working in similar fields.

We aim to pass on donations as quickly as possible. We provide our partners with a simple request form for a maximum of £2,500, which can be repeated if needed, and we can react immediately to an emergency. For example, after bombs fell on the city of Zaporizhzhia in the early hours of 6 October 2022, we were contacted at 8am by two partner CSOs in the city who needed bedding, clothes and psychological support for people who had lost their homes. We approved the request and transferred funds by 10am.

Within the first 10 days of the Appeal we had raised over £100,000 and sent half of it to local partners. Thereafter in 2022 we kept up a disbursement rate closer to 70-80% of donations. By the end of 2022 we had sent around £340,000 to partners. This had risen to more than £400,000 by May 2023 and a disbursement rate of over 90%.

Types of assistance provided by the Appeal

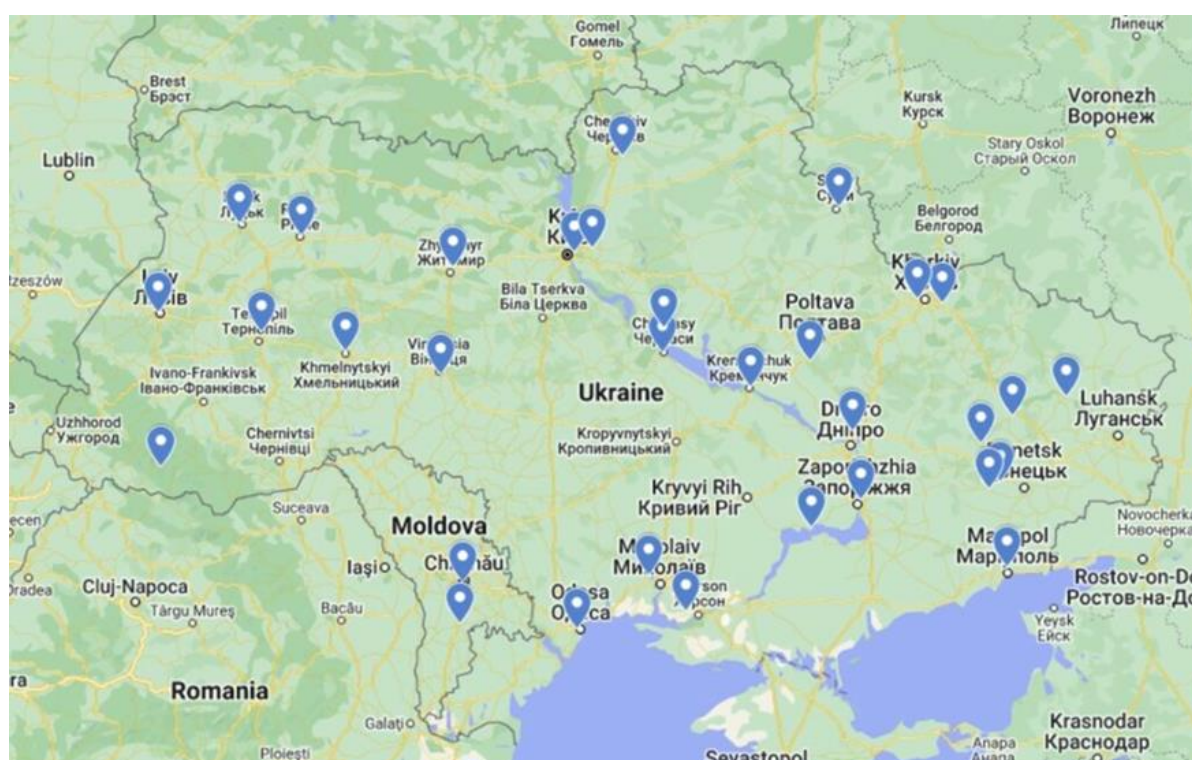
The donations we receive and pass on to our partners are typically spent immediately on food, hygiene packs, basic medical supplies, clothing, bedding, and fuel for transport. Funds are also used for psychological support and trauma counselling. The following table summarises items from reports sent by our partners:

Food packs (long-life)	Head torches
Fresh fruit and vegetables	Batteries and solar lights
Infant formula	Thermos flasks
Water	Electric blankets
Hot meals in refugee centres	Transport for evacuation of an old people's home
Refrigerators for refugee centre and maternity hospital	Fuel for distribution of international aid from warehouses
Hygiene and sanitary supplies	Basic refurbishment of refugee support centres
Medicines	Materials for training displaced people in new skills
First aid kits	Gardening tools and plants for displaced people and their hosts
Bedding	Psychological support and trauma counselling
Clothing	Art therapy classes for children
Insulated mats and blankets for bomb shelters	Games and colouring books for children in bomb shelters
Generators and fuel	Christmas / New Year gifts for children

Many of our partners are now providing more psychological support to deal with the effects of trauma and displacement. Some are working on projects to provide displaced people with new skills to help them into eventual employment. Despite the exhausting nature of their work, several of our partner CSOs have built on their experience and extended their activities, sometimes linking up with similar organisations. When their projects grow beyond BEARR's funding capacity we support them to apply to larger funders and we are delighted that some have been successful in attracting international aid.

Distribution of emergency grants

Our emergency grants are distributed widely across Ukraine and Moldova, as the map below shows (approximate locations only).



Monitoring of Appeal funds

Our approach to monitoring Appeal funds follows the same principles as our Small Grants Scheme. We use an application form that tries to strike a balance between accessibility and simplicity and enough information for us to make decisions and allocate funds. We recognise that, in the circumstances of the war, many CSOs cannot manage complex application and reporting procedures and that even in normal times smaller community organisations find it difficult to access international aid because of onerous due diligence and monitoring requirements. Nevertheless, all recipients send reports on their expenditure, and we publish anonymised stories or summaries on the BEARR website to enable donors to follow the progress of the campaign.

As the amount of money we handled increased, and the number of partners we work with expanded, we introduced new checks and procedures to meet legal, banking, and donor know-your-client and compliance requirements. We also registered The BEARR Trust with the Fundraising Regulator.

We are indebted to the many hundreds of individual donors who donated to the Appeal, some repeatedly, and to those who organised imaginative fundraising events in 2022.

The BEARR Trust Small Grants Scheme

Since 2006, The BEARR Trust has operated a Small Grants Scheme (SGS) through which we have made awards to small health and social welfare groups in the region. Up to and including 2022, BEARR has awarded 142 small grants throughout the region, totalling just over £365,000.

The SGS aims to support and encourage CSOs to:

- share experience and learning among CSOs with relevant aims
- disseminate good practice more widely in the region
- facilitate cooperation with and/or coordination among CSOs and other organisations working with relevant groups
- improve awareness, influence policy, or engage public institutions in addressing the relevant issues
- propose other, imaginative, ways of achieving the SGS's aims.

Administration of the Small Grants Scheme

Grants are awarded annually. Details of each year's themes and how to apply, are published on our website (www.bearr.org), on social media and in our newsletter. The BEARR Trust will match-fund up to half of a project's cost, subject to a maximum decided from year to year depending on available resources.

We are committed to ensuring that our Small Grants Scheme is **simple** in terms of process, **accessible** to the smaller community organisations that we aim to support, and **open** to new organisations with which we have not previously had a relationship.

Reflecting these aims, we organised a **webinar for prospective applicants** ahead of the 2022 application deadline in February 2022. Led by BEARR Trustee Ross Gill, more than 100 CSO representatives were guided through the application process and given advice on how to make a strong application. They also had an opportunity to hear from past grantees about their experience of the scheme. Details of the webinar can be found on BEARR's website:

<https://bearr.org/2022/02/11/report-bearrs-2022-small-grants-scheme-webinar/>.

Small Grants Scheme themes

Over the years, BEARR grants have covered diverse health and social welfare themes, often building on subjects discussed in our annual conferences. Themes have included mental health; attitudes to disability; drug dependency; homelessness; human trafficking; skills training for refugees and displaced people, prevention of violence to women and children; and reducing the social isolation of people living with disability.

Reports of completed projects are posted on the BEARR website, and reports of projects in 2022 are given below.

Monitoring and evaluation of projects

BEARR asks grant recipients to complete a simple monitoring form as soon as their project is completed. More detailed project reports are then commissioned as articles for the BEARR newsletter and annual report: these publicise the project and enable others with similar interests to make contact and exchange experience.

We try to avoid mechanical auditing and we ask grantees to be candid about how their projects went — we want to demystify the process and encourage an open and honest approach to learning from things that did not go as well as hoped. We try to encourage an iterative process that helps our grantees to reflect on their projects, recognise their achievements, and adapt to the changing needs of their communities.

BEARR Trustees, the Information Officer, the Small Grants Officer or other contacts use opportunities to visit project partners informally when they are travelling nearby. The Covid pandemic prevented project visits in 2020 and 2021 but in 2022 BEARR Trustee Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay was able to visit one of our project partners in Georgia, Union Women Center in Tbilisi. Trustees Megan Bick and Jane Ebel went to Moldova in March 2022 and supported former grantees who were now providing relief to refugees from Ukraine.

Sources of funding for the Small Grants Scheme in 2022

The principal source of funding for the 2022 Small Grants Scheme was a grant from a private foundation, increased by a grant from Just Trust and donations from individual BEARR supporters.

Themes, applications and awards in 2022

We redesigned the Small Grants Scheme in 2022 in order to include, for the first time, grants to strengthen civil society organisations (CSOs) to enable them to continue supporting vulnerable people. BEARR's 2021 survey of CSOs had highlighted the pandemic-related problems of CSO staff and volunteer funding and fatigue, and we wanted to respond to the need for core funding.

We therefore divided the SGS into two strands:

A: Projects to improve the social welfare of migrant workers and the wellbeing of their families

This part of BEARR's 2022 Small Grants Scheme sought applications from across Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia for projects to improve the social welfare of migrant workers and the wellbeing of their families. Labour migration is prevalent across the region, creating risks for the workers themselves and for their families left behind. Migrant workers were particularly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic as they were often the first people to lose their jobs and their ability to provide for their families.

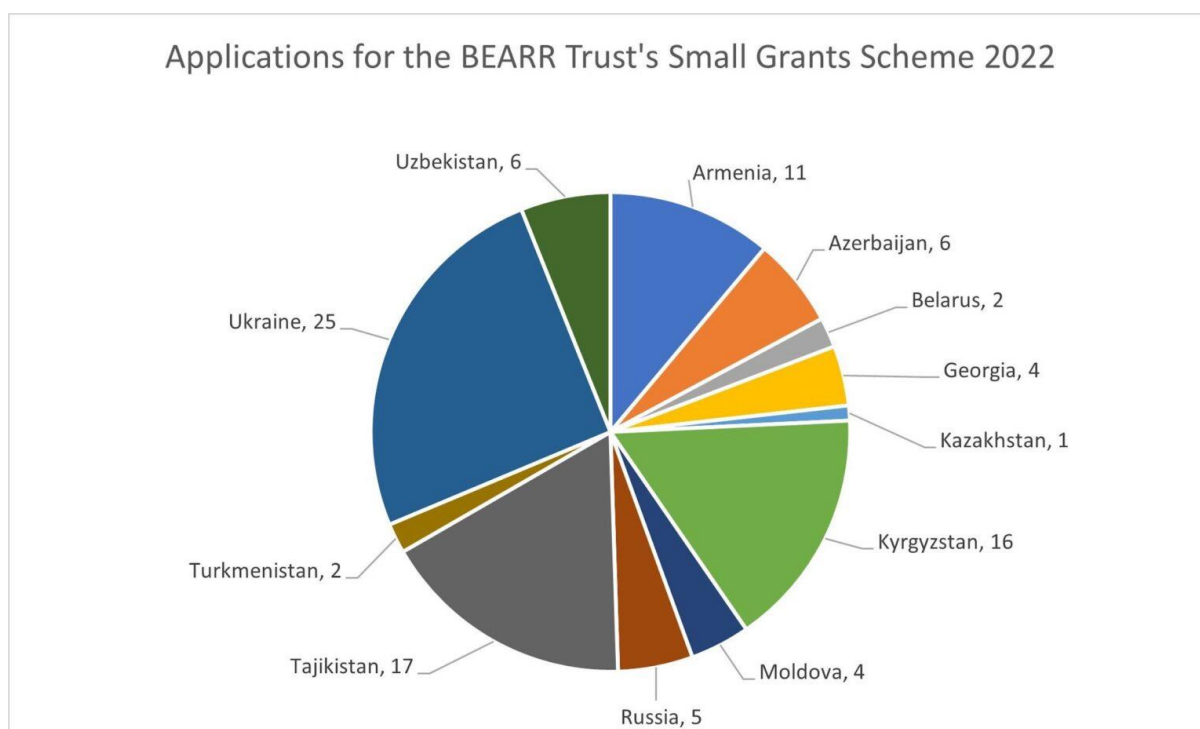
We welcomed applications from new and small CSOs and we asked for projects that would involve partnership with, or extend collaboration to, other organisations in the same country or in another country, and that would take an imaginative or unusual approach to the problems faced by migrant workers and their families.

B: Projects to improve the organisational resilience and support the wellbeing of staff and volunteers in organisations that had previously received grants from The BEARR Trust

Only previous BEARR grantees were eligible to apply for a grant under strand B.

We received a total of 98 applications from 12 countries, with at least one application from each of the countries in BEARR's region.

We awarded a record 21 grants, totalling £43,725.



Summary of 2022 Small Grants Scheme projects

A-strand projects

Baku Volunteer Centre, Azerbaijan

Grant awarded: £3,000

Project: To support young migrants and migrant women affected by the economic effects of COVID-19 with a series of training sessions and seminars. The project also seeks to raise awareness about migrant rights and gender-based violence. Read their project report [here](#).

Centre for Initiative Youth, Kyrgyzstan

Grant awarded: £2,930

Project: To provide free mental health support for labour migrants in order for them to improve their resilience and achieve their personal goals abroad.

Dialogue, Trust, Rights, Kyrgyzstan

Grant awarded: £2,954

Project: Training for teachers to provide psychological support for children of migrant workers. The project aims to work with 12 schools and over 800 children in the Batken province, where 14% of minors have at least one parent in migration. Read their project report [here](#).

Gurdofarid, Tajikistan

Grant awarded: £2,500

Project: To support unemployed families of migrant workers, women and girls aged 18-65. Beneficiaries will receive skills training to start their own business or find work in various fields, with the courses ranging from computer science and sewing, to budgeting and time management. Read their project report [here](#).

Insan-Leilek, Kyrgyzstan

Grant awarded: £3,000

Project: To protect the labour rights of vulnerable migrant women in Yekaterinburg by raising public awareness about the legal prohibition, prevention and response to sexual harassment of migrant women at work, and providing psychological support for victims of such violence. Read their project report [here](#).

Khachmeruk Educational Consulting Centre Foundation, Armenia

Grant awarded: £2,990

Project: Vocational training for the wives of absent migrant workers in the Shirak region, an area of Armenia with high rates of poverty and unemployment. Alongside skills training, the project will provide beneficiaries with social and psychological support.

Legal Analysis and Research Public Union, Azerbaijan

Grant awarded: £2,750

Project: Pro-bono legal support for migrant workers and their families in Azerbaijan. As well as offering free legal advice and representation for migrant workers from India, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and other countries, the project will also provide training to other NGOs working with migrants in the country. Read their project report [here](#).

Najiba, Tajikistan

Grant awarded: £2,990

Project: To support women and their families abandoned by labour migrants through a series of self-help groups and social business development projects. Beneficiaries will be advised by a professional mentor, and the start-up projects will be presented to Najiba's board members.

New Generation Humanitarian NGO, Armenia

Grant awarded: £3,000

Project: To improve the social well-being and empowerment of migrants' families by training wives of Armenian migrant workers in business development, leadership, and women rights and equality. Read their project report [here](#).

Oasis, Kyrgyzstan

Grant awarded: 2,850

Project: An educational program to prepare and support care leavers and migrant children from rural areas involved in internal migration to Osh and Bishkek. The project aims to ensure responsible and safe migration by improving the legal literacy of beneficiaries and providing information about educational opportunities and legal employment. Read their project report [here](#).

Partnership for Education and Communication, Georgia

Grant awarded: £2,986

Project: To support the integration and socio-economic empowerment of young migrant workers returning to Georgia, primarily those returning from seasonal

work in Turkey. Activities include mentoring and employment training. Read their project [here](#).

PO MIR, Tajikistan

Grant awarded: £2,993

Project: A micro-enterprise project for women, with mentoring and financial literacy training for wives, daughters, and mothers of migrant workers aged 18-50 in two target jamoats of the Isfara region. Read their project report [here](#).

B-strand projects

Association of Wives and Mothers of Soldiers, Ukraine

Grant awarded: £976

Project: Improving the external and internal communications systems to unite the team, minimise employee burnout and strengthen units on the way to achieving their goals.

Inclusive Studies, Ukraine

Grant awarded: £830

Project: Mediation training for members of staff to help promote the idea of inclusion among the target audience and community members.

KEDEM, Moldova

Grant awarded: £1,000

Project: An educational seminar for long-term volunteers and volunteers active during the pandemic on the themes of online safety, nutrition, volunteering, first aid, psychological security and internal wellbeing. Read their project report [here](#).

League of Polish Women, Moldova

Grant awarded: £998

Project: A training event for the staff of the Playback Theatre conducted by experts in the field, in order to develop and promote the therapeutic benefits of the theatre throughout Moldova. Read their project report [here](#).

NGO Center, Armenia

Grant awarded: £1,000

Project: To update the official website and improve the organisation's online visibility, as well as increase website security following repeated cyber attacks.

Partnership for Education and Communication, Georgia

Grant awarded: £998

Project: To conduct resilience training for employees and volunteers, and create an online mentoring platform to integrate the training into the organisation's long-term strategy.

PO MIR, Tajikistan

Grant awarded: £1,000

Project: A strategic planning session to develop the goals of the organisation over the next two years, alongside conducting a psychological assessment of all staff to identify the levels of stress and emotional burnout.

Public Assessors of the Republic of Tajikistan

Grant awarded: £980

Project: A training session to improve the digital security of our workers and volunteers, as well as medical treatment to maintain the physical wellbeing of staff.

Women's Fund for Development, Georgia

Grant awarded: £1,000

Project: To support the wellbeing of the staff and volunteers by creating a safe space for relaxation breaks, meditation and therapy. Employees will also take part in integrated wellness workshops, outdoor trips, yoga classes and one-to-one psychological sessions.

Civil society organisation surveys

We carried out surveys of CSOs in 2020 and 2021 to find out how their work had been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures taken to combat it. Responses from 328 CSOs in 2020 and 140 in 2021 gave us a good insight into the problems they were facing and shaped our planning for the Small Grants Scheme in 2022.

We launched our third survey in February 2022, designed to identify best practices and innovative approaches to working with vulnerable groups suffering from social isolation as the Covid-19 pandemic continued. We had planned for the survey results to form the basis of a webinar on social isolation later in 2022. However, Russia's invasion of Ukraine shortly after the survey launch interrupted this work. We received only 23 responses and postponed the webinar.

Information from the 2022 CSO survey can be found on the BEARR website:

<https://bearr.org/2023/01/11/2022-cso-survey-results/>

Annual conference

The BEARR Trust Annual Conference held in November 2022 on the theme '**War in Ukraine: The Civil Society Response**' was a hybrid event, with 65 participants joining online from Ukraine and other countries and 30 meeting at a London venue. Two panels, moderated by BEARR Trustees Michael Rasell and Janet Gunn, discussed lessons learned from their experience over the past nine months and the challenges posed by the winter and the months beyond.



The first panel comprised:

- Olga Donets, Director of the Donetsk Youth Debate Centre, established in Donetsk and Luhansk and currently working from Kyiv.
- Marat Abdullaiev, Founder and Director of the Youth Charitable Foundation, "NEXT", Odesa.
- Tamara Ababii, President of NGO The League of Polish Women in Moldova, Chisinau.

The second panel comprised:

- Daria Gerasymchuk, The President's Advisor and Commissioner on Child Rights and Child Rehabilitation.
- Anna Bondarenko, Founder and CEO of Ukrainian Volunteer Service, Odesa.
- Irina Georgievna Los, Director of Open Doors, Nikopol.

- Liliana Rotaru, President and Founder of Children, Community, Family (CCF), Chisinau.

It was wonderful to be able to see our Ukrainian and Moldovan friends on the screen, even though some of them were in darkness or had to adjust their emergency lighting or internet connection. Despite the terrible times they have been living through, they seemed in good heart and determined to continue their incredibly valuable humanitarian work for as long as it takes. They spoke of the culture of volunteering that has developed in Ukraine, and of how networks of partners established years before the February 2022 invasion had helped everyone to rally together in a humanitarian 'front line'.

The key insights from the conference, summarised by BEARR Trustee Marcia Levy, as well as links to recordings in English, Ukrainian and Russian, can be found here: <https://bearr.org/2022/11/30/report-on-the-bearr-trust-annual-conference-2022/>

Lectures

We organise one or more lectures each year by an eminent speaker to raise funds for BEARR. Encouraged by the response to our first online lectures in 2020 and 2021, which attracted large audiences to the live event and recordings on BEARR's YouTube channel, we arranged two online lectures in 2022.

In June 2022, trauma surgeon **David Nott** spoke on 'Surgery on the Front Line in Ukraine'. In conversation with Bridget Kendall, the BBC's former Moscow and Diplomatic Correspondent and a patron of the BEARR Trust, he talked about his inspirational work providing emergency surgical care and training local doctors in Ukraine amid the brutality of war. Donations were divided between BEARR's Ukraine Appeal and the Nott Foundation.

<https://bearr.org/2022/08/31/the-bearr-trust-lecture/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDHMDCnMlG8&t=1s>

In November 2022, **Edward Lucas**, former senior editor at The Economist and author of *The New Cold War*, spoke on 'Putin's War: what's the Endgame?'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIANUNZvCA>

Publications

We published a bi-monthly newsletter to email subscribers throughout 2022, drawing attention to progress of the Ukraine Emergency Appeal, news from the region published on the BEARR website, as well as BEARR's own news and events. The newsletters highlight project reports and contain longer articles on various topics.

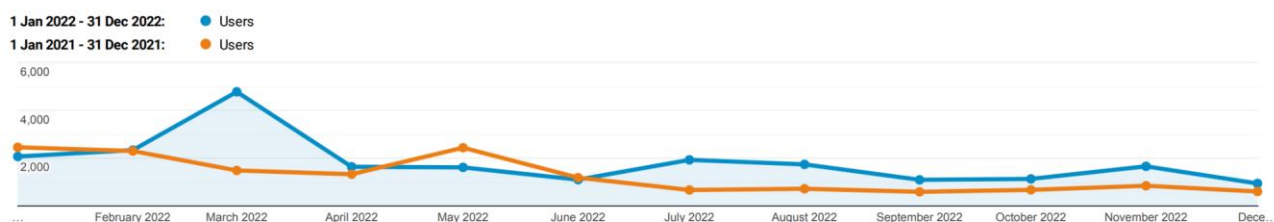
Additional updates on the Ukraine Emergency Appeal were published throughout 2022.

An archive of print newsletters published prior to 2020 is available on the BEARR website. These provide an in-depth chronicle of BEARR's activities, the projects we have funded, and health and welfare developments in the region.

Website and social media

Online engagement with BEARR's website increased strongly in 2022. With 20,700 visitors in total, we measured significant growth in returning and new users, page views and longer visits compared with 2021.

Website engagement has been building since 2020. The increase in 2022 was initially driven by the launch of our Ukraine Appeal, when the website was visited by 4,775 users, an increase of 223% over March 2021 and an all-time engagement high. While this naturally dropped down, a pattern of increased engagement continued through the rest of the year.



We saw particular growth in engagement with users in Western Europe and the US in 2022. More users came to the website directly compared with 2021, probably reflecting a greater awareness of BEARR because of campaigning and publicity around the Ukraine Appeal. Users in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also increased.

We observed a decline in some regional audiences, notably in Ukraine and Russia. This is likely to reflect the diversion of our usual CSO audience in Ukraine towards activities in response to the war, and a possible reluctance among Russian users to engage with external organisations.

In 2022 BEARR used its Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts to publicise the Ukraine Emergency Appeal, to promote events, and to share news of past and present grantees' projects and work. Twitter and Instagram followers roughly doubled between 2021 and 2022, with more modest growth in Facebook followers. By October 2023 we had 699 followers on Twitter, over 1,400 followers on Facebook, and 299 followers on Instagram.

We continued to use YouTube to store recordings of all our online events and to ensure that they remain easily accessible to the public. By October 2023 BEARR's YouTube recordings had received over 2,300 views and the account had 45 subscribers.

The trustees hope to build on the wider audience and name recognition that was gained by the Ukraine Appeal in 2022 to engage more users throughout the region.

Planning

All the Trustees participate in planning. We use a broad framework of objectives established for a five-year period, and then set an action plan for each year.

Five-year framework for 2021-2025

The Trustees agreed a new five-year framework for BEARR's activities, coinciding with the 2021-2025 period of our principal multi-year grant. This takes account of the global challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change, and the specific challenges and opportunities for grassroots CSOs focusing on health and social welfare.

The five-year framework can be seen at <https://bearr.org/about/governance-and-finance/>.

Action plan for 2022

Despite the impact of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine most of the plan for 2022 was achieved. A webinar on social isolation, planned in conjunction with the 2002 CSO survey, did not go ahead. Some work on grants analysis remains to be completed when possible. The 30th anniversary lecture was postponed to 2023 to enable it to be held in person.

- Raise at least £20,000 in external funding, with multi-year commitments where possible.
- Maintain regular contact with civil society organisations (CSOs), including through surveys, in order to tailor BEARR's activities in response to evolving needs.
- Promote opportunities for networking between CSOs to share knowledge and good practice, and to develop a 'BEARR Community'.
- Run a scheme offering small grants to CSOs (the Small Grants Scheme).
- Evaluate the 2021 and 2022 Small Grants Schemes, using online contact to increase coverage.
- Design a Small Grants Scheme in 2023 in the light of information received from civil society organisations throughout the year.
- Update the record of grant-funded projects since 2007 and refine the data archive to be searchable on various dimensions including beneficiary and topic.
- Develop BEARR's safeguarding policy and work with grantees to develop their own safeguarding practices.

- Maintain a flow of up to date and informative content on BEARR's website and social media channels.
- Update BEARR's digital review, and review website functionality and ease of use.
- Issue six bi-monthly email newsletters and an online and printed annual report / almanac.
- Organise an annual conference or webinars.
- Organise two or more fundraising public lectures on topics of wider interest, including one to mark BEARR's 30th anniversary.
- Build up cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region through joint events, project partnerships and use of the data archive.
- Maintain an active network of Trustees, Patrons and volunteers.
- Ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers.

Action plan for 2023

At the end of 2022 the Trustees agreed an action plan for 2023, adding further actions to reflect BEARR's work in Ukraine and Moldova.

- Raise at least £30,000 in additional core funding, with multi-year commitments where possible.
- Continue to promote the Ukraine Emergency Appeal.
- Consider how BEARR should best engage with opportunities to support civil society in Ukraine in the longer term, building on years of experience and its responsive approach.
- Maintain regular contact with civil society organisations (CSOs), including through surveys, in order to provide advice and technical support and to tailor BEARR's activities to evolving needs.
- Promote opportunities for networking between CSOs to share knowledge and good practice, and to develop a 'BEARR Community' by encouraging a more collaborative culture between CSOs.
- Start building a library of resources for CSO partners.
- Run a scheme offering small grants to CSOs (the Small Grants Scheme), providing guidance for applicants through notes and a webinar.

- Evaluate recent Small Grants Schemes, using online contact to increase coverage. Explore different evaluation methodologies including OECD.
- Design a Small Grants Scheme for 2024 in the light of information received from CSOs throughout the year.
- Continue updating the record of grant-funded projects since 2007, and refine the data archive to be searchable on various dimensions including beneficiary and topic
- Promote BEARR's safeguarding policy among grantees and develop training based on practical examples.
- Maintain a flow of up to date and informative content on BEARR's website and social media channels. Add more detailed management and financial information to the website's governance sections.
- Update BEARR's digital review, and review website functionality and ease of use.
- Issue six bi-monthly email newsletters and an online and printed annual report / almanac.
- Organise an annual conference or webinars.
- Organise two or more fundraising public lectures on topics of wider interest, including one to mark BEARR's 30th anniversary.
- Build up cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region through joint events, project partnerships, and use of the data archive.
- Maintain an active network of trustees, patrons and volunteers.
- Ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers.

Financial Review

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the current statutory requirements and comply with the Charity's governing document and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued in January 2019.

Financial performance

The financial performance of the Charity for the year are set out in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Total income for the Charity was £450,617 (2021: £83,278): a substantial increase accounted for by the Ukraine Appeal started in February 2022. Income consisted of:

- £68,524 in unrestricted funds (known as the 'General Fund').
- £382,093 in restricted funds for the Ukraine Appeal. Of this, £110,348 was received in the form of grants from charitable bodies; £270,174 in donations and gifts; and £1,571 from the proceeds of lectures and BEARR's annual conference.

Total expenditure for the year was £415,881 (2021: £70,587). This consisted of:

- £81,493 in unrestricted expenditure. Of this, £44,473 was on the Small Grants Scheme (2021: £44,411).
- £334,389 in restricted expenditure on the Ukraine Appeal. It should be noted that all restricted expenditure was on direct grant payments to civil society organisations for humanitarian activity in Ukraine and Moldova, with all administrative costs paid for from unrestricted funds.

Consequently, the Charity made an overall surplus of £34,735 in the year (2021: £12,692). This consisted of a deficit in unrestricted funds of £12,968; and a surplus on the restricted Ukraine Appeal of £47,704.

Cash in the bank and at hand on 31 December 2022 was £88,285 (2021: £54,226).

Reserves policy

The Trustees seek to maintain an adequate level of reserves to enable the Charity to carry on its activities in the event of financial difficulties, to enable restructuring if necessary and the avoidance of unplanned closure. To support this, the Trustees seek to hold unrestricted reserves equivalent to at least six months of annual General Fund expenditure, excluding grant payments. Based on expenditure in 2022, this would equate to £18,884.

This level of reserves had been achieved at the end of the year. Total funds on 31 December 2022 were £89,077 (2021: £54,342). This includes £41,373 held in unrestricted funds. No funds were held as fixed assets.

The view of the Trustees at the end of 2022 was that the overall position of the Charity and the balance of funds were sufficient to enable the Charity to operate, and that there were sufficient liquid assets to enable restricted and unrestricted funds to be applied as necessary.

Fundraising

The BEARR Trust is reliant on grants and donations from a wide range of charitable trusts, philanthropic organisations and private individuals. To support our efforts, we operate a Friends scheme, to encourage regular donations, and we run an annual conference and a programme of lectures, which also encourages donations. In 2022, all lecture and conference proceeds were allocated to the Ukraine Appeal.

The Charity is registered with the Fundraising Regulator; consequently, everyone who supports us may be assured that we comply with the regulatory standards for fundraising. All our fundraising activities are managed in-house, and we do not pay for fundraising advice.

In 2022, £56,672 was received from a large charitable donor as the second instalment of a five-year unrestricted annual grant. The Trustees would also like to acknowledge the generous support of the following organisations, all of which have provided larger donations:

- Just Trust
- The Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust
- The Miranda Foundation
- Network for Social Change Charitable Trust
- The Southall Trust

Many other donors and benefactors have also supported the Charity, including church groups, private donors and charitable trusts which have asked that we respect their anonymity by not including them in this report. Many private donations were enabled by a link to CAF Donate via our website. £206,557 was secured in donations to the Ukraine Appeal via CAF Donate.

Of grants and donations received in 2022, £16,000 was specifically designated for future years. In addition, we secured a commitment of £15,000 from the Mulberry Trust for a grant to the Ukraine Appeal in 2023.

The Trustees are very grateful for the generosity of all our donors, especially at a time when the need to support humanitarian assistance in Ukraine and Moldova was so great.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees 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).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees on 31 October 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Ross Gill
Treasurer

Statement of Financial Activities

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account) for the year ending 31 December 2022

		2022			2021
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income from:	3				
Donations and legacies		68,192	380,521	448,713	80,922
Charitable activities		-	1,571	1,571	2,353
Investments		332	-	332	3
Total income		<u>68,524</u>	<u>382,093</u>	<u>450,617</u>	<u>83,278</u>
Expenditure on:	4				
Raising funds		3,353	-	3,353	2,032
Charitable activities		78,140	334,389	412,528	68,555
Total expenditure		<u>81,493</u>	<u>334,389</u>	<u>415,881</u>	<u>70,587</u>
Net movement in funds		<u>- 12,968</u>	<u>47,704</u>	<u>34,735</u>	<u>12,692</u>
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		54,342	-	54,342	41,650
Net movement in funds		<u>- 12,968</u>	<u>47,704</u>	<u>34,735</u>	<u>12,692</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>41,373</u>	<u>47,704</u>	<u>89,077</u>	<u>54,342</u>

All funds in 2021 were unrestricted.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on the following pages form part of these financial statements.

Balance sheet at 31 December 2022

	Note	2022			2021
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total this year	Total (Unrestricted)
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets		-	-	-	-
Current assets					
Debtors	10	1,086	4,093	5,179	721
Cash at bank and in hand	12	44,675	43,611	88,285	54,226
Total current assets		45,761	47,704	93,465	54,947
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	4,387	-	4,387	605
Net current assets/(liabilities)		41,373	47,704	89,077	54,342
Total assets less current liabilities		41,373	47,704	89,077	54,342
Total net assets or liabilities		41,373	47,704	89,077	54,342
Funds of the Charity					
Restricted income funds	1		47,704	47,704	54,342
Unrestricted funds		41,373		41,373	-
Total funds		41,373	47,704	89,077	54,342

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 31 October 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Ross Gill
Treasurer

Notes to the financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2022

Note 1: Accounting policies

Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - 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) (effective 1 January 2019).

The BEARR Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held for 12 months from authorising these financial statements.

Change in accounting policy

2022 is the first year in which the Charity's accounts have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102. In previous years, the accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis. The 2021 accounts have therefore been revised to enable comparison with these accounts. These are reconciled in Note 2.

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 income receivable can be measured reliably.

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet.

No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

No Government grants or legacies were received during the accounting period.

Gift Aid

Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.

In practice, most donations from private individuals are received via CAF Donate, which processes Gift Aid on the Charity's behalf. CAF Donate Gift Aid receipts are therefore included within the overall donation value.

Donated goods and services

No donated goods or services were received in the accounting period.

Voluntary help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts.

However, the Charity relies on significant in-kind support from volunteers and trustees. Volunteer time is estimated at around 100 hours per year. Trustee time is substantially in excess of this, although we do not formally maintain timesheet records.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets costing £2,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably. However, the Charity held no tangible fixed assets in 2022.

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount.

Cash in bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less. In practice, this applies to all of the Charity's cash assets.

Fund accounting

The General Fund is an unrestricted fund which is available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which is not designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. There were no designated funds in 2022 or 2021.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The only restricted fund in 2022 was the Ukraine Appeal fund. The aim and use of this is set out in the notes to the financial statements. There were no restricted funds in 2021.

Note 2: Reconciliation with previous accounting policy

The accounts for 2021 were prepared on a receipts and payments basis. The tables below reconcile the accounts for 2021:

Reconciliation of funds per receipts and payments to funds determined under FRS 102

	01/01/2021	31/12/2021
	£	£
Fund balances as previously stated	41,650	54,226
Adjustments:		
Creditor	0	-605
Debtor	0	721
Fund balance as restated	<u>41,650</u>	<u>54,342</u>

Reconciliation of net income/ expenditure per receipts and payments to funds determined under FRS 102

	At 31/12/2021
	£
Net income/(expenditure) as previously stated	12,575
<i>Adjustments:</i>	
<i>Creditor</i>	-605
<i>Debtor</i>	721
 Previous period net income/(expenditure) as restated	 12,692

Note 3: Analysis of income

	2022			2021
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	
	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies				
Donations and gifts	6,655	270,174	276,829	18,927
Gift Aid	365	-	365	4,517
General grants provided by other charities	61,172	110,348	171,520	57,478
Total	68,192	380,521	448,713	80,922
Charitable activities				
Lectures and conferences	-	1,571	1,571	2,353
Total	-	1,571	1,571	2,353
Investments				
Interest income	332	-	332	3
Total	332	-	332	3
Total income	68,524	382,093	450,617	83,278

All restricted income in 2022 relates to the Ukraine Appeal.

All income was unrestricted in 2021.

Note 4: Analysis of expenditure

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Expenditure on raising funds						
Incurred seeking donations	1,162	-	1,162	1,635	-	1,635
Incurred seeking grants	1,162	-	1,162	1,635	-	1,635
Staging fundraising events	1,029	-	1,029	-	-	-
Total	3,353	-	3,353	3,269	-	3,269
Expenditure on charitable activities						
Small Grants Scheme	44,473	-	44,473	44,411	-	44,411
Ukraine Appeal	718	334,389	335,107	-	-	-
Information and Networking	4,067	-	4,067	3,051	-	3,051
Administration and Governance	28,882	-	28,882	19,855	-	19,855
Total	78,140	334,389	412,528	67,317	-	67,317
Total expenditure	81,493	334,389	415,881	70,587	-	70,587

Note 5: Funds received as agent

In 2022, the Charity agreed to administer a grant of £5,000 on behalf of another charity, Street Child (Charity Registration No. 1128536).

This was because Street Child had a pre-existing relationship with the Donetsk Youth Debate Centre (DYDC), a civil society organisation in Ukraine, which The BEARR Trust had also funded. Street Child wished to transfer a grant of £5,000 to DYDC, but was unable to do so. The BEARR Trust therefore received payment from Street Child and processed the transfer on its behalf.

As The BEARR Trust acted as an agent in this case, income from Street Child is not recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities or the Balance Sheet, nor is the expenditure to DYDC.

Note 6: Analysis of support costs

Support costs are apportioned as follows:

2022

	Small Grants Scheme £	Ukraine Appeal £	Information & networking £	Admin & governance £	Total £	Basis of allocation
Small Grants Scheme - Monitoring & Evaluation	748		-	-	748	Actual costs of monitoring and evaluation incurred
Ukraine Appeal - Finance costs	-	718	-	-	718	Actual costs incurred in transferring funds to Ukraine Appeal beneficiaries
Website and IT costs			624	-	624	Actual costs incurred on website and IT costs
Administration and governance	1,680		-	27,202	28,882	Est. 10% of Information & Administration Officer time to Fundraising; 90% to Admin & Governance. SGS Support time 100% support costs to SGS. Remaining workstation rent, insurance and governance costs as actual.
Total	2,428	718	624	27,202	30,972	

2021

	Small Grants Scheme £	Ukraine Appeal £	Information & networking £	Admin & governance £	Total £	Basis of allocation
Small Grants Scheme - monitoring and evaluation	384		-	-	384	Actual costs of monitoring and evaluation incurred
Website and IT costs			3,051	-	3,051	Actual costs incurred on website and IT costs
Administration and governance			-	19,855	19,855	Est. 10% of Information & Administration Officer time to Fundraising; 90% to Admin & Governance. Remaining workstation rent, insurance and governance costs as actual
Total	384	-	3,051	19,855	23,290	

Note 7: Fees for the examination of the accounts

The cost of independent examination of the accounts for 2022 is estimated at £1,980 including VAT. This will be paid in 2023 and is included in the accounts as a creditor.

There were no fees payable for independent examination in 2021. Independent examination on this occasion was carried out on a pro bono basis.

Note 8: Payment of officers

The charity did not have any employees in the accounting period. However, it did have contracts with a freelance Information and Administration Officer and Small Grants Scheme Officer.

Total payments were £21,815 in 2022 (2021: £14,835).

Note 9: Grants

In 2022, the Charity paid £377,114 in grants to third party organisations. These were made up of:

- Grants via the Small Grants Scheme: £43,725 (2021: £44,027). This consisted of 11 grants to support the social welfare of migrant workers and their families; and eight grants to support organisational development.
- Grants via the Ukraine Appeal: £333,389. This consisted of grants to 52 organisations for emergency humanitarian assistance.

The charity incurred support costs of £748 in relation to the Small Grants Scheme and £718 in relation to the Ukraine Appeal.

Note 10: Debtors

Total debtors were £5,180 in 2022 (2021: £721). These were made up of Gift Aid claims due (£1,086) and reimbursements due on grant payments that had not been processed by the bank (£4,093).

Note 11: Creditors

Total creditors were £4,387 in 2022 (2021: £605). These were made up of payments to freelance workers for work done in 2022 and the costs of independent examination.

Note 12: Cash in bank and at hand

Cash in the bank and at hand was as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Cash at bank and on hand	87,940	53,880
Other	345	345
Total	88,285	54,226

'Other' cash relates to £345 held in a dormant PayPal account.

Note 13: Exposure to financial risk

The Charity's exposure to financial risk is assessed as follows:

- **Credit risk:** Low. The only debtors related to Gift Aid payments yet to be claimed, and foreign grant payments that were unable to be processed, and which the banks were due to repay. There is a slight loss made on unfulfilled transfers, but this is limited to the administration cost of the transfer (no more than £20) and potentially exchange rate losses.

- **Liquidity risk:** Low. There is no liquidity risk in relation to the Ukraine Appeal, since no grants are issued unless funds are already received (and at year end, the Ukraine Appeal had a surplus). BEARR's Reserves Policy sought to maintain a year's core expenditure less the costs of the Small Grant Scheme.
- **Market risk:** Zero. The BEARR Trust has no investments. All funds are held in CAF Bank accounts, or in accounts with international payment providers (in the case of the latter, only a minimal amount is held to meet immediate needs).

Note 14: Transactions with Trustees and related parties

No Trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with the Charity or a related entity.

£145,524 was received by Trustees in reimbursements (2021: £1,848). This consisted of:

- Trustee expenses and reimbursements for goods and subscriptions purchased:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Travel	656	-
Subsistence	75	-
Accommodation	297	-
Other	2,313	1,848
Total	3,341	1,848

- Reimbursement for grants paid to beneficiaries of the Ukraine Appeal: £142,183. In the case of 60 Ukraine Appeal grant payments, Trustees arranged initial payment and were subsequently repaid.

Note 15: Donations to the Charity by Trustees

In 2022, Trustees of the Charity donated £14,095, principally to support the Ukraine Appeal (2021: £80). These donations were to fund the work of the Charity and were entirely separate from reimbursements and expenses paid to Trustees.

Report of the Independent Examiner

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The BEARR Trust
I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

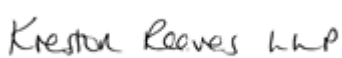
Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

This report is made solely to the company's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the company's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's Trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.

Signed: 

Dated: 31 October 2023

Lucy Hammond BSc FCA Kreston Reeves LLP, Chartered Accountants
9 Donnington Park 85 Birdham Road Chichester PO20 7AJ

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution and regulation

The BEARR Trust is constituted by a Declaration of Trust dated 27 April 1992 and Supplemental Deed of Variation dated 14 December 1995.

The BEARR Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales. Its registered charity number is 1011086.

The BEARR Trust is registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

Patrons

The BEARR Trust has a number of distinguished Patrons:

Vladimir Ashkenazy,
Elena Bashkirova Barenboim
Robert Brinkley CMG
Lady Ellen Dahrendorf
Myra Green OBE
Bridget Kendall MBE
Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG
Michael McCulloch
Mike Simmonds
Dr Robert van Voren, PhD, FRCPsych (Hon),
Sir Andrew Wood GCMG

Trustees

The board of Trustees reflects a wide range of experience and relevant expertise. There were no changes in the trustee body in 2022.

Trustees who have served at any time during the period from 1 January 2022 until the date of the approval of this report are:

Megan Bick
Jane Ebel
Ross Gill
Janet Gunn
Ali Lantukh
Marcia Levy
Ann Lewis
Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay
Nicola Ramsden (Chairman)
Michael Rasell
Charlie Walker

Appointment and training of Trustees

Trustees are appointed by a resolution of the Trustees. Potential Trustees are sought through recommendation by existing Trustees, or through advertising. Since 2014, new Trustees have been appointed for a period of three years, renewable by mutual agreement.

All Trustees are given a copy of the Charity Commission publication, 'The Essential Trustee: An Introduction', and are referred to the full version of this document on the Charity Commission website and to The BEARR Trust's annual report and accounts. New Trustees are given an induction pack consisting of The BEARR Trust's governing documents, minutes of the most recent meetings of Trustees, and policies and process notes prepared by Trustees and volunteers, describing all aspects of BEARR's operations.

Trustee meetings and roles

Meetings of the full trustee board are held every two months. Sub-groups of Trustees meet more often to manage specific tasks such as the Ukraine Emergency Appeal, conferences, workshops, publications, and the Small Grants Scheme. Individual Trustees take responsibility for different functional areas, such as fundraising, finance, volunteer management, digital development, and data security.

Independent examiner

Lucy Hammond
Kreston Reeves LLP
9 Donnington Park
85 Birdham Road
Chichester
West Sussex PO20 7AJ

Bankers

CAF Bank
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4JQ

Governance policies

The BEARR Trust's governance policies and internal process notes cover:

- conflicts of interest
- automatic disqualification
- risk management
- safeguarding

- equity, diversity and inclusion
- sanctions policy
- financial controls
- data protection
- management of volunteers
- monitoring and review

The BEARR Trust maintains a register of interests and declarations relating to automatic disqualification, in line with Charity Commission recommendations, that all Trustees are required to sign. Policies are reviewed annually at Trustee meetings and updated as necessary. .

Risk management

The Trustees have considered the main risks that might prevent BEARR from fulfilling its charitable objectives. Our approach has been reviewed and updated in the light of the increase in BEARR's activities since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. A consolidated risk register is in place and is regularly reviewed by the Trustees.

Administrative support and volunteers

A significant amount of BEARR's work is done by volunteers, including by Trustees who manage operations *pro bono* in addition to their trustee duties. The Information Officer, the Small Grants Officer, and the Russian-language website assistant were the only people who received fees for their work in 2022. At the beginning of 2023 the Information Officer role became a part-time employee post.

In 2022, as in previous years, we relied on volunteers for many important tasks: preparing and examining BEARR's financial accounts, translating for publications, interpreting on the webinars, and supporting social media. Volunteers regularly give over 100 days in total to BEARR each year, and their efforts, as well as additional time given by Trustees, help to keep overhead costs low.

We aim to ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers, whether a Trustee or the Information Officer. BEARR provides interesting opportunities for volunteers of any age and at any stage of their career, including students and recent graduates. We particularly welcome volunteers with knowledge of the region and/or of its languages.

Networks

Networking is a key aspect of BEARR's charitable work, which depends on maintaining an active network of Trustees, Patrons, supporters and volunteers. We connect with other charities involved with countries in our area of interest through our website, newsletters, annual and regional conferences, and

workshops. Online events since 2020 have enabled participation from a much wider area than was possible previously.

We aim to develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including organising joint events where possible. Our academic trustees help to design our CSO surveys and are able to use some of the findings in their own research and publications. We were pleased to welcome several academics to our London conference in 2022, and continued to maintain contact at seminars in 2023.

Contact Information

CAN Mezzanine
7-14 Great Dover Street
London SE1 4YR

Tel: +44 (0)20 7922 7849
Email: info@bearr.org
Website: www.bearr.org

Registered charity number 1011086

THE BEARR TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1011086

Accounts

A group of children in winter clothing are in a snowy forest. Two children in the foreground are holding a large log horizontally. They are wearing heavy jackets, hats, and gloves. Other children are visible in the background, also in winter gear. The scene is set in a snowy, wooded area.

THE BEARR TRUST ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2021

The BEARR Trust

Supporting vulnerable people in Eastern
Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus

Front cover image credit: Sergei Shibaev's photograph was entered into the Eastern Europe and Central Asia category of BEARR's 30th anniversary photography competition on the theme 'Side by Side'. *'Untitled*. Sergei is a foster parent at Orion Children's Community in the Kaluga region, Russia.'

Highlights of 2021

- **BEARR celebrated its 30th anniversary with a photography competition on the theme 'Side by Side', marking three decades of building connections and sharing understanding between communities.**
- **We expanded our Small Grants Scheme, awarding 15 grants totalling £44,000 for projects to reduce the social isolation of people living with disadvantage.**
- **We gained vital information after 140 civil society organisations responded to BEARR's annual survey on the continuing impact of Covid-19 in the region.**
- **Representatives of civil society organisations took part in BEARR's first webinar on safeguarding.**
- **Three online lectures by well-known experts attracted record audiences and raised funds for BEARR.**

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Letter from the Chairman

We started BEARR's 30th anniversary year in 2021 with strong finances underpinned by the first of five annual grants from a private foundation. This enabled us to increase grants offered to small civil society organisations (CSOs) by almost 50 per cent.

The 15 projects we funded in 2021 were designed to combat social isolation, a problem exacerbated by the pandemic and identified by an extensive survey of CSOs in 2020. We ran a further survey in 2021. The valuable insights provided by these surveys help us to design each year's activities and to share awareness of challenges being faced in the sector. We hope to make them an annual event.

We continued to work under the constraints of lockdowns in 2021 but took advantage of opportunities to organise events online. Our webinar on safeguarding examined concepts that are not widely understood in the region, and which we will continue to promote and explain. Online lectures by Nigel Gould-Davies, Oliver Bullough with John Lloyd, and Maria Logan with Anastasia Burakova were intellectual and fundraising highlights of the year.

BEARR's Trustees continued to manage the organisation *pro bono*, supported by Information Officer Louisa Long and Small Grants Officer Anna Lukanina-Morgan. I would like to thank them, and all our volunteers, for their professionalism and hard work.

I would also like to thank BEARR's financial supporters, especially the regular contributors to BEARR's Friends scheme. We were grateful for the continued support by Just Trust of our Small Grants Scheme, and to a private donor for making a multi-year commitment to BEARR starting in 2021.

2021 was the first year of our five-year framework of objectives which we expected to be shaped by the impact of Covid-19 and by climate change. The invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 changed our focus overnight. Within three days of the invasion we launched an appeal for humanitarian aid, which by October 2022 had exceeded £350,000.



Partnerships built up over years of the Small Grants Scheme provided the basis for distributing funds rapidly throughout Ukraine and Moldova to procure desperately needed emergency supplies and deliver them to the most vulnerable people affected by the war. The response of civil society organisations to the tragic events of 2022 has been inspiring and we are committed to doing all we can to support their efforts to alleviate suffering.

Nicola Ramsden

About The BEARR Trust

The BEARR Trust is a UK-based, English-registered charity that helps vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

History of The BEARR Trust

The BEARR Trust was formed in 1991 and formally constituted in 1992 to act as a bridge between the health and welfare sectors of Britain and the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union.

During the 1990s The BEARR Trust became a pioneering support organisation for new grass-roots voluntary groups in the region, sharing knowledge, skills and contacts with the aim of:

- protecting and preserving good health, both physical and mental
- relieving and rehabilitating those suffering from physical or mental disabilities
- advancing education and training, both academic and vocational, for those involved in the voluntary sector

Where we work

Our work focusses on the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

The BEARR Trust's objectives and activities

The BEARR Trust's main purpose now is to promote and support cooperation between small health and social welfare civil society organisations (CSOs) within the region and with those doing similar work in the United Kingdom.

The BEARR Trust has two main strands of activity, which we characterise as **supporting** and **sharing**. Our **supporting** activities are based on grants for small-scale health and social welfare projects. Our **sharing** activities consist of networking and information services, including regular newsletters linked to content on our website, conferences, lectures, and workshops. Our partners include CSOs, academics, research institutions, professionals, and students.

Our supporting and sharing activities are connected and mutually reinforcing through our system of project reports and evaluation, and follow-up conferences or workshops. They are designed to:

- encourage innovation, imagination and independence in organisations committed to reform in the health and social welfare sectors
- provide flexible and light-touch small grants to assist selected organisations to launch or extend partnerships
- share connections and help organisations working in the region to identify potential partners
- share experience, ideas, good practice, and lessons learned
- lobby with and on behalf of organisations that share our aims.

The BEARR Trust is the only UK-based charity working in this region that combines grant-giving and networking services: BEARR was a pioneer and remains unique.

Public benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Trustees have considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

The Global Goals

Our work also sits within the broader framework of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (the Global Goals), which emphasise collaboration across all sectors of government and society. The seventeen Global Goals are interrelated, and BEARR's work is relevant to several:

- Good Health and Wellbeing
- Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- Reduced Inequalities
- Partnerships for the Goals.

Achievements and Performance in 2021

30th anniversary photography competition

BEARR Information Officer Louisa Long organised a photography competition on the theme 'Side by Side' to celebrate 30 years of building connections and sharing understanding between communities. Photographers were invited to submit photos celebrating community spirit.

Louisa assembled an impressive panel of judges: Nadia Beard, Editor-in-Chief of *The Calvert Journal*; Bridget Kendall, former BBC Diplomatic Correspondent and BEARR Patron; Jadwiga Bronte and Emma Brown.

More than 60 photographers from all over the world submitted over 100 photographs, many of extremely high quality. Winners were announced in an online prize-giving on 16 June.

We hope to hold an exhibition in London in due course. For a full report and to see the winning photographs follow this link:

<https://bearr.org/2021/06/21/online-exhibition/>

The BEARR Trust Small Grants Scheme in 2021: projects to reduce the social isolation of people living with disadvantage

Since 2006, The BEARR Trust has operated a Small Grants Scheme (SGS) through which we have made awards to small health and social welfare groups in the region. Up to and including 2021, BEARR has awarded 121 small grants throughout the region, totalling just over £322,000.

The SGS aims to support and encourage CSOs to:

- share experience and learning among CSOs with relevant aims
- disseminate good practice more widely in the region
- facilitate cooperation with and/or coordination among CSOs and other organisations working with relevant groups
- improve awareness, influence policy, or engage public institutions in addressing the relevant issues
- propose other, imaginative, ways of achieving the SGS's aims.

Administration of the Small Grants Scheme

Grants are awarded annually, and details of each year's themes, and how to apply, are published on our website (www.bearr.org), on social media and in our

newsletter. The BEARR Trust will match-fund up to half of a project's cost, subject to a maximum decided from year to year depending on available resources.

We are committed to ensuring that our Small Grants Scheme is **simple** in terms of process, **accessible** to the smaller community organisations that we aim to support, and **open** to new organisations with which we have not previously had a relationship.

Over the years, BEARR grants have covered diverse health and social welfare themes, often building on subjects discussed in our annual conferences. Themes have included mental health; attitudes to disability; drug dependency; homelessness; human trafficking; skills training for refugees and displaced people, and prevention of violence to women and children. Reports of completed projects are posted on the BEARR website.

Monitoring and evaluation of projects

BEARR asks grant recipients to complete a simple monitoring form as soon as their project is completed. More detailed project reports are then commissioned as articles for the BEARR newsletter and annual report: these publicise the project and enable others with similar interests to make contact and exchange experience.

We try to avoid mechanical auditing and we ask grantees to be candid about how their projects went — we want to demystify the process and encourage an open and honest approach to learning from things that did not go as well as hoped. We try to encourage an iterative process that helps our grantees to reflect on their projects, recognise their achievements, and adapt to the changing needs of their communities.

The pandemic continued to prevent project visits in 2021.

Sources of funding for the Small Grants Scheme in 2021

The principal source of funding for the 2021 Small Grants Scheme was a grant from a private foundation, increased by a grant from Just Trust and donations from individual BEARR supporters.

Small Grants Scheme 2021: Project Summaries

Reducing the social isolation of people living with disadvantage

BEARR's 2021 Small Grants Scheme sought applications from across Eastern Europe and Central Asia for projects to reduce the social isolation of people living with disadvantage, an issue which had only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We did not specify the beneficiaries: instead, applicants were asked to describe the problems faced by the people they wished to help.

We asked for projects that would:

- involve partnership with, or extend collaboration to, other local organisations
- have an imaginative or unusual approach to reducing social isolation
- try to extend provision of support to other groups of people facing disadvantage or marginalisation resulting from their age, ability, ethnicity, gender or sexuality, or because of geography.

We had a fantastic response, receiving 227 applications in total. Over 60% came from Ukraine, with at least one application from every country which BEARR covers: Armenia 26, Azerbaijan 3, Belarus 1, Georgia 5, Kazakhstan 3, Kyrgyzstan 7, Moldova 6, Russia 11, Tajikistan 23, Turkmenistan 1, Ukraine 140, Uzbekistan 1.

After much deliberation, we awarded 15 grants, totalling just over £44,000, to organisations in Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Ukraine. Three organisations who were former grantees were awarded additional funding to improve their organisational resilience as they adjusted to working under pandemic conditions.

Full project reports were published in BEARR's newsletters and can be read on BEARR's website: <https://bearr.org/2021/06/22/bearrs-2021-small-grants-scheme-results/>

The projects are summarised below.

Association of Wives and Mothers of Soldiers Participating in ATO, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £2,978 to Association of Wives and Mothers of Soldiers Participating in ATO for their project "United we are stronger!", a mutual self-help group for women in remote areas of the Donetsk region. 20 women whose lives had been uprooted by the war in Donbas received training on the themes of peer-to-peer assistance, stress management, psycho-social welfare and housing legislation. The beneficiaries have now set up 10 mutual support groups throughout the region and are regularly assisting more than 100 women in their communities.

We are delighted to have awarded the Association of Wives and Mothers of Soldiers Participating in ATO an additional funding grant under the B strand of our 2022 Small Grants Scheme.

Gender-Vector, Kyrgyzstan



We awarded a grant of £1,427 to Gender-Vector for their project to improve the socio-economic position of young LGBT people in the Chui region following severe job losses and housing difficulties during the pandemic. Participants met with the Kara-Balta employment agency, received support from LGBT-friendly housing shelters to negotiate rental agreements, and were invited to twice-monthly Zoom sessions with a psychologist and lawyer to discuss any issues related to housing security, employment and social exclusion. As a result of the project, 80 participants received jobs, 37 representatives trained in new fields and are in demand on the labour market today, and 68 were assisted in finding a new home.

Girls in Tech, Armenia



Girls in Tech™ Armenia



We awarded a grant of £2,800 to Girls in Tech for their project "I know you!", a programme designed to develop the digital skills of women and girls from Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. The project sought to equip participants with the

latest technological tools to create digital content, as well as to facilitate more socially inclusive and tolerant online communities. Girls in Tech received over 200 applications for the 60 places on the programme, with half of those enrolled either from Nagorno-Karabakh or displaced from the region since the outbreak of war in 2020. The project participants attended several digital training sessions, with the acquired skills then used to implement a social media campaign on the topic of gender stereotypes. Many of the posts received high levels of engagement, and the collaborative nature of the project has left the participants with not only vastly improved digital literacy skills, but a long-lasting supportive community, too.

Inclusive Studies, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £3,000 to Inclusive Studies for their project "Inclusive Art Practices", a series of accessible music and theatre, art therapy and paper sculpture classes for young people with disabilities. 12 participants, alongside their parents and a group of volunteers, attended a summer camp, where they devised and performed a play and sculpted an art installation on their hopes for a more inclusive and accessible home. The project hoped to increase public awareness about the issues facing young people with disabilities, as well as broaden their access to education and the arts. Several local organisations collaborated on the project, and Inclusive Studies hope to facilitate similar programmes in the future.

Kids are Kids, Russia



We awarded a grant of £2,850 to Kids are Kids to support a 3-month summer camp for children from marginalised and migrant communities, many of whom had fled war-torn regions or political oppression. The programme was an extension of Kids are Kids' usual activity, which runs throughout the academic year, and saw over 200 classes delivered during the summer holidays. Alongside daily classes on academic subjects, including Russian as a foreign language, students had access

to extracurricular music and art lessons, were taught about daily life in Russia, and received guidance on how to use public transport and read road signs. Kids are Kids were also involved in the 2021 Point of Displacement Festival, an annual celebration dedicated to migration and ethnocultural diversity.

Kuhhoi Pomir, Tajikistan



We awarded a grant of £2,796 to Kuhhoi Pomir for their initiative to reduce the social exclusion of 19 livestock breeders and their families in isolated communities on the Pamir mountains. The aim of the project was to identify the needs of the group, facilitate their participation in the formal economy, and assist them with administrative and legal procedures. Due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and a destabilisation in the political situation of the region, Kuhhoi Pomir was delayed in starting its project, and the project continues. However, they have already held meetings with a lawyer, psychologist and a representative of the Pasture Trust of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Trust, as well as hosted a seminar with the livestock breeders. The beneficiary families have also received aid packages comprising hygiene items, books, battery-operated radios and legal support documents.

PO MIR – Offices for Development, Tajikistan



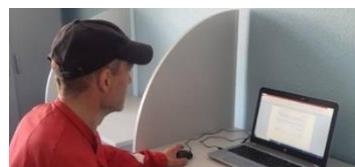
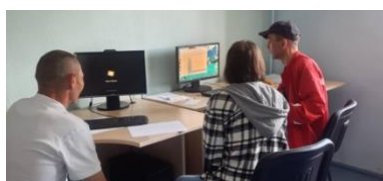
We awarded a grant of £2,990 to PO MIR for their project to support the reintegration of vulnerable groups affected by COVID-19. The primary beneficiaries were older people and people with disabilities – groups who had been disproportionately affected in their access to social services during the pandemic. PO MIR also received an additional funding grant of £1,000.

Under their social reintegration programme, PO MIR established three self-help groups in rural areas of the Asht district. Participants received advice on the various channels of legal, medical and psychological support available, and were offered skills training to provide counselling and targeted assistance to those in need. PO MIR also organised an outreach campaign entitled Health Caravan, which saw 499

women and families with young children undergo medical examinations. The community formation and capacity-building nature of the project has meant participants of the self-help groups continue to provide home visits and informational resources to vulnerable and isolated members of the community.

We are delighted to have awarded PO MIR another additional funding grant for 2022.

People Plus, Belarus



We awarded a grant of £3,000 to People Plus for their project "Breaking the loneliness", an initiative that sought to reduce the social isolation and exclusion of elderly people living with HIV. People Plus conducted a series of mutual assistance sessions and online support groups, where beneficiaries were given access to psychologists and infectious disease specialists. Participants also received digital training and internet vouchers to establish long-term and long-distance relationships with those in a similar position to them. Throughout the project, over 420 people received specialised advice, 62 attended computer courses and received online counselling, 18 had Wi-Fi installed in their homes, and 170 received food and medicine packages.

Society of People with Disabilities TAUR, Moldova



We awarded a grant of £3,000 to TAUR for their project to reduce the social isolation of people with disabilities. Following the passing of their director in 2017, this was the first project TAUR had implemented in 4 years. More than 50 people with physical and intellectual disabilities participated in the programme, which consisted of online community sessions, handicraft workshops and individual legal consultations. On 3 December – the International Day of People with Disabilities – TAUR's members hosted an exhibition and sale of their crafts. Beneficiaries also received food and toiletry packages, and a few participants were invited onto Radio Vocea Sperantei to share their experiences.

Tvory Dobropillya, Ukraine



Вільний простір
RePost



We awarded a grant of £2,985 to Tvory Dobropillya to support their project "To Babushka with Love". To combat the social isolation of elderly people from minority and migrant communities in the region, Tvory Dobropillya acquired premises to serve as a social, cultural and educational hub. Here, they ran cooking classes with teenagers, held an open-air festival, and exchanged stories, cultures and cuisines. Despite an initial delay to the implementation of the project due to COVID restrictions, 14 cooking masterclasses were held with more than 300 attendees. An unexpected outcome of the project was a request by the elderly participants to visit a local drug rehabilitation centre. 5 beneficiaries of Tvory Dobropillya's project are now regularly volunteering with the centre.

Ukrainian Down Syndrome Organisation (UDSO), Ukraine

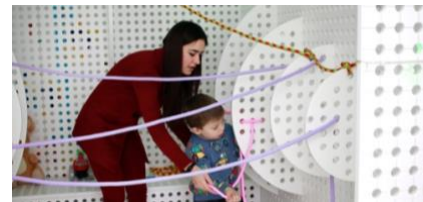


Всеукраїнська благодійна організація
Даун Синдром



We awarded a grant of £2,861 to Ukrainian Down Syndrome Organisation for their project to increase the employment opportunities for young people aged 16-35 with Down Syndrome. Alongside online training sessions for school-leavers, UDSO organised several workshops with employers to explore the possibilities of hiring their beneficiaries. Parents were also invited to a series of Discussion Clubs to reduce their anxieties about their children's futures. An important outcome of the project was the involvement of government officials in the business workshops. Legislation to promote the rights of people with disabilities in the workplace is still very much needed, and UDSO consider their completion of the project simply the starting point in changing public attitudes toward the thousands of people with Down Syndrome in Ukraine.

Vlada Brusilovska Charitable Foundation, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £1,720 to the Vlada Brusilovska Charitable Foundation for their project 'CUBA BUBA', an innovative and creative leisure space to support the rehabilitation of children with neurological disorders. Based on academic research into healing architecture and evidence-based design, 14 portable play areas were installed in the Stepan Inclusive Resource Centre, each with age-appropriate zones for the 100+ children who receive treatment there each year. The BUBA matrix, designed by Katerina and Valeria Kuznetsov, is already in use in 7 medical centres in Ukraine. The expansion of the project to the Stepan Inclusive Resource Centre in the remote Rivne region has increased the accessibility of inclusive and innovative rehabilitation facilities.

Winds of Change, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £2,980 to Winds of Change for the creation of a needlework social enterprise for Roma women and girls in Odesa. Winds of Change also received an additional funding grant of £960.

Over 20 illiterate Roma women attended professional needlework classes, received financial literacy training and attended stress management workshops. Upon completing the project, 12 members of the course have joined the social enterprise to sell their handicrafts online. Meanwhile, 2 have found their own work placements and another has set up their own training course. 1 in 6 participants are now training new cohorts of Roma women, ensuring the longevity of the programme.

YCF Next, Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £2,920 to YCF Next for their project "Hospital is not a prison", an art therapy and leisure centre for children with eating disorders at the Odesa Regional Children's Psychiatric Hospital. 164 children aged 6-18 had access to the centre, where 6-hour classes were held 5 days a week by an art therapist and psychologist. The children were taught exercises to promote self-care and personal hygiene, improve their motor skills, and nurture their art and sculpture skills. Since the project's completion, 30% of parents whose children were discharged have continued to consult the psychologist, and a further 20% have recommended the facilities to a friend. With a huge rise in eating disorders among young children during the pandemic, Next is now exploring funding options to develop a preventative programme.

Zhytomyr Regional Association of Social Services (ZtRASS), Ukraine



We awarded a grant of £2,950 to ZtRASS for their mutual assistance initiative to support single women with children in remote towns of the Zhytomyr region. ZtRASS also received an additional funding grant of £1,000.

Supported by local authorities and other CSOs, ZtRASS established a series of self-help groups attended by over 90 women struggling with unemployment, poverty, domestic violence and drug abuse. Many of the women had previously been failed by state social services, with the self-help groups acting as a critical and often final lifeline. Since the project's completion, the participants have continued their meetings, inviting more women to share their stories and gain access to much-needed support from their peers.

Survey of CSOs 2021

We carried out a second survey of CSOs in 2021, following the strong response to the first survey carried out in 2020 to find out how CSOs' work had been affected by Covid-19 and the measures taken to combat it. The 2020 survey had painted a vivid picture of an increased demand for services and reduced resources, but also of innovative practices which had enabled many CSOs, although not all, to continue their work. The Trustees were keen to understand how the situation had developed during a second year of pandemic conditions to inform BEARR's activities in 2022.

140 organisations responded to the second survey. Almost 80% of them reported an increase in demand for services in their communities, compared with just under 60% the previous year. Narrative comments referred to the increased support needed by disabled people while self-isolating and noted an increase in cases of depression and domestic violence during successive lockdowns. Around half of organisations had suffered a loss of finance during the pandemic.

More information from the 2021 CSO survey can be found on the BEARR website: <https://bearr.org/2021/12/17/2021-cso-survey-preliminary-review/>

Design and launch of 2022 Small Grants Scheme

BEARR's surveys of CSOs in 2020 and 2021 showed how the pandemic had made existing inequalities worse. The Trustees identified migrant workers and their families as one of the many groups of vulnerable people who were experiencing increased hardship over this period. We also recognised the continuing strain on civil society organisations trying to respond to the needs of vulnerable people. The 2022 Small Grant Scheme was therefore designed with two strands:

A – projects that propose ways of improving the social welfare of migrant workers and the wellbeing of their families.

B – projects to improve the welfare of staff and volunteers and to improve the resilience of civil society organisations (CSOs) that had previously received a grant from The BEARR Trust.

Applications were invited from CSOs in any of the countries in which BEARR works: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

2021 Safeguarding webinar: 'How to make sure that our assistance does not cause harm'.

Following the introduction of BEARR's safeguarding policy in 2021, we held a webinar on the subject for CSOs in the region. The webinar was moderated by BEARR trustee Ross Gill and focussed on presentations by Anna Raskina, director of St Petersburg-based children's charity Ulitsa Mira, and Tanya Buynovskaya, director of UK-based charity HealthProm.

A poll of the 30 participants at the start of the webinar showed that around two-thirds were familiar with the term 'safeguarding' and around a half had a safeguarding policy in their organisation. A poll at the end of the webinar suggested interest in further support on safeguarding practices, and BEARR will continue to share information on the subject.

A full report of the webinar can be found on the BEARR website:

<https://bearr.org/2021/12/13/how-to-make-sure-that-our-assistance-does-not-cause-harm/>

Lectures in 2021

BEARR traditionally organises an annual lecture by an eminent speaker as a fundraising event. Our first online lecture in 2020 showed the potential for reaching a wider audience, compensating to some extent for the missed social interaction of our annual lectures regularly hosted by the EBRD. Encouraged by this, we organised spring, summer and autumn lectures in 2021, all of which attracted large audiences to the live event and recordings on BEARR's YouTube channel

The Spring Lecture was given by **Nigel Gould-Davies** on the topic '**Belarus: what happened and what next?**' A full report can be found on the BEARR website:

<https://bearr.org/2021/03/02/the-bearr-trusts-spring-lecture/> and the recording of the lecture can be seen on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xe3Wo1dxhCY&list=PLUv2gNwcE8LpYmXMCiVWN4d4qmmNyZLCL&index=3>

The Summer Lecture was given by journalist and author **Oliver Bullough**, chaired by Financial Times contributing editor **John Lloyd**, on '**The Londongrad Laundromat and its consequences**'. A full report can be found on the BEARR website: <https://bearr.org/2021/06/21/the-bearr-summer-lecture/> and the recording of the lecture can be seen on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcdUFnNPkZs>

The Autumn Lecture was a conversation between human rights lawyers Maria Logan and Anastasia Burakova exploring **'Media and civil society under attack in Russia: What can we do?'**. A full report can be found on the BEARR website: <https://bearr.org/2021/10/18/bearr-trust-autumn-lecture/> and the recording of the lecture can be seen on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6800nOtpu8&t=3244s>

Publications

We published a bi-monthly newsletter to email subscribers throughout 2021, drawing attention to news from the region published on the BEARR website, as well as BEARR's own news and events. The newsletters highlight project reports and contain longer articles on various topics.

An archive of print newsletters published prior to 2020 is available on the BEARR website. These provide an in-depth chronicle of BEARR's activities, the projects we have funded, and health and welfare developments in the region.

Website and social media

In January 2021, BEARR appointed Ali Lantukh as its first dedicated Digital Trustee, responsible for digital strategy. BEARR's new website had been launched in early 2020 just as the pandemic started, meaning that we were well positioned to pivot to an online focus. In 2021 we measured:

- an increasing audience: 14,300 visitors in 2021 compared with 12,100 in 2020
- more returning users: 2,000 visited the website more than once in 2021 compared with 1,370 in 2020 (although some of these 'visits' are by search engines)
- increased human engagement as indicated by time spent on each page: in 2021 3,500 visits were for longer than one minute, compared to 2,400 in 2020
- an increase in the number of visitors clicking through to BEARR's site from other websites – an indication of 'shareable' content on BEARR's site
- strong interest in BEARR's Small Grants Scheme
- evidence that BEARR was gaining traction in the region, with large increases in audiences in Russia, Ukraine, Armenia and Tajikistan.

BEARR continues to use its Twitter and Facebook accounts to promote events and share news of past and present grantees' projects and work. As of October 2022, the accounts had 611 and 1,367 followers respectively. Our Facebook reach increased sharply in 2021, with 6,381 users seeing and interacting with our posts compared with 951 in 2020 – a seven-fold increase. Since the launch of our Ukraine emergency appeal in early 2022, our Facebook reach has doubled, with 12,874 accounts reached in the period January-October 2022.

In December 2020, we set up a YouTube account, primarily to store recordings of all our online events and to ensure that they remain easily accessible to the public. To date, the account has received 1,100 views and has 31 subscribers.

In April 2021, BEARR launched an Instagram account to coincide with our 30th anniversary photography competition. This platform has been especially helpful in promoting the competition as well as connecting with younger people interested in the region in which BEARR operates. It has also helped us to connect with present and former grantees and promote their activities visually. BEARR's Instagram profile now has 227 followers. From January-December 2021, our Instagram posts were seen by 71,790 unique accounts.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution and regulation

The BEARR Trust is constituted by a Declaration of Trust dated 27 April 1992 and Supplemental Deed of Variation dated 14 December 1995.

The BEARR Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales. Its registered charity number is 1011086.

Patrons

The BEARR Trust has a number of distinguished Patrons:

Vladimir Ashkenazy,
Elena Bashkistrova Barenboim
Robert Brinkley CMG
Lady Ellen Dahrendorf
Myra Green OBE
Bridget Kendall MBE
Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG
Michael McCulloch
Mike Simmonds
Rair Simonyan
Dr Robert van Voren, PhD, FRCPsych (Hon),
Sir Andrew Wood GCMG

Trustees

The board of Trustees reflects a wide range of experience and relevant expertise. There were no changes in the trustee body in 2021.

Trustees who have served at any time during the period from 1 January 2021 until the date of the approval of this report are:

Megan Bick
Jane Ebel
Ross Gill
Janet Gunn
Ali Lantukh
Marcia Levy
Ann Lewis
Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay
Nicola Ramsden (Chairman)
Michael Rasell
Charlie Walker

Appointment and training of Trustees

Trustees are appointed by a resolution of the Trustees. Potential Trustees are sought through recommendation by existing Trustees, or through advertising. Since 2014, new Trustees have been appointed for a period of three years, renewable by mutual agreement.

All Trustees are given a copy of the Charity Commission publication, 'The Essential Trustee: An Introduction', and are referred to the full version of this document on the Charity Commission website and to The BEARR Trust's annual report and accounts. New Trustees are given an induction pack consisting of The BEARR Trust's governing documents, minutes of the most recent meetings of Trustees, and policies and process notes prepared by Trustees and volunteers, describing all aspects of BEARR's operations.

Governance policies

The BEARR Trust's governance policies and internal process notes cover:

- conflicts of interest
- automatic disqualification
- risk management
- safeguarding
- equity, diversity and inclusion
- sanctions policy
- financial controls
- data protection
- management of volunteers
- monitoring and review

The BEARR Trust maintains a register of interests and declarations relating to automatic disqualification, in line with Charity Commission recommendations, that all Trustees are required to sign. Policies are reviewed annually at Trustee meetings and updated as necessary. Key current policies can be viewed at <https://bearr.org/about/governance-and-finance/>.

Trustee meetings and roles

Meetings of the full trustee board are held every two months. Sub-groups of Trustees meet more often to manage specific tasks such as conferences, workshops, publications, and the Small Grants Scheme. Individual Trustees take responsibility for different functional areas, such as fundraising, finance, volunteer management, digital development, and data security.

Volunteers

A significant amount of BEARR's work is done by volunteers, including by Trustees who manage operations *pro bono* in addition to their trustee duties. The Information Officer, the Small Grants Officer, and the Moscow Representative were the only people who received fees for their work in 2021.

In 2021, as in previous years, we relied on volunteers for many important tasks: preparing and examining BEARR's financial accounts, translating for publications, interpreting on the webinars, and supporting social media. Volunteers regularly give over 100 days in total to BEARR each year, and their efforts, as well as additional time given by Trustees, help to keep overhead costs low.

We aim to ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers, whether a Trustee or the Information Officer. BEARR provides interesting opportunities for volunteers of any age and at any stage of their career, including students and recent graduates. We particularly welcome volunteers with knowledge of the region and/or of its languages.

Networks

Networking is a key aspect of BEARR's charitable work, which depends on maintaining an active network of Trustees, Patrons, supporters and volunteers. We connect with other charities involved with countries in our area of interest through our website, newsletters, annual and regional conferences, and workshops.

Our annual lecture and our London conference are usually occasions when we can meet and engage with supporters — especially members of our Friends scheme — beneficiaries, donors and other contacts. Although we regretted not being able to meet people as normal in 2021, the webinars and the three online lectures enabled more people to participate, from a much wider area.

We are also keen to develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including organising joint events where possible.

Planning

All the Trustees participate in planning. We use a broad framework of objectives established for a five-year period, and then set an action plan for each year.

Five-year framework for 2021-2025

The Trustees agreed a new five-year framework for BEARR's activities, coinciding with the 2021-2025 period of our multi-year grant. This takes account of the global challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change, and

the specific challenges and opportunities for grassroots CSOs focusing on health and social welfare.

The five-year framework can be seen at <https://bearr.org/about/governance-and-finance/>.

Action plan for 2021

While the pandemic curtailed project visits, most of the plan for 2021 was achieved.

- Raise an additional £20,000 in external funding, with multi-year commitments where possible
- Maintain regular contact with civil society organisations, including through surveys, in order to tailor BEARR's activities in response to evolving needs
- Run a scheme offering small grants to civil society organisations, and evaluate the 2020 Small Grants Scheme
- Prepare an overview of grant-funded projects since 2007, and design a data archive
- Design a scheme for small grants in 2022 in the light of information received from civil society organisations throughout the year
- Issue six bi-monthly email newsletters and an online and printed annual report / almanac
- Maintain a flow of up to date and informative content on BEARR's website and social media channels
- Extend BEARR's use of online communications for meetings, webinars and public lectures
- Organise an annual conference or webinar series
- Organise two or more public lectures
- Develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including through joint events and the development of a data archive
- Maintain an active network of Trustees, Patrons and volunteers
- Ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2021

Both income and expenditure increased in 2021. However, greater than anticipated income meant that the charity gained a surplus of £12,575, in contrast to the deficit incurred in 2019 and 2020.

Income

Income in 2021 was £82,557, some 42% higher than in 2020. Our largest source of income was from a charitable foundation, which has supported BEARR since 2016. In 2021, the foundation awarded BEARR a further multi-annual grant over five years. This is denominated in US dollars and is worth up to \$75,000 per year, with the value to BEARR fluctuating depending in on the dollar: sterling exchange rate. In 2021, the grant yielded £53,478.

In addition to this major grant, we secured a grant of £4,000 from Just Trust, as well as £1,545 in regular donations from BEARR's Friends Scheme. We were also especially fortunate to receive £2,416 in sponsorship funds raised by Luke Grenfell-Shaw for his Bristol2Beijing cycle journey.

While COVID-19 meant that we were again unable to hold our normal conference and lecture, we continued to develop a programme of online lectures and webinars. This proved to be an important source of income, securing £2,353.

Expenditure

Charitable expenditure was £69,982 in 2021, compared with £62,878 in 2020.

The largest item of expenditure was our Small Grants Scheme, which accounted for £44,027. This was substantially higher than expenditure on the Scheme in the previous year (£30,638), reflecting the increased funding capacity that our donors made available.

Other expenditure included fees paid to our Information Officer and Moscow Representative, as well as website, newsletter and administration costs. There were no events costs in 2021, reflecting the shift online.

Charitable expenditure accounted for around 94% of BEARR's total spend. We are able to operate with low overheads thanks to the voluntary work of our trustees and volunteers in delivering much of BEARR's activity.

Restricted and designated funds

BEARR had no restricted funds in 2021. However, we account internally for grants and donations that were intended for a specific purpose: in 2021, these related to the Small Grants Scheme.

Foreign currency

All funds received in foreign currency (principally, the large grant received in US dollars) are converted to sterling on receipt. BEARR held no foreign currency balances at the end of 2021.

Reserves policy

The BEARR Trust maintains unrestricted cash funds at a level sufficient to cover BEARR's operating costs and to pursue BEARR's principal objectives for at least one year. Unrestricted funds are monitored through regular budgets and cash flow forecasts, including accounting for funds that are designated for specific uses. BEARR has no investments.

Cash reserves at the end of 2021 were £54,225 (compared with £41,650 at the end of 2020).

Ross Gill

Treasurer

Receipts and payments accounts 2021

For the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

Section A: Receipts and Payments

	2021, £	2020, £
A1. Receipts		
Donations	21,133	10,039
Friends' payments	1,545	1,580
Grants	57,478	42,873
Income from events	2,353	3,809
Other	48	27
Sub-total	82,557	58,328
A2. Asset and investment sales	0	0
Total receipts	82,557	58,328
A3. Payments		
Charitable expenditure	65,784	59,641
Fundraising and publicity	2,032	1,645
Governance	1,476	1,383
Other	690	209
Sub-total	69,982	62,878
A4. Asset and investment purchases	0	0
Total payments	69,982	62,878
Net of payments	12,575	-4,550
A5. Transfers between funds	0	0
A6. Cash funds		
Cash funds at year end	54,226	44,071
Liabilities (see Section B)	605	-2,421
Total funds available	54,831	41,650

Section B: Statement of assets and liabilities at end period

	2021, £
B1. Cash funds	54,226
B2. Other monetary assets	0
B3. Investment assets	0
B4. Assets retained for the charity's own use	0
B5. Liabilities (payments pending)	605

Approved by the Trustees on 4 August 2022

Signed by the Chairman, Nicola Ramsden

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The BEARR Trust

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The BEARR Trust (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charities Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Carolyn Davis
High Thrushbank Cottage
Loweswater
Cockermouth
Cumbria
CA13 0RU

Date: 23 October 2022

Administrative and Contact Information

CAN Mezzanine
7-14 Great Dover Street
London SE1 4YR

Tel: +44 (0)20 7922 7849

Email: info@bearr.org

Website: www.bearr.org

Registered charity number 1011086

THE BEARR TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1011086

Accounts



THE BEARR TRUST ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2020

The BEARR Trust

**Supporting vulnerable people in
Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the
Caucasus**



Highlights of 2020

- **BEARR won a five-year grant to continue and to further develop our activities from 2021 to 2025.**
- **We maintained our charitable work during the Covid pandemic by switching to remote working and online participation.**
- **We awarded 11 grants, totalling over £30,000, to projects supporting women in rural Central Asia and the South Caucasus.**
- **More than 300 civil society organisations responded to BEARR's survey on the impact of Covid-19 in the region.**
- **More than 100 people throughout the region took part in three webinars that replaced BEARR's annual conference.**
- **We launched a bi-monthly online newsletter linked to BEARR's new website www.bearr.org and intensified our use of social media.**

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Letter from the Chairman, Nicola Ramsden

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic The BEARR Trust moved online in 2020. The Trustees met remotely throughout the year, and regular BEARR events, from the Annual Lecture to the Annual Conference, were run as webinars. BEARR's new website and linked bi-monthly newsletter, which were launched before the outbreak of the pandemic, provided a timely boost to our mission to raise awareness of health and social welfare challenges facing vulnerable groups in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus. Helped by a new generation of volunteers with video editing and social media skills, we were able to widen the range of content we could share. The Small Grants Scheme – funding projects to support women in rural areas of Central Asia and the South Caucasus – had been announced early in 2020 and was able to go ahead as planned.

An important initiative in 2020 was a survey of CSOs working on health and welfare issues in our region, organised by BEARR's Small Grants Officer, Anna Lukanina-Morgan. We used the information gleaned from over 300 responses to design three webinars to replace our traditional Annual Conference, and to choose the theme of the 2021 Small Grants Scheme: projects to combat social isolation.

The other highlight of 2020 was our successful application to a private foundation for a five-year grant worth up to a total of \$375,000 (£288,000), starting in 2021. The grant will allow BEARR to extend the Small Grants Scheme and to develop new approaches to evaluating projects with greater local participation. Coming towards the end of a challenging year, the grant award felt like a strong endorsement of BEARR's approach to supporting local community groups. The financial stability brought by multi-year funding was also welcome.

My fellow Trustees continued to give significant time to running the organisation *pro bono*. Despite the disruption to home and working lives caused by the pandemic, the Trustees were able to produce newsletters, organise events, plan budgets, and undertake the strategic thinking that underpinned our application for future funding. Credit is also due to BEARR's resourceful Information Officers – Sophie Vandyck, succeeded by Louisa Long in 2020 – as well as to Anna Lukanina-Morgan and to our Moscow Representative, Igor Timoshin. Skilled volunteers again made a significant contribution to BEARR's work: translating and interpreting, researching, supporting social media, and examining the accounts.

I would like to thank all BEARR's financial supporters, especially the regular contributors to BEARR's Friends scheme. We were grateful for Just Trust's continued support of the Small Grants Scheme in 2020, and for the decision of Tushinskaya Trust to transfer its residual assets to BEARR.

In 2021 we are due to celebrate the 30th anniversary of BEARR's foundation by Jill Braithwaite in 1991. This last year has shown that BEARR maintains its capacity to adapt, and to identify and respond to need. With a secure core of funding for the next five years, we are looking forward to a new phase of our work.

About The BEARR Trust

The BEARR Trust is a UK-based, English-registered charity that helps vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

History of The BEARR Trust

The BEARR Trust was formed in 1991 and formally constituted in 1992 to act as a bridge between the health and welfare sectors of Britain and the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union.

During the 1990s The BEARR Trust became a pioneering support organisation for new grass-roots voluntary groups in the region, sharing knowledge, skills and contacts with the aim of:

- advancing education and training, both academic and vocational
- protecting and preserving good health, both physical and mental
- relieving and rehabilitating those suffering from physical or mental disabilities.

Where we work

Our work focusses on the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

The BEARR Trust's objectives and activities

The BEARR Trust's main purpose now is to promote and support cooperation between small health and social welfare civil society organisations (CSOs) within the region and with those doing similar work in the United Kingdom.

The BEARR Trust has two main strands of activity, which we characterise as **supporting** and **sharing**. Our **supporting** activities are based on grants for small-scale health and social welfare projects. Our **sharing** activities consist of networking and information services, including regular newsletters linked to content on our website, conferences, lectures, and workshops. Our partners include CSOs, academics, research institutions, professionals, and students.

Our supporting and sharing activities are connected and mutually reinforcing through our system of project reports and evaluation, and follow-up conferences or workshops. They are designed to:

- encourage innovation, imagination and independence in organisations committed to reform in the health and social welfare sectors
- provide flexible and light-touch small grants to assist selected organisations to launch or extend partnerships
- share connections and help organisations working in the region to identify potential partners
- share experience, ideas, good practice, and lessons learned
- lobby with and on behalf of organisations that share our aims.

The BEARR Trust is the only UK-based charity working in this region that combines grant-giving and networking services: BEARR was a pioneer and remains unique.

Public benefit

When planning our activities for the year, the Trustees have considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

The Global Goals

Our work also sits within the broader framework of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (the Global Goals), which emphasise collaboration across all sectors of government and society. The seventeen Global Goals are interrelated, and BEARR's work is relevant to several:

- Good Health and Wellbeing
- Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- Reduced Inequalities
- Partnerships for the Goals.

Achievements and Performance in 2020

Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, BEARR made good progress with its **supporting** activities in the form of the Small Grants Scheme, and with its **sharing** activities, including information and networking, which adapted rapidly to online participation.

The BEARR Trust Small Grants Scheme

Since 2006, The BEARR Trust has operated a Small Grants Scheme (SGS) through which we have made awards to small health and social welfare groups in the region. Up to and including 2020, BEARR has awarded more than 100 small grants throughout the region, totalling over £250,000.

The SGS aims to support and encourage CSOs to:

- share experience and learning among CSOs with relevant aims
- disseminate good practice more widely in the region
- facilitate cooperation with and/or coordination among CSOs and other organisations working with relevant groups
- improve awareness, influence policy, or engage public institutions in addressing the relevant issues
- propose other, imaginative, ways of achieving the SGS's aims.

Administration of the Small Grants Scheme

Grants are awarded annually, and details of each year's themes, and how to apply, are published on our website (www.bearr.org), on social media and in our newsletter. The BEARR Trust will match-fund up to half of a project's cost, subject to a maximum decided from year to year depending on available resources.

We are committed to ensuring that our Small Grants Scheme is **simple** in terms of process, **accessible** to the smaller community organisations that we aim to support, and **open** to new organisations with which we have not previously had a relationship. In designing the 2020 call for applications we took account of responses to a survey of former grantees

Over the years, BEARR grants have covered diverse health and social welfare themes, often building on subjects discussed in our annual conferences. Themes have included mental health; attitudes to disability; drug dependency; homelessness; human trafficking; skills training for refugees and displaced people, and prevention of violence to women and children. Reports of completed projects are posted on the BEARR website.

Monitoring and evaluation of projects

BEARR asks grant recipients to complete a simple monitoring form as soon as their project is completed. A project's duration is normally six months, so we have quick feedback about their activities. More detailed project reports are then commissioned as articles for the BEARR newsletter and annual report: these publicise the project and enable others with similar interests to make contact and exchange experience. We ask grantees to be candid about how their projects went — we want to demystify the process and encourage an open and honest approach to learning from things that did not go as well as hoped.

The rapid feedback gives us some assurance that a grant was used as intended, and longer project reports help us to describe to our own donors how their money was spent. However, accountability to funders is only part of the monitoring and evaluation process. Following a review by BEARR Trustee Megan Bick, we are now aware that evaluation also raises ethical issues of power and purpose. As a result, we aim to improve accountability to the communities being worked in.

We want to avoid mechanical auditing in favour of an iterative process that helps our grantees to reflect on their projects, recognise their achievements, and adapt to the changing needs of their communities. The pandemic delayed development of our experiments with peer evaluation, and also affected project visits. Visits to projects in Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine that were planned for May and June 2020 had to be postponed. Despite this, charity cyclist Luke Grenfell-Shaw, cycling from Bristol to Beijing between waves of the pandemic, managed to visit two BEARR-funded projects in Moldova, run by the League of Polish Women in Chisinau and Zhenskiye Initsiativii in Tiraspol. Luke's impressions are published on BEARR's website.

Sources of funding for the Small Grants Scheme in 2020

The principal source of funding for this year's Small Grants Scheme was a grant from a private foundation, increased by a grant from Just Trust and donations from individual BEARR supporters.

Theme of the 2020 Small Grants Scheme: strengthening the position of women in rural communities in Central Asia and South Caucasus

Unlike 2019, when the Trustees offered grants to organisations working in any of the countries which BEARR covers, the 2020 Small Grants Scheme was limited to countries in Central Asia and South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The theme built on experience with the 2019 projects, which had addressed the problem of violence against women and girls. The Trustees decided to focus in 2020 on the position of women in rural areas.

Projects had to address issues in one of the following areas:

- Public participation
- Information and skills for economic security
- Preventing domestic violence

We received 77 applications, from all 8 eligible countries: Armenia 11, Azerbaijan 4, Georgia 17, Kazakhstan 4, Kyrgyzstan 3, Tajikistan 27, Turkmenistan 2, Uzbekistan 9. 11 were rejected because they did not meet the technical criteria.

We awarded 11 grants, totalling over £30,000, to organisations in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The projects are summarised below. Full project reports were published in BEARR's newsletters and can be read on BEARR's website

Summary of projects supported by the 2020 Small Grants Scheme

Grants were provided in May 2020, shortly after the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic had begun to be felt globally. Consequently, all of the 2020 recipients were forced to adapt or restrict their activities in some way, including by moving training sessions online, reducing participant numbers and holding events outside where possible. Recipients showed great resilience and resourcefulness, which can be seen in their project reports on BEARR's website. However, as a result of the restrictions and delays caused by this unprecedented year, several of them have not yet completed their projects.

Nurjolber

Naryn region, Kyrgyzstan



We awarded a grant of £2,800 to Nurjolber for their project to raise awareness of domestic violence and support women in the rural Naryn province to escape such violence through entrepreneurial training. Nurjolber organised training for 30 unemployed young people in the principles of entrepreneurship as well as practical assistance with the development of their small businesses and financial planning. The training included a seminar during which a number of successful businesswomen shared their knowledge and experience with participants.

Sarchashma

Khujand and the Sughd region, Tajikistan



We awarded £2,213 to NGO Sarchashma for a project training women's councils in southern jamoats of Tajikistan on women's legal rights and raising awareness about domestic violence through seminars working with men and boys as well as women and girls. Sarchashma has been working on projects preventing domestic violence since 2013, but had limited resources. With BEARR's funding, the NGO was able to organise several activities focussed on the Eva B jamaat of Ghafurov District and the Gulyakandoz jamaat in Jabbor Rasulov. These included training for 13 female activists from women's councils and 83 women from jamaats on how to be safe from violence and on national law on the prevention of domestic violence.

NGO Center

Vanadzor, Armenia



We awarded £2,998 to NGO Center in Armenia for their project "Women for good governance", which aimed to promote gender-balanced, needs-based local self-government. Beneficiaries were young people from four communities in the Lori region: Dsegh, Dzoragyugh, Mets Parni and Hartagyugh. The programme trained participants to carry out and analyse surveys, followed by practical courses on local government activities, leadership, media literacy, and advocacy. Suggestions for local government have already been adopted in local government annual work plans, indicating encouraging progress for the local communities involved.

The Association of Public Assessors of the Republic of Tajikistan (APART)

Tajikistan



We awarded a grant of £2,980 to APART for its project, "Homes without violence!", which involved training for paralegals and articles and information booklets on Tajik law relating to the prevention of domestic violence. Additionally, participants looked at the impact of the lack of higher education and early marriage on women in the region. Participants developed recommendations aimed at preventing domestic violence in the future, including the publication of three articles.

Partnership for Education and Communication (PEC)

Tbilisi, Georgia



BEARR awarded PEC £2,986 towards its project aimed at strengthening the position of marginalised rural women who continue to face significant obstacles in terms of participation in local businesses and community decision-making.

Activities included the development of an innovative online mentoring and networking platform to bring together beneficiaries, local decision-makers, CSO actors and entrepreneurs. It quickly became a hub for long-distance counselling and networking to access job opportunities. It continues to be widely used. Because training was moved online, more women than envisaged – 120 from four municipalities (Khelvachauri, Senaki, Kharagauli, Dusheti) – were able to come together for training on leadership, public participation, entrepreneurship and developing marketing strategies for rural women's local produce.

International Society for Human Rights (ISHR), Armenia

Yerevan, Armenia



We awarded £2,470 to ISHR, Armenia for a project with three intertwined elements: raising awareness of gender equality and women's position in society as key to poverty reduction; supporting family entrepreneurship in a single village; and creating a new, community-run NGO. Despite exceptionally difficult conditions caused by Covi-19 and the war in Nagorno-Karabakh, ISHR was still able to hold interactive training sessions with 10 rural women and girls discussing human rights and gender equality. One outcome was the formation of an assistance group to advocate on local issues such as female employment. Training for women and their husbands on setting up and managing small businesses was provided online.

PO MIR – Offices for Development

Sughd region, Khujand, Tajikistan



We awarded £2,978 to PO MIR - Offices for Development for their project 'Women's Joint Work – Effective Foundation for Preventing Domestic Violence'. The project sought to increase female participation in resolving domestic violence issues through educational events, economic initiatives and media coverage. PO-MIR worked with the Women Leaders' Association (WLA) to organise workshops on different entrepreneurial skills for women and girls who had experienced domestic violence. The workshops' results were presented at a final forum where representatives of crisis centres, NGOs, and public authorities

working to prevent violence discussed joint initiatives to combat gender-based violence and how to adapt work practices during the pandemic.

We are delighted to have awarded PO MIR another grant for 2021.

NGO Bonuvoni Pyanj

Pyanj province, Tajikistan



We awarded £3,000 to Bonuvoni Pyanj for a project focusing on raising awareness of domestic violence within 10 communities in Pyanj province.

The project involved training local NGOs and 60 of their representatives to respond to incidents of domestic violence quickly and adequately. Bonuvoni Pyanj also distributed an informative poster-calendar to approximately 300 families in the district. The organisation also held 10 meetings with approximately 30 different stakeholders (police, prosecutors, jamoats) where they discussed how to respond to cases of domestic violence in the most efficient and sensitive way possible.

Women Fund for Development

Gali, Abkhazia/Georgia

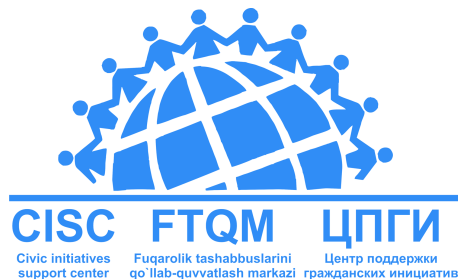


We awarded £1,995 to Women Fund for Development for a project to create initiative groups in three rural communities in Abkhazia, namely Chuburkinji (Gali region), Bedia (Ochamchira region) and Chxortol (Tkvarcheli region). Members received training, partly online, on leadership, effective communication, and civic activism. Through regular discussions, the groups identified the most pressing issues facing the community and began advocating for change. For example, poor roads are a key challenge facing the rural population, making it difficult for medical assistance to access

the area and for the children and teachers to get to school. The initiative group in Bedia raised this issue with local authorities. As a result of their advocacy and persistence, the most severely damaged part of the road was recently fixed.

Civic Initiatives Support Center (CISC)

Fergana, Uzbekistan



We awarded £2,998 to CISC for its project to improve services for victims of domestic violence in the Fergana region of Uzbekistan.

This included training for staff at rehabilitation centres working with women and families and their partner organisations on how to recognise and effectively address cases of domestic violence. CISC was delayed in starting its project and still plans to hold several more seminars. However, they have already held two seminars bringing together local authorities, journalists, and rehabilitation centre staff. They have also begun a study into prevailing attitudes towards domestic violence among specialists at various organisations and levels.

Women and Modern World Social Charitable Center (WMWSCC)

Shamakhi, Azerbaijan



We awarded £3,000 to WMWSCC for a project focusing on training for doctors, police, youth activists and NGO leaders to promote awareness of domestic violence and the relevant laws in Shirvan rural districts of Azerbaijan.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh has sadly greatly limited the organisation's activities. One training session has been held so far and WMWSCC hopes that more will be possible soon.

Design and launch of 2021 Small Grants Scheme

The BEARR Trust's 2021 Small Grants Scheme sought applications from across the region for projects to reduce the social isolation of people living with disadvantage, a problem made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic and referred to by respondents in our survey of CSOs in August 2020 (see below).

We did not specify the beneficiaries: instead, applicants were asked to describe the problems faced by the people they wished to help. Previous BEARR grantees were also invited to apply for some additional funding to help improve their organisational resilience as they adjusted to working under Covid-19 conditions.

We invited projects that would:

- involve partnership with, or extend collaboration to, other local organisations
- have an imaginative or unusual approach to reducing social isolation
- try to extend provision of support to other groups of people facing disadvantage or marginalisation resulting from their age, ability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or because of geography.

We received 227 grant applications. Over 60 % came from Ukraine, with at least one application from every other country in BEARR's region.

Survey of CSOs 2020

In August and September 2020, Anna Lukanina-Morgan, BEARR's Small Grants Officer, conducted a survey of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus to find out how their work had been affected by Covid-19 and the measures taken to combat it.

The call to take part in the survey was shared with BEARR's Small Grant Scheme applicants 2015-2020, and publicised on social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) and the websites of our partners.

We received responses from 328 CSOs based in 12 countries, mostly small (49% with fewer than 10 staff) and medium (29% with 11-20 staff members) and assisting with access to healthcare and education (53%). They painted a vivid picture of an increased demand for services and reduced resources, but also of innovative practices which had enabled many CSOs, although not all, to continue their work.

The key findings were published in BEARR's newsletters and on the BEARR website. We used the survey results to plan the November 2020 webinars (see below) and the 2021 Small Grants Scheme. As well as informing BEARR's

subsequent activities, the survey results were a useful resource for academic researchers. BEARR trustee Dr Charlie Walker drew on the extensive testimonies of individual CSOs in an article on welfare in the former Soviet Union submitted to the journal *Europe Asia Studies*, due for publication in 2022. The Trustees decided to conduct a further CSO survey in 2021.

2020 Annual Conference webinars

BEARR's traditional annual conference in London, usually attended by participants from around the region, was replaced by three webinars held in November 2020. The webinar topics were chosen after studying the CSO survey reported on above.

The webinars were recorded and are available to view on BEARR's YouTube channel. Full webinar reports by BEARR Trustees Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay, Janet Gunn and Megan Bick were published in BEARR's newsletters and on the BEARR website

Webinar 1: Civil society support for persons with disabilities

The first webinar explored how service-providing and advocacy disability CSOs are supporting persons with disabilities and their families in the EECCA region during the Covid-19 crisis. Particular attention was paid to their activities to address Covid-19's impact on community inclusion and to promote equal rights for persons with disabilities amidst lockdowns, social distancing and economic downturn. The webinar featured three speakers from different parts of the EECCA region:

- Gulmira Kazakunova: **Ravensto**, Union of People with Disabilities, Kyrgyzstan.
- Maia Shishnashvili: **Movement for Changes**, Georgia – an NGO which supports young adults with disabilities.
- Anna Bitova: **Centre for Curative Pedagogics**, Russia – an organisation helping children with mental disabilities and autism.

Webinar 2: Civil society and migrant labour

The second webinar considered the role of civil society in supporting migrant workers: a vulnerable group not hitherto much in The BEARR Trust's focus. It considered the particular challenges that the pandemic has thrown up for migrant workers in the EECCA region, and how civil society organisations are

assisting them. The following speakers, drawn from the legal and academic world as well as CSO practitioners, presented on the challenges faced:

- Khadicha Abysheva: Chairperson of the board of the **Legal Centre for Women's Initiatives, Sana Sezim**, Kazakhstan.
- Valentina Chupik: Executive Director at international non-profit organisation, **Tong Jahoni**, Uzbekistan.
- Daniel Kashnitsky: Junior Researcher, **Higher School of Economics, Moscow**, Academic Relations Coordinator, Regional Expert Group on Migration and Health.
- Dina Musina: Development Manager, **Civic Assistance Committee**, Moscow.

Webinar 3: CSOs and innovation in a time of pandemic

This online discussion looked at the ways in which CSOs have adapted their practices and methodologies to rise to the challenges of the pandemic, the key lessons they have learned and the needs that remain to be met. The speakers were drawn from different CSOs across the EECCA region:

- Kristina Spirina: **Winds of Changes**, Ukraine.
- Kurbonkul Kosimova: **Najoti-Kudakon**, Tajikistan.
- Anastasiia Stytsenko: **Youth Volunteer Organisation: Leadership**, Kyrgyzstan.
- Birodar Mirzaev: **Civic Initiatives Support Center**, Uzbekistan.

Annual Lecture 2020: Tom de Waal on 'Europe's Eastern Partnership/Russia's "Near Abroad" – living with powerful neighbours'

In most years The BEARR Trust's friends and supporters and others with an interest in our region get together at the premises of the EBRD in central London to hear a talk on a topic of current interest by an eminent expert, after which we enjoy chatting over drinks and snacks kindly provided by our hosts. In 2020 it was not to be. Instead, on 7 July 2020, The BEARR Trust held its Annual Lecture online for the first time. The lecture reached an audience of nearly 70 people. We missed the convivial drinks afterwards, always an excellent opportunity for members of the audience to engage further with the speaker, but enjoyed seeing our friends on the Zoom screen!

A full report by BEARR trustee Janet Gunn was published in the BEARR newsletter and can be read on the BEARR website.

Publications

BEARR has produced a regular **newsletter**, edited by BEARR Trustee Ann Lewis, almost from its inception. This developed from a simple black-and-white newsheet to a full colour biannual magazine issued in print and electronic format. It was supplemented for a decade by a monthly Bulletin drawing attention to coverage of news and events on the BEARR website. Together these publications provided an in-depth chronicle of BEARR's activities, the projects we have funded, and health and welfare developments in the region.

An archive of these publications is available on the BEARR website.

From early 2020, with the launch of BEARR's new website, both publications were replaced by a new bi-monthly newsletter distributed by Mailchimp to a list of subscribers. This format allows us to draw readers' attention to a wider range of material on the website.

BEARR news and events and **news from the region** remain the bedrock of the newsletters, and we also include longer articles and book reviews, and report changes to BEARR's staff, Trustees and volunteers, acknowledging the contribution they make to BEARR's activities. In 2020 we used the newsletters particularly to track the effects of Covid-19 in our region, with both ad hoc reporting and in-depth analysis.

The first issue in the new format, in February 2020, focussed on domestic violence, with a report on our November 2019 conference on that theme and a companion piece on issues of masculinity. It also featured an article on domestic violence in Russia, and reports from Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Georgia and Azerbaijan on projects dealing with violence against women and girls supported by BEARR's 2019 Small Grants Scheme.

Domestic violence continued to be a key theme throughout the year, with further **project reports** and news items from across the region. From April that theme became intertwined with the pandemic, as domestic violence was exacerbated by the Covid-19 restrictions imposed in much of the region. We carried reports from CSOs we had supported and partner organisations like HealthProm on how they were affected; analysis of the situation in various countries and articles on the effect of Covid-19 in Russian prisons and on migrant workers throughout the region. The newsletter was also used to launch our survey of the effects of Covid-19 on CSOs across the region.

Other highlights in the 2020 newsletters included reports of the Annual Lecture given by Tom de Waal and of the three webinars held in November, and the announcement of the 2021 Small Grants Scheme on the theme of reducing the social isolation of people living with disadvantage.

We are indebted to our volunteer Nathan Dampier for three major reports on the progress of Covid-19 and official reactions to the pandemic. The first two were snapshots of a fast-changing scene, as statistics and other information became available. The third focussed on the less-studied effects of the pandemic on rural communities in Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

The effect on labour migration was covered in more detail in an article by Janet Gunn, BEARR Trustee. Written in June 2020 when Russia was in lockdown, the report highlighted the precarious situation for many of the 12 million-plus migrant workers in Russia, often left without work or pay, and stranded away from their home countries.

To obtain a glimpse of the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on partner CSOs in the region, we asked some of those working on domestic violence issues how they were coping. We published on the BEARR website replies from Sezim Crisis Center in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Tolerspace in Kyiv, Ukraine; and Winds of Change in Odessa, Ukraine.

The BEARR Trust admires the resilience of all those making such efforts in difficult circumstances, and we hope they will be able to recover and keep up their work, perhaps using an enhanced set of tools, in 2021.

Website and social media

2020 saw a host of digital developments for BEARR in terms of its website, social media and use of digital platforms, catalysed by the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic which encouraged us to adapt and move more activities online.

In January 2021, BEARR appointed Ali Lantukh as its first dedicated Digital Trustee. Ali has since launched a revamp of BEARR's communications strategy and has recently started work on a comprehensive digital strategy.

Website

In 2018 BEARR had finalised its new brand and visual identity, which provided a starting point to begin work on our new website. The website was launched in February 2020, and we have witnessed a steady growth in traffic in terms of users and visits to the website month by month.

The most notable changes in users are proportional increases in the 18-24 age bracket – most likely students – and in the older age brackets. Taken together, these trends suggest that the new website's visuals and user experience (ease of use) is attracting a more diverse audience.

In terms of geographical reach, approximately 50% of our users and sessions held come from across the US, the UK, Ukraine, and Russia. A substantial percentage also comes from Central Asian countries.

Social media

Since September 2018, BEARR has been developing its social media strategy.

In December 2020, we set-up a YouTube account, predominantly to store recordings of all of our online events and ensure that they are easily accessible to the public. Our account has had 488 views and has 20 subscribers to date (June 2021). Clips of these recordings were also shared on Twitter and were well received.

BEARR continues to use its Twitter and Facebook accounts to promote events, share news of past and present grantees' projects and work, and interact with other organisations in the health and social welfare sectors, among other things. As of June 2021, the accounts had 293 and 1187 followers respectively.

In April 2021, BEARR launched an Instagram account to coincide with our 30th anniversary photography competition. This platform has been especially helpful in promoting the competition as well as connecting with younger people interested in the region in which BEARR operates. It has also helped us to connect with present and former grantees and promote their activities visually. BEARR's Instagram profile now has 108 followers.

Impact of online events

The online events described elsewhere in this report appear to have driven increased engagement with our website via weblinks in the recording descriptions and on email updates to attendees.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution and regulation

The BEARR Trust is constituted by a Declaration of Trust dated 27 April 1992 and Supplemental Deed of Variation dated 14 December 1995.

The BEARR Trust is regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales. Its registered charity number is 1011086.

Patrons

The BEARR Trust has a number of distinguished Patrons:

Vladimir Ashkenazy,
Elena Bashkistrova Barenboim
Robert Brinkley CMG
Lady Ellen Dahrendorf
Myra Green OBE
Bridget Kendall MBE
Sir Roderic Lyne KBE CMG
Michael McCulloch
Mike Simmonds
Rair Simonyan
Dr Robert van Voren, PhD, FRCPsych (Hon),
Sir Andrew Wood GCMG

Trustees

The board of Trustees reflects a wide range of experience and relevant expertise. There were no changes in the trustee body in 2020.

Trustees who have served at any time during the period from 1 January 2020 until the date of the approval of this report are:

Megan Bick
Jane Ebel
Ross Gill
Janet Gunn
Ali Lantukh
Marcia Levy
Ann Lewis
Biljana Radonjić Ker-Lindsay
Nicola Ramsden (Chairman)
Michael Rasell
Charlie Walker

Appointment and training of Trustees

Trustees are appointed by a resolution of the Trustees. Potential Trustees are sought through recommendation by existing Trustees, or through advertising. Since 2014, new Trustees have been appointed for a period of three years, renewable by mutual agreement.

All Trustees are given a copy of the Charity Commission publication, 'The Essential Trustee: An Introduction', and are referred to the full version of this document on the Charity Commission website and to The BEARR Trust's annual report and accounts. New Trustees are given an induction pack consisting of The BEARR Trust's governing documents, minutes of the most recent meetings of Trustees, and process notes prepared by Trustees and volunteers, describing all aspects of BEARR's operations. Trustees are made aware of BEARR's governance policies, covering conflicts of interest, automatic disqualification of Trustees, data protection, management of volunteers, monitoring and review, risk management, safeguarding, and financial controls. The BEARR Trust maintains a register of interests and declarations relating to automatic disqualification, in line with Charity Commission recommendations, that all Trustees are required to sign.

Trustee meetings and roles

Meetings of the full trustee board are held every two months. Sub-groups of Trustees meet more often to manage specific tasks such as conferences, workshops, publications, and the Small Grants Scheme. Individual Trustees take responsibility for different functional areas, such as fundraising, finance, volunteer management, digital development, and data security.

Volunteers

A significant amount of BEARR's work is done by volunteers, including by Trustees who manage operations *pro bono* in addition to their trustee duties. The Information Officer, the Small Grants Officer, and the Moscow Representative are the only people who receive fees for their work.

In 2020, as in previous years, we relied on volunteers for many important tasks: preparing and examining BEARR's financial accounts, translating for publications, interpreting on the webinars, and supporting social media. Volunteers regularly give over 100 days in total to BEARR each year, and their efforts, as well as additional time given by Trustees, help to keep overhead costs low.

We aim to ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers, whether a trustee or the Information Officer. BEARR provides interesting opportunities for volunteers of any age and at any stage of their career, including students and recent graduates. We particularly welcome volunteers with knowledge of the region and/or of its languages.

Networks

Networking is a key aspect of BEARR's charitable work, which depends on maintaining an active network of Trustees, Patrons, supporters and volunteers. We connect with other charities involved with countries in our area of interest through our website, newsletters, annual and regional conferences, and workshops.

Our annual lecture and our London conference are usually occasions when we can meet and engage with supporters — especially members of our Friends scheme — beneficiaries, donors and other contacts. Although we regretted not being able to meet people as normal in 2020, the webinars and online annual lecture enabled more people to participate, from a much wider area.

We are also keen to develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including organising joint events where possible.

Planning

All the Trustees participate in planning. We use a broad framework of objectives established for a five-year period, and then set an action plan for each year.

Five-year framework for 2016-2020

- Ensure stable multi-year financing from multiple sources, including foundations, companies and individuals (the Friends Scheme).
- Maintain an adequate pool of competent volunteers.
- Develop and, if possible, expand the Small Grants Scheme, ensuring more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of projects.
- Expand networking activities, including by organising an annual workshop in BEARR's region.
- Ensure that BEARR's information technology, website and social media presence effectively and efficiently support our grant-making and networking activities.

Action plan for 2020

- Raise an additional £20,000 per annum, preferably on a multi-year basis.
- Maintain an active network of Trustees, Patrons and volunteers.
- Ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers.
- Ensure BEARR makes effective use of the possibilities offered by information technology and social media.
- Develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including through joint events.
- Organise the London conference.
- Organise a workshop in Central Asia on the theme of combatting violence against women and girls

- Organise one or two public lectures.
- Issue six bi-monthly email newsletters and a printed annual report / almanac.
- Run a scheme offering small grants to CSOs and evaluate the 2019 Small Grants Scheme.
- Progress a project to evaluate the impact of Small Grants Scheme projects since 2007.
- Plan a further Small Grants Scheme in 2021.
- Formulate BEARR's objectives for 2021-2025.

Most of these aims were achieved. Although the pandemic prevented us from holding physical meetings, the Trustees were satisfied that the rapid move to online events had worked well.

Five-year framework for 2021-2025

At the end of 2020 the Trustees agreed a new five-year framework for BEARR's activities, coinciding with the period of our new multi-year grant. This now takes account of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and of climate change.

The BEARR Trust's Objectives 2021-2025 Global challenges and new ways of working with civil society
--

The challenges and opportunities for grassroots CSOs focusing on health and social welfare

- The consequences of climate change, including the mass displacement of people, will create health and social welfare challenges.
- Covid-19 will exacerbate existing inequalities regarding health and social welfare.
- Public and governments' expectations of CSOs to step up support to vulnerable communities will increase, mostly at a local level.
- Service-providing CSOs will have difficulties in reaching out to vulnerable beneficiaries in a safe manner.
- With reduced face-to-face contacts, CSOs will need to find new ways of networking and campaigning effectively.
- Financial sustainability will continue to be an important challenge.
- Public awareness of health and social welfare challenges – and public engagement and generosity – have increased.

How BEARR can support grassroots CSOs and people living with disadvantage
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- Continue to raise awareness of health and social welfare issues facing vulnerable groups and those CSOs supporting them in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- Support CSOs to obtain relevant tools and equipment to provide services safely

- Help CSOs to develop digital skills and to adopt new technologies for networking, campaigning and fundraising
- Support our existing network of CSOs to collaborate more effectively, creating hubs in different countries as platforms for learning and developing local leadership
- Continue to provide small grants directly to grassroots organisations and work with partners to support civil society in other ways

What BEARR will do to enhance its own capacity to support health and social care CSOs

1. Ensure stable multi-year financing from multiple sources, including foundations, companies, academic collaboration and individuals (the Friends Scheme).
2. Enhance volunteering by providing interesting and rewarding opportunities for people with experience, academics, students and young people to volunteer time and skills.
3. Evaluate, share lessons learnt and ensure sustainability of its flagship Small Grants Scheme: assess its achievements since 2007 and share best practices, including on monitoring and evaluation, with other practitioners and academics; identify opportunities for follow-up funding.
4. Enhance partnerships with academic experts in order to position and leverage BEARR as a useful information and best practice resource.
5. Ensure that BEARR's information technology, website and social media presence provide transparent and inspiring descriptions of how we promote better health and social welfare.

Action plan for 2021

This supports the new five-year framework:

- Raise an additional £20,000 in external funding, with multi-year commitments where possible
- Maintain regular contact with civil society organisations, including through surveys, in order to tailor BEARR's activities in response to evolving needs
- Run a scheme offering small grants to civil society organisations, and evaluate the 2020 Small Grants Scheme
- Prepare an overview of grant-funded projects since 2007, and design a data archive
- Design a scheme for small grants in 2022 in the light of information received from civil society organisations throughout the year

- Issue six bi-monthly email newsletters and an online and printed annual report / almanac
- Maintain a flow of up to date and informative content on BEARR's website and social media channels
- Extend BEARR's use of online communications for meetings, webinars and public lectures
- Organise an annual conference or webinar series
- Organise two or more public lectures
- Develop cooperation with the academic community in the UK and in the region, including through joint events and the development of a data archive
- Maintain an active network of Trustees, Patrons and volunteers
- Ensure that all volunteers have clear roles and feel supported by their managers

Risk management

The Trustees have considered the main risks that might prevent BEARR from fulfilling its charitable objectives. In general terms, BEARR's operations are not large or complex, and **governance and operational risks** are managed by appointing Trustees who contribute a wide range of appropriate knowledge and experience, and by recruiting skilled part-time administrative officers. The Trustees are therefore confident that they can both identify risks and make an informed assessment of new opportunities that might arise.

The Trustees have concluded that the main risk facing BEARR is **financial resource risk**, primarily the dependence on one funder for a significant part of BEARR's income. Over the five years 2016-2020 BEARR's activities were underpinned by the receipt of a multi-year grant totalling \$250,000, paid in instalments of \$50,000 per annum. The grant covered the full range of BEARR's activities and was the most important source of funding for the Small Grants Scheme.

In 2020 BEARR was awarded a new five-year grant from the same funder, worth up to \$75,000 each year from 2021 to 2025, and again covering all BEARR's activities. This has renewed BEARR's financial stability, ensuring that the Small Grants Scheme should continue at least until 2025. However, the annual grant is partly conditional on other fundraising by BEARR, so the amount received each year could vary.

The Trustees will continue to manage financial risk by planning an affordable programme of charitable expenditure, and by committing only to expenditure that can be amended in the light of future income flows. Since our most important source of funding is a US dollar-denominated grant, this includes considering changes in the US dollar exchange rate. We aim to mitigate this exposure by continuing to seek diverse sources of funding, ideally on a multi-

year basis. We forecast cash flows bi-monthly, and we observe a policy of maintaining a level of free reserves sufficient to fund at least one year's core expenditure.

The Trustees have further identified a possible **external and regulatory risk** through the spread of repressive legislation that could prevent us working with civil society organisations in certain countries of our region. This in turn could eventually impact the willingness of funders to support BEARR. The Trustees routinely monitor developments affecting civil society in the region and ensure that relevant news reports are featured in BEARR's bi-monthly newsletters.

Safeguarding Policy

In 2020 the Trustees adopted the following safeguarding policy:

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, especially children and vulnerable adults, from any harm that may be caused through activities delivered or funded by The BEARR Trust. This includes harm arising from the design and implementation of BEARR programmes, and the activities of third-party organisations in receipt of BEARR grants.

This policy sets out the commitments made by The BEARR Trust and informs BEARR Trustees, staff, volunteers, and grant beneficiary organisations of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

Definition of safeguarding

Safeguarding in its broadest sense means protecting people and the environment from unintended harm.

For the purposes of this policy, we use the definition adopted by the Department for International Development, which refers to safeguarding as *"preventing and responding to harm caused by sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment or bullying"*¹.

Policy statement

The BEARR Trust believes that everyone with whom the Charity comes into contact, regardless of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or nationality, has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Preventing and responding to harm is at the core of our mission to support vulnerable people in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. We seek to achieve this by supporting community organisations within the region to

¹ DFID (2020), [Enhanced Due Diligence: Safeguarding for external partners](#)

continuously improve approaches to safeguarding, as well as through The BEARR Trust's own actions.

BEARR Trust responsibilities

The BEARR Trust will:

- Ensure that all Trustees, staff, and volunteers are familiar with and know their responsibilities within this policy.
- Ensure that all third-party beneficiaries of BEARR grant support are aware of this policy and know their responsibilities within it.
- Carry out due diligence on third-party organisations receiving grant support from The BEARR Trust. We recognise that this must be compatible with the accessible design of our grant-making process, which aims to support a wide range of 'grassroots' civil society organisations (CSOs), many of which may have limited initial capacity.
- Share awareness of, and good practice in relation to, safeguarding, and encourage third-party beneficiary organisations to adopt effective approaches to safeguarding.
- Review beneficiary organisations' approaches to safeguarding through project monitoring and evaluation.
- Ensure that there is a process in place for safeguarding concerns to be raised and that safeguarding concerns are followed up on promptly.

Trustee, staff, volunteer, and third-party beneficiary responsibilities

All Trustees, staff, and volunteers within The BEARR Trust, and within all CSOs in receipt of BEARR Trust grant (and their staff and volunteers) **must**:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes safeguarding and prevents abuse.
- Report any concerns regarding safeguarding violations to The BEARR Trust.

All Trustees, staff, and volunteers within The BEARR Trust, and all CSOs in receipt of BEARR Trust grant (and their staff and volunteers) **must not**:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18.
- Sexually abuse or exploit children or vulnerable adults.
- Subject any child or vulnerable adult to physical, emotional, or psychological abuse, or neglect.
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children or vulnerable adults, including child labour or trafficking.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

The BEARR Trust will ensure that safe, appropriate, and accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to volunteers, staff, and third-party beneficiary organisations and the communities they work with. The BEARR Trust will also accept complaints from members of the public, partners, and official bodies.

Concerns should be reported immediately to the Chairman of The BEARR Trust. Reported safeguarding concerns will be considered by the Trustees at the earliest opportunity.

Review

The BEARR Trust is committed to continuous improvement. This policy will be reviewed by Trustees at least annually and will be supplemented with process notes and best practice as appropriate.

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2020

Despite the challenging and unusual circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, BEARR's finances proved resilient in 2020. The charity incurred a modest deficit of £4,500, smaller than the deficit in 2019 and lower than the projected outturn at the start of the year.

Income

Income in 2020 was £58,328, around 10% lower than in 2019. Our largest source of income was from a charitable foundation, which awarded BEARR a multi-annual grant over five years from 2016. This is denominated in US dollars and is worth \$50,000 per year, with the value to BEARR fluctuating depending on the dollar: sterling exchange rate. In 2020, the relative weakness of sterling meant that the grant yielded £39,373, some £2,133 more than in 2019. During 2020, we were successful in securing a further five-year grant of up to \$75,000 per annum, offering stability and scope for expansion over the next few years.

In addition to this major grant, we secured a grant of £3,500 from Just Trust. We also received £1,520 in regular donations from BEARR's Friends Scheme; in addition to some £10,633 in general donations. As well as several individual donations, these included the generous transfer of £6,470 from the Tushinskaya Children's Hospital Charity Trust, following the winding up of the charity.

We were unable to hold our normal conference and lecture in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. While this reduced our normal events income, we raised £1,199 through online lectures and webinars. The accounts for 2020 also include payment of £2,076 from the UNDP for the conference that we held in Moldova in 2019.

Expenditure

Charitable expenditure was £62,878 in 2020, compared with £73,131 in 2019.

The largest item of expenditure was on our Small Grants Scheme, which accounted for £30,638. This was somewhat lower than expenditure on the Scheme in the previous year (£38,147), partly reflecting a smaller field of applicants during the pandemic and the fact that we were unable to transfer funds to one of the beneficiaries. Over the five years up to and including 2020, BEARR has supported community CSOs with some £147,000.

Events expenditure was substantially reduced to £1,597, reflecting the shift to online delivery. Remaining expenditure included fees paid to our Information Officer, Small Grants Officer and Moscow Representative, as well as website, newsletter and administration costs.

Charitable expenditure accounted for around 94% of BEARR's total expenditure of £62,878. We are able to operate with low overheads thanks to the voluntary work of our Trustees and volunteers in delivering much of BEARR's activity.

Restricted and designated funds

BEARR had no restricted funds in 2020. However, we account internally for grants and donations that were intended for a specific purpose: in 2020, these related to the Small Grants Scheme.

Foreign currency

All funds received in foreign currency (principally, the large grant received in US dollars) are converted to sterling on receipt. BEARR held no foreign currency balances at the end of 2020.

Reserves policy

The BEARR Trust maintains unrestricted cash funds at a level sufficient to cover BEARR's operating costs and to pursue BEARR's principal objectives for at least one year. Unrestricted funds are monitored through regular budgets and cash flow forecasts, including accounting for funds that are designated for specific uses. BEARR has no investments.

Cash reserves at the end of 2020 were £41,650 (compared with £46,201 at the end of 2019).

Receipts and Payments Accounts 2020

For the period from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

Section A: Receipts and Payments

	2020, £	2019, £
A1. Receipts		
Donations	10,633	12,887
Friends' payments	1,520	1,035
Grants	42,873	47,229
Income from events	3,275	3,431
Other	27	53
Sub-total	58,328	64,634
A2. Asset and investment sales	0	0
Total receipts	58,328	64,634
A3. Payments		
Charitable expenditure	59,399	68,212
Fundraising and publicity	1,766	1,476
Governance	1,504	3,317
Other	209	126
Sub-total	62,878	73,131
A4. Asset and investment purchases	0	0
Total payments	62,878	73,131
Net of payments	-4,550	-8,497
A5. Transfers between funds	0	0
A6. Cash funds		
Cash funds at year end	44,071	46,201
Liabilities (see Section B)	-2,421	0
Total funds available	41,650	46,201

Section B: Statement of assets and liabilities at end period

	2020,£
B1. Cash funds	44,071
B2. Other monetary assets	
Gift aid debtor	2,898
B3. Investment assets	0
B4. Assets retained for the charity's own use	0
B5. Liabilities	0
Payment for Moscow Representative (payment pending)	2,421

Approved by the Trustees on 3 June 2021

Signed by the Chairman, Nicola Ramsden

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The BEARR Trust

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The BEARR Trust (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charities Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Carolyn Davis
High Thrushbank Cottage
Loweswater
Cockermouth
Cumbria
CA13 0RU

Date: 1 August 2021

Administrative and Contact Information

CAN Mezzanine
7-14 Great Dover Street
London SE1 4YR

Tel: +44 (0)20 7922 7849

Email: info@bearr.org

Website: www.bearr.org

Registered charity number 1011086