BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

England & Wales · Charity number 1061538

Details

Other names	BRCC
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	03327628
Registered	1997-03-24
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	The Old School Southill Road Cardington Bedford MK44 3SX
Phone	01234834931
Email	info@bedsrcc.org.uk
Website	bedsrcc.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE ANY CHARITABLE PURPOSES FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY PRIMARILY IN THE HISTORIC COUNTY OF BEDFORDSHIRE ("THE AREA OF BENEFIT"), AND IN PARTICULAR, THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION, THE PROTECTION OF HEALTH AND THE RELIEF OF POVERTY, DISTRESS AND SICKNESS.IN FURTHERANCE OF THAT PURPOSE, BUT NOT OTHERWISE, TO PROMOTE AND ORGANISE CO-OPERATION IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SAME AND TO THAT END TO BRING TOGETHER REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND STATUTORY AUTHORITIES WITHIN THE AREA OF BENEFIT.

Activities: BRCC exists to help people and communities in Bedfordshire to do more for themselves.Our main areas of work are:- Supporting Communities- Health & Wellbeing- Environment- Community Transport- Rural Development

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Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Accommodation/housing, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Environment/conservation/heritage, Economic/community Development/employment, Recreation
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** BEDFORDSHIRE
- Bedford
- Buckinghamshire
- Cambridgeshire
- Central Bedfordshire
- Hertfordshire
- Luton

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£2,320,235	£2,411,779	£1,817,502	86
2024-03-31	£2,370,069	£2,571,804	£1,909,046	83
2023-03-31	£3,548,222	£2,808,071	£2,110,781	94
2022-03-31	£2,888,801	£2,661,143	£1,455,232	89
2021-03-31	£2,345,953	£2,305,528	£1,214,114	86

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Janet Ridge	Chair	2025-04-15
Ashok Khandelwal		2023-11-30
Christopher Barker		2019-10-03
Elizabeth Rose Kirby		2025-11-04
JUNE MARGARET BARNES		
Joanne Kalsi		2025-04-15
Joel Carre		2023-11-30
Julian Polhill		2026-02-17
PAULA GRAYSON		
Rev Steve Marsh		2026-05-05
Sukhi Khooner		2022-11-21

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BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

England & Wales - Charity number 1061538

Accounts

Registered number: 03327628
Charity number: 1061538

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Trustees	C Barker J M Barnes J Carré B S George (resigned 5 August 2024) P Grayson, Chair Cllr T Hill (resigned 5 August 2024) J Kalsi (appointed 15 April 2025) A Khandelwal S Kooner M R Liddiard (resigned 1 September 2025) A Lovesey J Ridge (appointed 15 April 2025) I Riches (resigned 29 October 2024) C J Smith (resigned 31 March 2025)
Company registered number	03327628
Charity registered number	1061538
Registered office	The Old School Cardington Beds MK44 3SX
Company secretary	Mrs T Cowan (resigned 28 May 2025) C R Andrews (appointed 28 May 2025)
Chief executive officer	Mrs T Cowan (resigned 28 May 2025) C R Andrews (appointed 28 May 2025)
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ National Westminster Bank plc 81 High Street Bedford MK40 1NE Scottish Widows PO Box 12757 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Virgin Money Jubilee House Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4PL
Senior Management Team	Mrs Tracy Cowan Mr Cliff Andrews Ms Janice Janes Mrs Kate Ellis Mr Bill Simmons
Solicitors	Woodfines LLP 16 St Cuthberts Street Bedford MK40 3JG
Independent Auditors	Streets Audit LLP Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors Potton House Wyboston Lakes Great North Road Wyboston Bedford MK44 3BZ

TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charitable company for the year from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Since the group and the charitable company qualify as small under section 383 of the Companies Act 2006, the Group Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

The group and the charitable company also trade under the names Beds RCC and BRCC.

Founded in 1953 as Bedfordshire Rural Community Council, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) is a member of a national network of Rural Community Councils under an umbrella organisation, Action for Rural Communities in England (ACRE).

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a company limited by guarantee, having no share capital, and is a registered charity.

The charity was incorporated on 4 March 1997 and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The liability of its members in the event of the charitable company being wound up is limited to a sum not exceeding £10 per member.

b. Objects

The charity's objects are:

- to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community primarily in the historic county of Bedfordshire, and in particular, the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress or sickness.

- in furtherance of that said purpose, but not otherwise, to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same and to that end to bring together representatives of the voluntary organisations and statutory authorities in the historic county of Bedfordshire.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

c. Governance (including appointment, induction and training of Trustees)

The directors and senior managers of the organisation who served during the year are set out on page one. The directors of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. Members of the charity are entitled to nominate directors, from whom the Board is elected at the Annual General Meeting. All new directors are provided with an induction by the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board.

The Board of Directors meets quarterly. Many of its responsibilities are delegated to three Board Committees: the Finance Committee, the People and Projects Committee and the Strategic Development Committee, which also meet quarterly.

Day-to-day responsibility for the running of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive and five departmental managers (as listed on page two).

d. Pay policy for key management personnel

The charity uses the NJC payscales as a basis for all staff salaries, including the CEO and management team who make up the Key Management Personnel.

e. Related party relationships

The charity's trustees and officers are involved in a wide range of other businesses and organisations, as directors, trustees, employees and councillors.

Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council provide funding to Beds RCC but the trustees do not consider that any councillors who are also trustees of Beds RCC are able to influence the charity's relationship with those organisations.

Details of related party transactions are given in note 27 to the financial statements.

f. Financial risk management

The directors recognise that there are potential risks to which the charity may be exposed. The directors have identified five main areas of risk:

- governance and management of the charity
- operational risks
- financial risks
- environmental and external factors
- compliance with law and regulation

The processes for monitoring and mitigation of these risks have been identified and are recorded in a risk register. The directors have delegated the day-to-day implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the risk register to the senior management team. During the year the Board received reports from the Chief Executive and agreed actions to mitigate any serious risks.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

g. Grant making policies

In administering grant schemes, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity will ensure that:

- it only manages funding programmes that clearly fit in with its own priorities, objectives and mission
- there is an independent and representative panel of people established as the body accountable for making decisions on grant allocation
- staff carrying out developmental work with projects are not involved in any way with decision making
- all grants funds will be promoted and advertised in ways that aim to reach the full range of target beneficiaries, and the application procedures are straightforward, transparent and clearly explained
- once awarded, expenditure of the grant and monitoring of progress is carried out at appropriate intervals to ensure that the funding is spent for the purpose for which it is given
- all conditions attached to the offer of the grant are met – in the event of this not being the case, the grant offer will be withdrawn
- final reports are submitted from the recipients of the grant outlining the outcome of the funding
- appropriate financial records are kept and reporting obligations of funders are met.

h. Fixed Assets

Acquisitions and disposals of fixed assets during the year are recorded in the notes forming part of the financial statements.

Objectives and activities

a. Mission and role

BRCC exists to support local community life in Bedfordshire. Its role is as follows:

- A **coordinator** of local community activity to enable communities to do more for themselves and reduce reliance on the state

- An **intermediary** between public (and private) service providers and the people in local communities they need to reach

- A **manager of partnerships** across public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve common objectives (e.g. conservation, rural economic development)

- A direct **provider of services** (e.g. community transport) that help people to participate in the community

Objectives and activities (continued)

b. Areas of benefit

BRCC is still unquestionably the leading countywide organisation working with rural communities in Bedfordshire. However, it is not always helpful to make the distinction between urban and rural when services are delivered across whole local authority areas. While retaining its rural specialism, BRCC increasingly supports 'local community life' across all areas of the county.

Also, BRCC now operates outside Bedfordshire in some cases (e.g. where projects based in Bedfordshire have extended across county boundaries).

c. Desired outcomes

The high level outcomes that BRCC seeks to achieve are as follows:

- Communities are more involved in delivering local services and managing their local assets
- Potentially vulnerable and/or disadvantaged people gain more independence
- People increase their physical, mental and social well-being
- People with barriers to the labour market gain skills and employment
- Rural communities have a more thriving local economy
- Bedfordshire's built and natural environment is conserved and enhanced

d. Public benefit

Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 requires the Board of Directors to comply with their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

The Board of Directors has reviewed the organisation's mission and values (as listed above) in the context of its charitable purposes and considers that they meet the two key principles of public benefit as identified by the Charity Commission:

- there must be an identifiable benefit or benefits
- benefit must be to the public, or section of the public

BRCC has introduced a checklist for use to ensure that all of its activities are for public benefit. It is based on the two principles above and the relevant factors under each principle identified by the Charity Commission. All existing work has been assessed against the checklist, and it is used by the Strategic Development Committee to assess proposed new areas of work. As a result, all areas of the charity's work are deemed to be for the public benefit according to Charity Commission guidance.

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities

April 2024:
April was filled with Good Neighbour Group news and developments. New groups were launched in Milton Ernest and Pavenham. Houghton Regis Helpers (HRH) were delighted to receive the King's Award for Voluntary Service at Houghton Regis Memorial Hall on Thursday 18th April. This award is the highest award given to volunteer groups across the UK, and receiving it is a huge honour.

May 2024:
In May the Beds RCC project Time2Connect won the Mayor's Pride of Houghton Regis Award. The Time2Connect team were amazed and delighted to receive the Mayor's Award and to hear the wonderful citations that were read alongside the presentation. The team said that "it is a wonderful thing to be appreciated and valued for the work we do and have done and we are honoured to have received this special award for our work."

June 2024:
Warden Abbey Vineyard was delighted to receive a Bronze Medal at the 2024 Decanter World Wine Awards for its 2019 Sparkling Brut. The Vineyard had a bumper harvest in 2019 – one of the best since 2010 when Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (Beds RCC) took over the vineyard and set up the Community Vineyard Project. The volunteers work throughout the year to tend the vines and we are very proud that the quality of the wine we produce has been recognised by the industry.

July 2024:
Beds RCC once again partnered with Central Bedfordshire Council to stage the annual Cheering Volunteering event on the 17th of July. Cheering Volunteering recognises and celebrates the work of our remarkable local volunteers who contribute so much to our communities. Around a hundred volunteers attended the event at Central Bedfordshire Council's Priory House with a buffet, live entertainment and raffle. Our very own Mike Fayers led a short wellbeing walk in the local woods which was joined by nearly half of those attending!

August 2024:
A volunteer work party from East West Rail joined us at Ridgmont to help out with our garden. Some of the volunteers shared their thoughts:
"It was lovely; everyone was so welcoming from the first minute."
"Thoroughly enjoyed the whole day, it was great fun!"
"The museum, tearooms and station house are fantastic – keep up the good work!"

September 2024:
Together with Bedford Borough Council we launched Wellbeing in the Wild! Weekly group nature-based activities aimed to help support the wellbeing of women who are pregnant or have a baby under the age of one. These activities encompassed the Five Ways to Wellbeing - Connection, Be Active, Learn, Take Notice and Give Back. The sessions offered a chance to meet other parents-to-be or parents with young babies. During the sessions we offered simple seasonal activities inspired by nature, including mindfulness and art.

October 2024:
Warden Abbey Vineyard mentioned in The Telegraph. Warden Abbey Vineyard was recently mentioned in a recent Telegraph article on grape harvesting. From the piece: "Grape picking is a great way to meet like-minded people, while doing something outdoors which is good for physical and mental health. There's a fun, purposeful atmosphere, and whether you're actively picking or on a break from snipping, it's sociable. You'll discover a lot about how grapes are grown and how wine is made.

Achievements and performance (continued)

November 2024:
Our Community Rail and Green Wellbeing Teams were busy creating great new video, showcasing the Rails to Roots wellbeing gardening group at Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre. The community garden vision was always to become a showcase for community rail, and also become a new reason for people to travel along the lovely Marston Vale line that connects Bedford to Bletchley.

December 2024:
The Good Neighbour group Leighton Linslade Helping Hands (LLHH) reached their 10th anniversary! To mark the occasion, the group held a celebratory evening at Leighton Buzzard's Ship Inn, where volunteers and clients past and present got together with other special guests to have fun and to reflect on ten years of LLHH helping out their local community. Simon Patterson, who is part of BRCC's support team for all the Good Neighbour schemes in Bedfordshire, presented a commemorative thank-you certificate to Liz, the group's chair.

January 2025:
We continued to develop our Wellbeing and Warm Spaces offer over the winter period in many different Bedfordshire locations. These spaces were for people to come to enjoy a hot drink, some company, and support, if they need it. These spaces are free, and anyone is welcome to come along. In related work we also started recruiting for Winter Warmth Agents.

February 2025:
During February our fantastic volunteers from M.E.E.T (Men. Engage. Exercise. Talk.) spoke at the Bedfordshire Mental Health Alliance event on men's mental health! They did an incredible job highlighting the impact of M.E.E.T. and the positive difference it makes for the young men who attend. We're so proud of their dedication and passion!

March 2025:
Social Prescribing Day. We finished the financial year off in March by celebrating Social Prescribing Day. Over the course of a week we promoted all the fantastic work that our Social Prescribing team does. Delivering social prescription across Bedfordshire has been a significant part of the work within Beds RCC, and we're really proud of our team and the work that we're delivering and the difference if makes to those taking part.

This year has seen a great start in delivering our Strategic Plan which was launched in March 2024. Across our broad suite of services and projects we have made significant progress in fulfilling our mission of Building, connecting and serving communities who care for each other's wellbeing and the environment. As we look ahead, we remain committed to building on this year's successes and creating even more opportunities for connection, wellbeing, community and collaboration.

As always the team of staff, volunteers, trustees and patrons support our organisation selflessly with passion and enthusiasm and for that they need a special thank you in our report.

Supporting and Engaging Communities

Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
Good Neighbour and Village Care Schemes play a vital role within their communities by facilitating access to occasional voluntary assistance, akin to the support one neighbour might offer another. This assistance serves as a crucial factor in allowing individuals to maintain their independence and continue residing in their own homes.

This year we supported 44 groups within the Bedfordshire network. By March 2025 we had 1,247 volunteers who over the year have carried out more than 33,900 tasks. We ran training sessions covering Safeguarding Level 1 (via the CVS and Virtual College); Support for Carers and Powers of Attorney (via Carers in Beds and Pictons Solicitors) and BT/EE's Digital Switchover affecting those on Telecare and people reliant on landlines.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Village and Community Agents
Our Village Agents operate in all the villages within Bedford Borough, primarily funded by the Bedford Borough Council. This dedicated team of part-time Agents identifies individuals in hard-to-reach rural areas and assists them in enhancing their quality of life by connecting them with mainstream services or community support networks.

Furthermore, we have Community Agents who work with specific communities in Central Bedfordshire, thanks to local funding arrangements.

Our Agents supported 1,040 individual clients, including 623 new clients. 722 home visits were undertaken.

Village Hall & Community Buildings support
We are part of the ACRE national network of Village Hall Advisors, providing information, advice and support to Charitable Village Hall Committees.

We supported 175 halls with advice and guidance this year. The newly built Potton Hall 4 All was formally opened on Friday 28th February 2025 by His Royal Highness, The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO, to which the VHA was also formally invited. The VHA service has supported this project for many years providing advice and support on issues such as funding, governance and more recently on equipment and fitting out.

Housing and planning
Beds RCC supports local communities to plan for their future through Neighbourhood and Green Infrastructure (GI) planning. During the year we supported 10 Neighbourhood Plan groups; we provided support to groups via phone and email and also through attending their Neighbourhood plan steering group meetings. We worked with 4 communities on Green Infrastructure Plans.

In addition, we help rural parishes to meet their affordable housing needs by carrying out household surveys. This year we carried out 11 housing needs surveys, working in partnership with Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Plan steering groups, Local Authorities, Housing Associations and local landowners.

We continue to work as part of Eastern Community Homes, a community led housing hub for the Eastern region – formed with our ACRE colleagues in the East of England. We continue to raise awareness of the benefits of community-led housing projects.

We facilitate the Community-led Planning and Rural Housing across Bedfordshire, offering advice and support in creating a Parish, Town, Neighbourhood or Green Infrastructure Plan. In this year we led on the establishment of the Bedfordshire Rural Housing Partnership

Health and Wellbeing
The Community and Wellbeing team is there to promote and facilitate health and wellbeing for individuals and communities.

Community Referral
Our Community Referral (Social Prescribing) service allows GPs, nurses and other care professionals to refer people for non-medical, community based support and services via our Community Wellbeing Champions. It bridges the gap between the NHS and the community and frees up GP time.

During the past year our Community Wellbeing Champions received 3,806 referrals.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Targeted Mental Health Social Prescribing
Through our role as a key VCSE partner, in partnership with ELFT, we supported colleagues in the transformation of secondary mental health services. We have been able to embed the Community Wellbeing Champion into the new 'front door' to enable residents access support provided by Community Mental Health Teams. In the third year of this role we are seeing the benefits of this resource, supporting people to access quick and responsive care, offering holistic strategies to enable them to maintain their mental health and be independent of services.

Community Wellbeing Champions are working across clinical teams to support sustainable changes for people with serious mental health.

Jubilation Hub
In partnership with our funder BIG LOCAL, we have successfully launch the Jubilation Community Drop in to support residents to access support services, become physically active, enjoy a hot drink, soup or roll and make connections in their community.

The group runs every Monday with the support from our Community Hub Coordinator and Assistant. Our collaboration with residents who attend the session, our hub team have co-designed a variety of groups and sessions to engage everyone. Our own Community Wellbeing Champions and partner organisations regularly attend the sessions to provide support service to attendees.

During the year we launched a Jubilee Park Wellbeing Walk to run parallel with the Hub sessions.

Green Infrastructure and Sustainability

We also provide a range of Community and Countryside initiatives, including wildlife conservation and volunteering. This year we have been developing several new Green Infrastructure plans for villages including facilitated workshops, online surveys and drop in engagement sessions. We host the Upper and Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership. Beds RCC also leads on a number of 'Green Wheels' (linking publicly accessible green spaces and routes within and around rural towns) predominantly in the Ivel Valley area. During this year we were pleased to partner with Central Bedfordshire Council and The Greensand Trust to develop a Masterplan for an Ampthill & Flitwick Green Wheel.

Beds RCC continues to deliver a variety of other activities that involve local people in designing, conserving and being active in their local green spaces, including our Ivel Valley Conservation Volunteers.

Green Social Prescribing
Our Green Social Prescribing work has continued to grow, providing individuals with healthy outdoor activities to benefit their physical and mental wellbeing. We supported a number of community gardens in addition to creating gardens at our sites at Dunstable Community Halls & Ridgmont Station. We continued to coordinate over 40 Wellbeing Walks within the county, run a low-cost bike hire scheme in Biggleswade, ran taster conservation volunteer courses and led numerous natural wellbeing activities; including delivering sessions in partnership with Dunton Community Garden.

Ecology and Conservation Volunteering
Our in-house Ecologist supported landowners and Local Authorities in undertaking a number of habitat and species surveys to inform planning applications and land management decisions. Our hosting of the Upper & Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership continued our involvement in caring for the wildlife of our rivers. We support partners in the wardening and management of a number of community green spaces. Our Ivel Valley Conservation Volunteer group undertook 35 tasks including habitat creation and management; and access enhancements to countryside sites.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Community Engagement
We supported 5 communities with the development of their Neighbourhood Plans. This support often included undertaking Housing Needs Surveys and facilitating the production of Green Infrastructure Plans. Using online and postal surveys, facilitated workshops and face to face drop-in sessions, we enabled many residents to have a voice in planning and decision making within their communities.

Dunstable Community Halls
Dunstable Community Halls provides affordably priced space for hire either to individuals, organisations or local groups. During the year we supported a range of local community activities, including children's dance classes, adult pilates and zumba, ball room dancing, line dancing, educational presentations, health and wellbeing sessions. Our community gardens have continued to develop as part of our Green Social Prescribing offer. Barclays Bank use 2 of our rooms twice a week to provide a service to local customers, following the closure of their bank.

Voluntary Sector Support
We continued to provide information, support and signposting to a range of community groups seeking assistance with funding, governance and community engagement. We supported the planning and hosting of Central Bedfordshire Council's Cheering Volunteering event.

Community Transport
Community transport plays a vital role in meeting the needs of vulnerable individuals throughout Bedfordshire. This year was a challenging year with the previous year trading loss. We were focussed on gaining additional work whilst still delivering a great service to our existing contracts. In 2024/25 we travelled 45,016 miles with 9,181 journeys.

Door to Door / Greensand Country
Beds RCC operates two personalised transport services, commonly known as 'dial-a-ride,' to cater to individuals facing substantial challenges in utilising conventional public transportation. These 'Door to Door' services cover the entirety of Bedford Borough, and the 'Greensand Country' area of northern Central Bedfordshire.

Together, they extend their coverage across 75% of Bedfordshire, encompassing areas from Dean & Shelton in the north to Harlington in the south. Both services are closely intertwined, often utilising the same vehicles and drivers to provide efficient transportation solutions for the community.

The Dial-a-ride services continued to make a difference to those in our communities who needed it.

Road – Contract Work
Community Transport has needed to look at additional contract work to support sustainability and has built gradually. We will continue to look for additional work across Bedfordshire.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Community Rail Partnerships
Beds RCC oversees the operations of two Community Rail Partnerships: One for the Bedford to Bletchley line, known as the Marston Vale line, and the other for the Bedford-St Albans City line, referred to as Beds & Herts. Both CRPs work to engage the local community and help people get the most from their railway, promoting social inclusion and sustainable travel, working alongside Train Operating Companies to bring about improvements.

Marston Vale CRP commissioned BA Events to produce a Great Days Out Film for the Marston Vale Line as part of an extensive marketing campaign to relaunch the Line after a lengthy service suspension. The film can be viewed at https://www.marstonvalecommunityrail.org.uk/

The CRP also worked with Youth Inspired in Bedford to design artwork for Bedford St Johns Station. The project was runner up in the Small Projects Award (Projects Under £500) at the 2025 Community Rail Awards. Lidlington Youth Engagement was shortlisted in the Involving Children & Young People category and Friends of Bletchley Station were shortlisted in the It's Your Station Silver category.

Beds & Herts CRP and Marston Vale CRP jointly piloted a new venture with the railway companies providing work experience for students with additional needs from Bedford College's 'Pathways' initiative at five stations on their routes. The CRP also joined in with the Scouts Association's new venture 'Platforms for Change' for the first time, where the local cub pack 'adopted' their station at Harlington for badgework opportunities.

Both CRPs are looking forward to celebrating 'Railway 200' - 2025 is the Bi-centenary of the first public train service - and a number of events have taken place.

Digital Connection
Digital connection sees us working with people in Bedfordshire to help them become more digitally included, to teach and equip them to access online services that improve their health and wellbeing helping reduce loneliness and inspire confidence.

You Can Do IT!
The 'You Can Do IT!' project, which supports people to learn how to use digital technology has transitioned from its original Health-focussed funding to delivering broader sessions across Bedford and Central Bedfordshire. 10 active volunteers continue to support us as Digital Health Champions to provide that help within our 8 established groups. The project has welcomed 107 learners across all groups and delivered 655 sessions of individual tuition. Funding has been secured to extend and expand the scheme in 2025/26.

Supporting Culture and Heritage

Supporting culture and heritage is still a relatively new area of work for us, introduced by our 2024-28 Strategic Plan. We want to support the culture and heritage of our communities to ensure the preservation of the rich history, traditions and identities of different communities and societies.

Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre
We are responsible for Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre, a Grade II Listed building dating back to 1846, designed by the Duke of Bedford. We restored it between 2007 and 2013. We are open to the public with a museum, gift shop, tourist information point, tea room and office & meeting space. This year was quieter due to the lack of regular trains on the Marston Vale line but the volunteers continue to do a wonderful job manning the shop, conducting tours of the building and museum.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Dunstable Cultural Consortium
Dunstable Cultural Consortium is a partnership supported by Beds RCC and focused on enhancing and promoting the cultural landscape of Dunstable. The consortium aims to bring together various cultural organisations, artists, historians and community groups to create a vibrant cultural scene in the town. Over this year we have supported the partnership in seeking funds for future programmes and activities.

Corporate and Community Business
This section combines our two new Strategic Plan areas of Community Business and People and Partners. This area focuses on our Corporate teams, people and partnerships and our not for profit Trading arm. This area operates across the whole organisation providing services and support to all departments, as well as our two not-for-profit businesses.

Financial and HR management
The finance team struggled this year with the long term absence of the Finance Officer and the departure of the Assistant Accountant in 2024. The Executive Assistant who took over the HR records function has continued to support the team to grow and support the organisations policies and procedures.

Marketing and IT
This was a very busy year for our Marketing and IT teams. Due to staff changes the Marketing Team has had to work with reduced staff hours.

The Marketing team continues marketing support of our Vineyard and along with lots of other internal Beds RCC projects. This has meant significant of new design work using our graphic design skills in-house. Our following across social media continues to develop and we were very lucky to win some awards with the support of the team.

Ridgmont Station Tea Room
This is covered in the review of activities for BRCC Trading Services Limited.

Warden Abbey Community Vineyard
This is covered in the review of activities for BRCC Trading Services Limited.

b. Review of activities – BRCC Trading Services Ltd

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity operates a wholly-owned subsidiary company entitled BRCC Services Ltd, the purpose of which is to raise funds to support the charity. The officers of the company are:

- P Grayson
- J Richardson (appointed 28 October 2024)
- I Riches (resigned 29 October 2024)
- A Kandelwal (appointed 1 July 2024)
- S Kooner (appointed 1 July 2024)

- T Cowan (Secretary - resigned 28 May 2025)
- C R Andrews (Secretary - appointed 28 May 2025)

Achievements and performance (continued)

The main trading activities of BRCC Services Ltd are currently:

Ridgmont Station Tea Room
The Tea Room had a productive 6 months within Trading Services with close to 1% sales growth on the same period in 2023/24. The decision was made by the Board to transfer the Tea Room accounts into the Charity from the 1st October 2024. There were some themed events such as "Festive Afternoon Tea, "Mother's Day Afternoon Tea" along with some of the Community Rail Partnership Heritage events.

The external area has been planted with vegetables and cared for by the BRCC Rails to Roots Group.

Warden Abbey Community Vineyard
Beds RCC manages the Warden Abbey vineyard as a community project, in order to provide rewarding volunteering opportunities locally while also continuing to make award-winning local wines. This year was extremely challenging. We had issues again with disease on the vines and there was also the added disappointment of bird and wildlife damage to the grapes just ahead of harvest time. During the harvesting day, the team picked around 0.5 tons of our grapes. This has been our lowest yield and will again affect us in the future in terms of new stock.

Financial review

a. Reserves policy

The trustees have identified the need for the Charity to hold unrestricted reserves for three principal reasons:

a) To remain resilient and manage risk in an increasingly uncertain and volatile operating environment

b) To accommodate cash flow pressures at a time when a number of BRCC's income streams involve payment in arrears

c) To allow for significant contingency, particularly the costs incurred in the event of closing down the Charity

Its unrestricted reserves will therefore contain two elements:

1. Resilience funds: BRCC will hold between 1 and 3 months' total budgeted operating costs in order to provide sufficient cash flow for the organisation while enabling it to address future opportunities, threats and risks as part of its long-term financial planning, as well as sensitively managing the cessation of services to beneficiaries where required.

2. Designated funds: the trustees have designated a Contingency Fund (to cover the costs of winding up the organisation); a Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve (to cover extraordinary repairs or maintenance costs); and a Fixed Assets Reserve (reflecting the current value of its Fixed Assets). These funds will not be used day to day for the purposes outlined in 1 and 2. The trustees review the levels of these designated funds annually.

The Charity will not hold more reserves than it needs to deliver the aims of this policy, in order to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its current beneficiaries as effectively as possible.

The level of reserves held will be monitored monthly by the Management Team and quarterly by the Finance Committee. The Board will review this reserves policy annually.

b. Financial review

During the year, the charity and its trading subsidiary BRCC Services Ltd raised income of £2,320,235 (2024 £2,370,069) to enable it to deliver a range of activities under its charitable objects. This income came principally from local and central government, Lottery distributing bodies and other funders through a range of service level agreements, grants and contracts. A proportion also came directly from clients and beneficiaries (through fees and charges), and some from retail activities and donations.

Total expenditure during the year amounted to £2,411,779 (2024 £2,571,804), with the result that the overall net movement in funds for the year amounted to a deficit of £91,544 (2024 deficit of £201,735).

The operating deficit evident in 2025 primarily reflects situations where income was received for the purposes of delivering specific projects and programs in previous years and the resulting expenditure fell within the current year. This is an appropriate presentation of the income and expenditure and reflects our commitment to responsibly manage and allocate resources over the duration of our projects including those which span more than one financial year.

Transfers have been made for the value of fixed assets purchased in the year, so the balance in the Fixed Asset Reserve of £1,119,185 (2024 £1,155,911) matches the total net book value of the fixed assets as at 31 March 2025. The other designated reserves (Contingency and Buildings & Vehicle Maintenance reserves) have been maintained at the same level.

As a result of this year's activity, the Charity's General Fund deficit has reduced from £68,382 to £12,156. The general fund is, therefore, still below the minimum level set out in the Reserves Policy (above) and restoring the General Fund to the minimum level continues to be a priority for the trustees over the coming years.

The trading subsidiary, BRCC Services Ltd, reported a profit of £9,250 in the year (2024 loss of £3,909) and the cumulative losses amounted to £150,696 (2024 £159,946).

c. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

Plans for the future

- Continue to grow our Community and Wellbeing Service securing funding from LA's/ ICB and the Primary Care Networks and further expand into Green Social Prescribing, Digital Isolation and Children and Young People areas
- Expand our Community Transport Service through increasing the range of services and projects and look for greener opportunities for the fleet
- Look for opportunities to continue the refurbishment Dunstable Community Halls
- Continue to develop our presence in the South of the County and Luton
- Continue to expand our Rural Housing offer to provide the full Rural Housing Enabler service
- Continue to develop the Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
- To acquire full Museum accreditation for Ridgmont Heritage Centre and develop the offer
- Develop our Culture and Heritage offer including a feasibility study for developing a community eco-building for our Community Vineyard
- Continue to develop collaborative relationships with other local organisations and within the ACRE Network
- Continue to look for opportunities and diversify income streams where possible

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Group and the charitable company and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their 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 Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

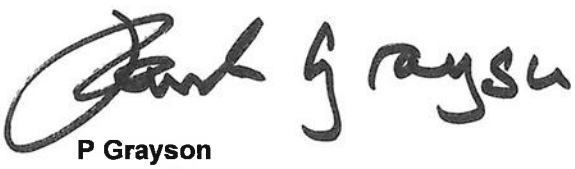
Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Streets Audit LLP, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

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



P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date:



C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Charitable company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the company and sector in which it operates;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, compliance with NHS Social Prescribing requirements and safeguarding of adults and children (including passenger assistance), requirements of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, employment and taxation legislation, anti-bribery, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

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

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

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

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statements and disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of governor meetings of those charged with governance; and
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Linda J Lord BSc BFP FCA TEP (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Streets Audit LLP
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditors

Date: 12 November 2025

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	**17,957**	**9,029**	**26,986**	*23,007*
Charitable activities	4	**2,000,837**	**125,795**	**2,126,632**	*2,164,950*
Other trading activities	5	**250**	**158,943**	**159,193**	*173,609*
Investments	6	**-**	**7,424**	**7,424**	*8,503*
Total income		**2,019,044**	**301,191**	**2,320,235**	*2,370,069*
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	**-**	**40,818**	**40,818**	*53,406*
Charitable activities	8	**2,181,881**	**189,080**	**2,370,961**	*2,518,398*
Total expenditure		**2,181,881**	**229,898**	**2,411,779**	*2,571,804*
Net (expenditure)/income		**(162,837)**	**71,293**	**(91,544)**	*(201,735)*
Transfers between funds	20	**37,079**	**(37,079)**	**-**	*-*
Net movement in funds		**(125,758)**	**34,214**	**(91,544)**	*(201,735)*
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		**806,463**	**1,102,583**	**1,909,046**	*2,110,781*
Net movement in funds		**(125,758)**	**34,214**	**(91,544)**	*(201,735)*
Total funds carried forward		**680,705**	**1,136,797**	**1,817,502**	*1,909,046*

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

The notes on pages 28 to 52 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Note		2025 £		*2024 £*
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**1,119,185**		*1,155,911*
Current assets					
Stocks	15	**34,766**		*40,320*	
Debtors	16	**340,247**		*205,925*	
Investments	17	**91,738**		*87,976*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**586,129**		*691,228*	
		1,052,880		*1,025,449*	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(351,622)**		*(259,610)*	
Net current assets			**701,258**		*765,839*
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		**(2,941)**		*(12,704)*
Total net assets			**1,817,502**		*1,909,046*

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	2025 £	*2024 £*
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	20	**680,705**	*806,463*
Unrestricted funds	20	**1,136,797**	*1,102,583*
Total funds		**1,817,502**	*1,909,046*

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date:

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 28 to 52 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Note		2025 £		*2024 £*
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**1,119,185**		*1,155,911*
Investments			**100**		*100*
			1,119,285		*1,156,011*
Current assets					
Stocks	15	**1,500**		-	
Debtors	16	**513,920**		*382,583*	
Investments	17	**91,738**		*87,976*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**581,072**		*688,248*	
		1,188,230		*1,158,807*	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(339,317)**		*(245,826)*	
Net current assets			**848,913**		*912,981*
Total net assets			**1,968,198**		*2,068,992*

CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Note		2025 £		*2024 £*
Charity funds					
Restricted funds	20	**680,705**		*806,463*	
Restricted funds	20		**680,705**		*806,463*
Unrestricted funds	20		**1,287,493**		*1,262,529*
Total funds			**1,968,198**		*2,068,992*

The charitable company's net movement in funds for the year was £(100,794) *(2024 - £(197,826))*.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date:

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 28 to 52 form part of these financial statements.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025 £	*2024* *£*
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash used in operating activities	**(96,378)**	*114,314*
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**7,424**	*8,503*
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets	**-**	*6,069*
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	**(2,620)**	*(45,656)*
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	**4,804**	**(31,084)**
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayments of borrowing	**(9,763)**	*(9,524)*
Movement in fixed term deposit	**(3,762)**	*(1,977)*
Net cash used in financing activities	**(13,525)**	**(11,501)**
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	**(105,099)**	**71,729**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	**691,228**	*619,499*
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**586,129**	*691,228*

The notes on pages 28 to 52 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. General information

As set out in the trustees' report, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is an unincorporated charity registered in England and Wales. The address of their registered office is The Old School, Cardington, Beds, MK44 3SX.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

The charity's objects are stated in the trustees' report.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 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 2015), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and Consolidated Balance Sheet consolidate the financial statements of the Group and its subsidiary undertaking. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

The Group has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

2.2 Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

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

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

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described below:

Allocation of costs - Direct expenses are charged to individual cost centres wherever possible. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of those resources.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Company status

Government grants relating to tangible fixed assets are treated as deferred income and released to the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities upon the completion of the relevant performance-related conditions. Other grants that are not subject to performance-related conditions are credited to the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities as the grant proceeds are received. Grants received prior to the revenue recognition criteria being satisfied are recognised as a liability.

2.4 Going concern

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate, i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

The trustees have reviewed the level of reserves held by the charity and are satisfied that they are sufficient to enable the charity to continue its activities for the foreseeable future and, accordingly, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

2.5 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

2.6 Income

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.7 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. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

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

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is made except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end are noted as a commitment, but not accrued as expenditure.

2.8 Interest receivable

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

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition are included in the measurement of cost.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation (continued)

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold property	- Over the remaining life of the property, assessed as 2% per annum straight line
Long-term leasehold property: Ridgmont Station improvements	Over the remaining life of the leasehold property being the 99 year lease for the Ridgmont Station building and 25 year lease for the car park land, both commenced March 2009
Long-term leasehold property: Other	- Over the remaining life of the leasehold property being 10% or 4% per annum straight line
Short-term leasehold property	- 10% or 20% per annum straight line
Plant and machinery	-
Motor vehicles	- 25% per annum straight line
Office equipment	- 25% per annum reducing balance or 33% per annum straight line

2.10 Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

2.11 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

2.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

2.13 Cash at 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 from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

2.14 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.15 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.16 Pensions

The charity provides a workplace pension scheme, compliant with Auto-enrolment procedures. The charity also continues to contribute to the previous stakeholder pension scheme for those staff who are eligible for membership under the terms of their contracts of employment. Pension contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities for the year in which they are payable.

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Other donations	17,957	9,029	**26,986**	*23,007*
Total 2024	*20,691*	*2,316*	*23,007*	

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Income from charitable activities	2,000,837	125,795	**2,126,632**	*2,164,950*
Total 2024	*2,097,184*	*67,766*	*2,164,950*	

5. Income from other trading activities

Income from fundraising events

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Rent received	-	84,975	**84,975**	*62,930*
Sundry income	250	503	**753**	*3,163*
	250	85,478	**85,728**	*66,093*
Total 2024	-	*66,093*	*66,093*	

Income from non charitable trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Sales	73,465	**73,465**	*107,516*
Total 2024	*107,516*	*107,516*	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Bank interest	7,424	**7,424**	*8,503*
Total 2024	*8,503*	*8,503*	

7. Expenditure on raising funds

Other trading expenses

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Cost of sales	36,027	**36,027**	*48,042*
Administration expenses	4,332	**4,332**	*4,666*
Interest payable	459	**459**	*698*
	40,818	**40,818**	*53,406*
Total 2024	*53,406*	*53,406*	

8. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	*Total 2024 £*
Charitable Activities	2,181,881	189,080	**2,370,961**	*2,518,398*
Total 2024	*2,319,201*	*199,197*	*2,518,398*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2025 £	Support costs 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Charitable Activities	1,997,628	373,333	**2,370,961**	*2,518,398*
Total 2024	*2,110,368*	*408,030*	*2,518,398*	

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Staff costs	**1,638,891**	*1,620,600*
Room hire, meetings and conferences	**10,618**	*16,737*
Publicity, publications and subscriptions	**27,833**	*45,721*
Printing, postage, stationery and telephone	**64,756**	*62,419*
Repairs and renewals	**67,648**	*70,949*
Contractors fees	**75,751**	*111,139*
Travel and susbistence	**8,092**	*12,031*
Recruitment and other staff costs	**5,841**	*7,033*
Volunteer's expenses	**1,507**	*3,085*
Rent, rates and service charges	**20,626**	*19,053*
Legal and professional fees	**9,807**	*6,066*
Grants paid	**5,830**	*59,253*
Vehicle costs	**42,510**	*50,212*
Lease costs	**15,257**	*16,374*
Marketing costs	**2,661**	*9,696*
	1,997,628	*2,110,368*

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2025 £	*Total funds 2024 £*
Staff costs	**229,792**	*246,939*
Depreciation	**39,346**	*37,851*
VAT lost on partial exemption	**9,128**	*13,270*
Premises costs	**76,450**	*92,742*
Bank charges	**2,190**	*2,180*
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	**-**	*(3,467)*
Bad debts	**953**	*3,010*
Governance costs	**15,474**	*15,505*
	373,333	*408,030*

10. Auditors' remuneration

	2025 £	*2024 £*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor for the audit of the charitable company's annual accounts	**14,000**	*12,250*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor in respect of:		
All non-audit services not included above	**4,000**	*4,250*

11. Staff costs

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*	Charity 2025 £	*Charity 2024 £*
Wages and salaries	**1,684,218**	*1,693,706*	**1,684,218**	*1,693,706*
Social security costs	**147,246**	*136,872*	**147,246**	*136,872*
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**37,219**	*36,961*	**37,219**	*36,961*
	1,868,683	*1,867,539*	**1,868,683**	*1,867,539*

11. Staff costs (continued)

The average number of persons employed by the charitable company during the year was as follows:

	Group 2025 No.	*Group 2024 No.*	Charity 2025 No.	*Charity 2024 No.*
Project staff	**83**	*80*	**83**	*80*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	86	*83*	**86**	*83*

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	Group 2025 No.	*Group 2024 No.*	Charity 2025 No.	*Charity 2024 No.*
Project staff	**48**	*51*	**48**	*51*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	51	*54*	**51**	*54*

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	Group 2025 No.	*Group 2024 No.*
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	**1**	*1*

The key management personnel of the charity are the trustees (who all give their time voluntarily), the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team. A total of £175,507 was paid to 3 members of staff for their roles as key management personnel (2024: £174,105 was paid to 3 members of staff).

12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits *(2024 - £NIL).*

During the year ended 31 March 2025, no Trustee expenses have been incurred *(2024 - £NIL).*

13. Tangible fixed assets

Group and Charity

	Freehold property £	Long-term leasehold property - Ridgmont Station £	Long-term leasehold property - Other £	Short-term leasehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation							
At 1 April 2024	**734,950**	**509,045**	**82,120**	**35,535**	**121,027**	**78,997**	**1,561,674**
Additions	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**2,620**	**2,620**
At 31 March 2025	**734,950**	**509,045**	**82,120**	**35,535**	**121,027**	**81,617**	**1,564,294**
Depreciation							
At 1 April 2024	**61,677**	**72,843**	**56,806**	**35,535**	**121,027**	**57,875**	**405,763**
Charge for the year	**23,753**	**6,789**	**2,828**	**-**	**-**	**5,976**	**39,346**
At 31 March 2025	**85,430**	**79,632**	**59,634**	**35,535**	**121,027**	**63,851**	**445,109**

13. Tangible fixed assets (continued)

Group and Charity (continued)

	Freehold property £	Long-term leasehold property - Ridgmont Station £	Long-term leasehold property - Other £	Short-term leasehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Net book value							
At 31 March 2025	**649,520**	**429,413**	**22,486**	**-**	**-**	**17,766**	**1,119,185**
At 31 March 2024	*673,273*	*436,202*	*25,314*	*-*	*-*	*21,122*	*1,155,911*

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

14. Subsidiary Undertakings

The following was a subsidiary undertaking of the charitable company:

Name	Company number	Registered office or principal place of business	Principal activity	Class of shares	Holding	Included in consolidation
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	4475077	England and Wales	Operation of farm shop, wine production and other commercial activities	Ordinary	100%	Yes

The financial results of the subsidiary for the year were:

Name	Income £	Expenditure £	Profit/(Loss) / Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year £	Net assets £
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	**74,050**	**(64,800)**	**9,250**	**(150,596)**

15. Stocks

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*	Charity 2025 £	*Charity 2024 £*
Goods for resale	**34,766**	*40,320*	**1,500**	-

16. Debtors

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*	Charity 2025 £	*Charity 2024 £*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**309,424**	*178,283*	**308,646**	*176,076*
Amounts owed by group undertakings	-	-	**174,541**	*178,865*
Other debtors	**5,042**	*22,826*	**4,952**	*22,826*
Prepayments and accrued income	**25,781**	*4,816*	**25,781**	*4,816*
	340,247	*205,925*	**513,920**	*382,583*

17. Current asset investments

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*	Charity 2025 £	*Charity 2024 £*
Bank deposit (over 90 days)	**91,738**	*87,976*	**91,738**	*87,976*

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*	Charity 2025 £	*Charity 2024 £*
Bank loans	**9,600**	*9,600*	**-**	*-*
Trade creditors	**41,038**	*33,169*	**40,606**	*32,717*
Other taxation and social security	**42,832**	*40,054*	**42,832**	*40,037*
Other creditors	**13,328**	*62,518*	**13,055**	*60,803*
Accruals and deferred income	**244,824**	*114,269*	**242,824**	*112,269*
	351,622	*259,610*	**339,317**	*245,826*

The trading subsidiary received a Bounce Back Loan which is guaranteed by the UK government and repayable in instalments.

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*	Charity 2025 £	*Charity 2024 £*
Deferred income at 1 April 2024	**62,478**	*138,266*	**62,478**	*138,266*
Resources deferred during the year	**199,954**	*62,478*	**199,954**	*62,478*
Amounts released from previous periods	**(62,478)**	*(138,266)*	**(62,478)**	*(138,266)*
	199,954	*62,478*	**199,954**	*62,478*

The charity receives some funding which has performance related criteria and is recognised when the income has been earned. Any income received in advance of the performance related criteria being met is deferred at the reporting date.

19. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*
Bank loans	**2,941**	*12,704*

The trading subsidiary received a Bounce Back Loan which is guaranteed by the UK government, repayable in instalments and is due for repayment within 5 years.

20. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	**1,155,911**	**-**	**(39,346)**	**2,620**	**1,119,185**
Contingency Fund	**150,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**150,000**
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	**25,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**25,000**
	1,330,911	**-**	**(39,346)**	**2,620**	**1,294,185**
General funds					
General Fund	**(68,382)**	**180,840**	**(103,201)**	**(21,413)**	**(12,156)**
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	**(159,946)**	**68,354**	**(40,818)**	**(18,286)**	**(150,696)**
VCSE funds	**-**	**51,997**	**(46,533)**	**-**	**5,464**
	(228,328)	**301,191**	**(190,552)**	**(39,699)**	**(157,388)**
Total Unrestricted funds	**1,102,583**	**301,191**	**(229,898)**	**(37,079)**	**1,136,797**

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds					
Bedford Borough Agents & GNS	-	132,877	(155,850)	22,973	-
Central Bedfordshire Agents & GNS	18,276	121,020	(107,348)	(18,276)	13,672
Community Hubs	-	65,619	(25,038)	-	40,581
Green Infrastructure	196,649	153,506	(205,147)	-	145,008
Rural Housing Enabler	22,014	51,545	(50,778)	(4,697)	18,084
Y2A (Youth 2 Adult)	11,417	14	(4,656)	-	6,775
Community Rail Partnerships	87,666	104,129	(101,419)	(62)	90,314
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	14,088	(35,938)	21,850	-
Dunstable Consortium	-	11,694	(68)	-	11,626
Community Transport	5,899	356,260	(377,450)	15,291	-
Timebank	51,978	47,753	(54,048)	-	45,683
Community Connectors	148,526	-	(88,593)	-	59,933
Mental Health Social Prescribing	61,479	189,025	(163,486)	-	87,018
Primary Care Networks	21,139	256,603	(260,018)	(13,834)	3,890
Social Prescribing CBC	113,267	267,470	(253,576)	-	127,161
CRSP LA (formerly Social Prescribing BBC)	-	233,805	(247,639)	13,834	-
GCLP Projects	16,565	-	(90)	-	16,475
You Can Do It	51,588	13,636	(50,739)	-	14,485
	806,463	2,019,044	(2,181,881)	37,079	680,705
Total of funds	1,909,046	2,320,235	(2,411,779)	-	1,817,502

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2024* £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	*1,150,708*	-	*(37,851)*	*43,054*	*1,155,911*
Contingency Fund	*150,000*	-	-	-	*150,000*
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	*25,000*	-	-	-	*25,000*
	1,325,708	-	*(37,851)*	*43,054*	*1,330,911*
General funds					
General Fund	*(25,530)*	*140,412*	*(132,896)*	*(50,368)*	*(68,382)*
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	*(156,037)*	*107,516*	*(53,406)*	*(58,019)*	*(159,946)*
VCSE funds	*9,501*	*4,266*	*(28,450)*	*14,683*	-
	(172,066)	*252,194*	*(214,752)*	*(93,704)*	*(228,328)*
Total Unrestricted funds	*1,153,642*	*252,194*	*(252,603)*	*(50,650)*	*1,102,583*

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2024* £
Restricted funds					
Bedford Borough Agents & GNS	*20,241*	*135,740*	*(170,122)*	*14,141*	-
Central Bedfordshire Agents & GNS	*70,530*	*88,836*	*(126,949)*	*(14,141)*	*18,276*
Community Hubs	*147,255*	*288,301*	*(238,907)*	-	*196,649*
Green Infrastructure	*15,916*	*15,443*	*(16,635)*	*(14,724)*	-
Rural Housing Enabler	-	*23,844*	*(1,830)*	-	*22,014*
Y2A (Youth 2 Adult)	-	*24,349*	*(12,932)*	-	*11,417*
Community Rail Partnerships	*92,241*	*110,679*	*(115,254)*	-	*87,666*
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	*17,009*	*(35,689)*	*18,680*	-
Ridgmont Station	-	*1,746*	*(30,922)*	*29,176*	-
Dunstable Consortium	*49,955*	-	*(67,473)*	*17,518*	-
Community Transport	*11,942*	*372,973*	*(379,016)*	-	*5,899*
Timebank	*41,172*	*112,712*	*(101,906)*	-	*51,978*
Community Connectors	*150,000*	-	*(1,474)*	-	*148,526*
Mental Health Social Prescribing	*35,889*	*166,304*	*(140,714)*	-	*61,479*
Primary Care Networks	*35,921*	*239,454*	*(254,236)*	-	*21,139*
Social Prescribing CBC	*133,393*	*264,957*	*(284,564)*	*(519)*	*113,267*
CRSP LA (formerly Social Prescribing BBC)	*5,255*	*231,903*	*(237,677)*	*519*	-
GCLP Projects	*58,639*	*30*	*(42,104)*	-	*16,565*
You Can Do It	*88,790*	*23,595*	*(60,797)*	-	*51,588*
	957,139	*2,117,875*	*(2,319,201)*	*50,650*	*806,463*
Total of funds	*2,110,781*	*2,370,069*	*(2,571,804)*	-	*1,909,046*

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Designated Funds:

Fixed Asset Reserve:
This fund represents the total net book value of the Charity's Tangible Fixed Assets which comprise: Freehold Property, Leasehold Land & Buildings, Renovation work at Ridgmont Station, Improvements made to the Cardington Office, Motor vehicles and Fixtures, fittings & equipment. Transfers to the fund represent the value of assets purchased or donated during the year and depreciation is charged as an expense of the fund.

Contingency Reserve:
This fund represents the Trustees' calculation of the likely costs that would be incurred in the event of having to wind up the Charity. It comprises staff redundancy payments and commitments on leases.

Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve:
This fund has been designated to cover any extraordinary repairs and maintenance that may be required to the Cardington office and the Charity's vehicles.

Restricted Funds:

Bedford Borough Agents & Good Neighbours Scheme:
Funding from Bedford Borough Council (Adult Services) supports the Carers Short Break Bureau; the Good Neighbours Schemes and the Village Agents "Just Ask" initiative.

Central Bedfordshire Agents & Good Neighbours Scheme:
Funding from Central Bedfordshire Council enables the charity to provide care for adults through the Village Care Scheme.

Community Hubs:
The charity has received funding to provide wellbeing spaces across Bedfordshire for vulnerable and isolated individuals to enjoy a hot drink, company and support.

Green Infrastructure:
Several funding streams are ring fenced for the provision of services, purchase of capital items and payments to contractors in respect of various environmental sites managed by the charity's Green Infrastructure Team. Costs are charged to the fund as and when the various projects are delivered, in partnership with local authorities.

Rural Housing Enabler:
Funding from Defra (administered by ACRE) has been received to expand the Rural Housing Service, appoint a Rural Housing Enabler and set up the Bedfordshire Rural Housing Partnership with the aim of increasing the provision of affordable rural housing.

Y2A (Youth 2 Adult):
Funding received from BLCF's Mental Health Collaboration Fund has enabled the charity to run a 12 month youth engagement programme, run by a newly appointed Children & Young People's Worker.

Community Rail Partnerships
- Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership (MVCRP):
The charity employs the MVCRP Officer, funded through Service Level Agreements with London Midland Trains, West Midlands Trains Ltd and Milton Keynes Borough Councils, to publicise and promote increased usage of the Marston Vale Community Rail Line.

20. Statement of funds (continued)

- Beds and Herts CRP:
The charity receives funding from Greater Thameslink Railway to employ a community rail officer on the Bedford to St Albans Line.

Warden Abbey Vineyard:
The charity receives grant income and donations to assist with the cost of managing the Warden Abbey Vineyard, used to provide opportunities for volunteering. The vineyard management costs have been charged to the restricted fund and a transfer of £21,850 (2024 £18,680) has been made from general funds to support the project.

Dunstable Consortium:
Funding from Historic England is part of a nationwide initiative to secure lasting improvements to historic high streets for the communities who use them.

Community Transport:
The charity provides community transport services under the Door to Door and Greensand Community Transport agreements, and to individuals with special needs.

Timebank:
Funds have been provided to encourage and support the development of Timebanks, across Central Bedfordshire, where people can help their neighbours and those within their community by sharing their time, interests and skills.

Community Connectors:
Funding of £150,000 was received in February 2023 to appoint community connectors in Bedford Borough and in Central Bedfordshire.

Primary Care Networks, Mental Health and Community Referral Social Prescribing (CRSP):
The charity has been commissioned by Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council to provide Social Prescribing services to Primary Care Networks and GP surgeries across Bedfordshire. The programme supports patients with social, emotional or practical needs by finding non-clinical solutions that will improve their health and wellbeing.

Greensand Country Landscape Programme (GCLP):
A balance of funding remains from the Heritage Lottery Fund grant, administered on behalf of the Greensand Ridge Landscape Partnership, to establish the Greensand Ridge area of Bedfordshire as a living and working landscape. .

You Can Do It:
Funding from NHS Charities Together and NHS England (via BLMK CCG) is used to develop and deliver a digital inclusion project, so individuals have the skills, devices and connectivity to access online health and wellbeing services.

21. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
Designated funds	**1,330,911**	**-**	**(39,346)**	**2,620**	**1,294,185**
General funds	**(228,328)**	**301,191**	**(190,552)**	**(39,699)**	**(157,388)**
Restricted funds	**806,463**	**2,019,044**	**(2,181,881)**	**37,079**	**680,705**
	1,909,046	**2,320,235**	**(2,411,779)**	**-**	**1,817,502**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2024* £
Designated funds	*1,325,708*	*-*	*(37,851)*	*43,054*	*1,330,911*
General funds	*(172,066)*	*252,194*	*(214,752)*	*(93,704)*	*(228,328)*
Restricted funds	*957,139*	*2,117,875*	*(2,319,201)*	*50,650*	*806,463*
	2,110,781	*2,370,069*	*(2,571,804)*	*-*	*1,909,046*

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	1,119,185	**1,119,185**
Current assets	947,795	105,085	**1,052,880**
Creditors due within one year	(267,090)	(84,532)	**(351,622)**
Creditors due in more than one year	-	(2,941)	**(2,941)**
Total	680,705	1,136,797	**1,817,502**

22. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Restricted funds 2024 £	*Unrestricted funds 2024 £*	*Total funds 2024 £*
Tangible fixed assets	-	*1,155,911*	*1,155,911*
Current assets	*932,386*	*93,063*	*1,025,449*
Creditors due within one year	*(125,923)*	*(133,687)*	*(259,610)*
Creditors due in more than one year	-	*(12,704)*	*(12,704)*
Total	*806,463*	*1,102,583*	*1,909,046*

23. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*
Net expenditure for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**(91,544)**	*(201,735)*
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	**39,346**	*37,851*
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**(7,424)**	*(8,503)*
Loss/(profit) on the sale of fixed assets	**-**	*(3,467)*
Decrease in stocks	**5,554**	*1,697*
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**(134,322)**	*326,256*
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**92,012**	*(37,785)*
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**(96,378)**	*114,314*

24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*
Cash in hand	**586,129**	*691,228*
Total cash and cash equivalents	**586,129**	*691,228*

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2024 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2025 £
Cash at bank and in hand	**691,228**	**(105,099)**	**586,129**
Debt due within 1 year	**(9,600)**	**-**	**(9,600)**
Debt due after 1 year	**(12,704)**	**9,763**	**(2,941)**
Liquid investments	**87,976**	**3,762**	**91,738**
	756,900	**(91,574)**	**665,326**

26. Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2025 the Group and the charitable company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2025 £	*Group 2024 £*	Charity 2025 £	*Charity 2024 £*
Not later than 1 year	**14,352**	*14,352*	**14,352**	*14,352*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**16,744**	*33,488*	**16,744**	*33,488*
	31,096	*47,840*	**31,096**	*47,840*

27. Related party transactions

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary company, BRCC Trading Services Limited, operates from the Cardington Office and is managed by staff employed by the parent charity. Staff costs and overhead costs totalling £21,141 (2024 £48,643) were recharged to BRCC Trading Services Limited during the year, together with recharged expenses of £641 (2024 £2,722). BRCC Trading Services Limited reported a profit of £9,250 for the year ended 31 March 2025 (2024 loss of £3,756).

The charity advanced a loan of £30,000 to the subsidiary company in previous years. Interest of £2,382 (2024 £1,858) has been charged on the loan at a rate of 3.0% above the bank base rate. At the balance sheet date, BRCC Trading Services Limited owed the charity a total of £174,541 (2024 £178,865) in respect of the loans and staff recharges which remained unpaid at the balance sheet date.

The charity also worked with the following organisations:

- Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council - organisations where some trustees and their close family members are employed, or where trustees serve as local or borough councillors.

No one person is considered to be in a position to exercise significant influence over these organisations and consequently no details of the related party transactions are disclosed in these financial statements.

28. Taxation

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a registered charity and therefore is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

29. Members' liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

England & Wales - Charity number 1061538

Accounts

Registered number: 03327628
Charity number: 1061538

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees	C Barker J M Barnes B S George P Grayson, Chair Cllr T Hill S Khooner A Lovesey B G Prickett (resigned 30 November 2023) I Riches C J Smith M R Liddiard (appointed 30 November 2023) J Carre (appointed 28 February 2024) A Khandelwal (appointed 27 February 2024)
Company registered number	03327628
Charity registered number	1061538
Registered office	The Old School Cardington Beds MK44 3SX
Company secretary	Mrs T Cowan
Chief executive officer	Mrs T Cowan
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ National Westminster Bank plc 81 High Street Bedford MK40 1NE Scottish Widows PO Box 12757 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Virgin Money Jubilee House Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4PL
Senior Management Team	Mr Cliff Andrews Ms Janice Janes Mrs Kate Ellis Mr Bill Simmons
Solicitors	Woodfines LLP 16 St Cuthberts Street Bedford MK40 3JG
Independent Auditors	Streets Audit LLP Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors Potton House Wyboston Lakes Great North Road Wyboston Bedford MK44 3BZ

TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charitable company for the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Since the group and the charitable company qualify as small under section 383 of the Companies Act 2006, the Group Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

The group and the charitable company also trade under the names Beds RCC and BRCC.

Founded in 1953 as Bedfordshire Rural Community Council, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) is a member of a national network of Rural Community Councils under an umbrella organisation, Action for Rural Communities in England (ACRE).

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a company limited by guarantee, having no share capital, and is a registered charity.

The charity was incorporated on 4 March 1997 and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The liability of its members in the event of the charitable company being wound up is limited to a sum not exceeding £10 per member.

b. Objects

The charity's objects are:

- to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community primarily in the historic county of Bedfordshire, and in particular, the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress or sickness.

- in furtherance of that said purpose, but not otherwise, to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same and to that end to bring together representatives of the voluntary organisations and statutory authorities in the historic county of Bedfordshire.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

c. Governance (including appointment, induction and training of Trustees)

The directors and senior managers of the organisation who served during the year are set out on page one. The directors of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. Members of the charity are entitled to nominate directors, from whom the Board is elected at the Annual General Meeting. All new directors are provided with an induction by the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board.

The Board of Directors meets quarterly. Many of its responsibilities are delegated to three Board Committees: the Finance Committee, the People and Projects Committee and the Strategic Development Committee, which also meet quarterly.

Day-to-day responsibility for the running of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive and five departmental managers (as listed on page two).

d. Pay policy for key management personnel

The charity uses the NJC payscales as a basis for all staff salaries, including the CEO and management team who make up the Key Management Personnel.

e. Related party relationships

The charity's trustees and officers are involved in a wide range of other businesses and organisations, as directors, trustees, employees and councillors.

Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council provide funding to Beds RCC but the trustees do not consider that any councillors who are also trustees of Beds RCC are able to influence the charity's relationship with those organisations.

Details of related party transactions are given in note 27 to the financial statements.

f. Financial risk management

The directors recognise that there are potential risks to which the charity may be exposed. The directors have identified five main areas of risk:

- governance and management of the charity
- operational risks
- financial risks
- environmental and external factors
- compliance with law and regulation

The processes for monitoring and mitigation of these risks have been identified and are recorded in a risk register. The directors have delegated the day-to-day implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the risk register to the senior management team. During the year the Board received reports from the Chief Executive and agreed actions to mitigate any serious risks.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

g. Grant making policies

In administering grant schemes, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity will ensure that:

- it only manages funding programmes that clearly fit in with its own priorities, objectives and mission
- there is an independent and representative panel of people established as the body accountable for making decisions on grant allocation
- staff carrying out developmental work with projects are not involved in any way with decision making
- all grants funds will be promoted and advertised in ways that aim to reach the full range of target beneficiaries, and the application procedures are straightforward, transparent and clearly explained
- once awarded, expenditure of the grant and monitoring of progress is carried out at appropriate intervals to ensure that the funding is spent for the purpose for which it is given
- all conditions attached to the offer of the grant are met – in the event of this not being the case, the grant offer will be withdrawn
- final reports are submitted from the recipients of the grant outlining the outcome of the funding
- appropriate financial records are kept and reporting obligations of funders are met.

h. Fixed Assets

Acquisitions and disposals of fixed assets during the year are recorded in the notes forming part of the financial statements.

Objectives and activities

a. Mission and role

BRCC exists to support local community life in Bedfordshire. Its role is as follows:

- A **coordinator** of local community activity to enable communities to do more for themselves and reduce reliance on the state

- An **intermediary** between public (and private) service providers and the people in local communities they need to reach

- A **manager of partnerships** across public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve common objectives (e.g. conservation, rural economic development)

- A direct **provider of services** (e.g. community transport) that help people to participate in the community

Objectives and activities (continued)

b. Areas of benefit

BRCC is still unquestionably the leading countywide organisation working with rural communities in Bedfordshire. However, it is not always helpful to make the distinction between urban and rural when services are delivered across whole local authority areas. While retaining its rural specialism, BRCC increasingly supports 'local community life' across all areas of the county.

Also, BRCC now operates outside Bedfordshire in some cases (e.g. where projects based in Bedfordshire have extended across county boundaries).

c. Desired outcomes

The high level outcomes that BRCC seeks to achieve are as follows:

- Communities are more involved in delivering local services and managing their local assets
- Potentially vulnerable and/or disadvantaged people gain more independence
- People increase their physical, mental and social well-being
- People with barriers to the labour market gain skills and employment
- Rural communities have a more thriving local economy
- Bedfordshire's built and natural environment is conserved and enhanced

d. Public benefit

Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 requires the Board of Directors to comply with their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

The Board of Directors has reviewed the organisation's mission and values (as listed above) in the context of its charitable purposes and considers that they meet the two key principles of public benefit as identified by the Charity Commission:

- there must be an identifiable benefit or benefits
- benefit must be to the public, or section of the public

BRCC has introduced a checklist for use to ensure that all of its activities are for public benefit. It is based on the two principles above and the relevant factors under each principle identified by the Charity Commission. All existing work has been assessed against the checklist, and it is used by the Strategic Development Committee to assess proposed new areas of work. As a result, all areas of the charity's work are deemed to be for the public benefit according to Charity Commission guidance.

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities

Beds RCC Annual Review: A Year of Growth, Community and Impact

April 2023: A Blooming Good Start The year began with a flourish as Beds RCC launched the 'Rails to Roots' gardening group at the Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre and Tea Room. This initiative has not only transformed the courtyard garden into a vibrant community space but also extended our green wellbeing projects to a new area of Bedfordshire. The group's efforts have created a peaceful retreat that visitors and locals alike have come to cherish, adding a new dimension to our services in the region.

May 2023: Coronation Celebrations and Community Engagement In May, we joined in the national celebration of His Majesty, The King's Coronation by participating in 'The Big Help Out'. Warden Abbey Vineyard opened its doors for two taster days, inviting the community to experience volunteering in a unique and meaningful way. These events highlighted the spirit of service that is at the heart of Beds RCC's mission, connecting people to nature and to each other through shared work and purpose.

June 2023: Honouring Our Volunteers Volunteer recognition took centre stage in June as we celebrated Volunteers Week. Our dedicated volunteers from Ridgmont, Bedford St Johns, Lidlington Stations, Warden Abbey Vineyard and Dunstable Community Halls' Garden Group were among the guests at the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Susan Lousada's garden party.

This event was a heartfelt acknowledgment of the countless hours our volunteers contribute, making our communities stronger and more resilient.

July 2023: National Spotlight on Local Treasures In July, Warden Abbey Vineyard gained national attention with a feature in the renowned food magazine delicious. The article highlighted the unique volunteer-driven approach of the vineyard, underscoring how community involvement enhances the quality of our wine and strengthens local ties. This recognition was a proud moment, showcasing how Beds RCC's projects not only serve local needs but also stand out on a national stage.

August 2023: Pedalling Forward and Family Fun August marked the successful launch of 'BigglesBikes' in Biggleswade, a community bike scheme that saw nearly 50 new users in its first month. This initiative encourages healthy, sustainable transport and adds to the vibrant community life in the area. Additionally, our 'Walk on the Wild Side' family walks provided free, nature-based activities during the summer holidays, helping families connect with the outdoors in meaningful ways.

September 2023: New Beginnings and Well-Deserved Recognitions September was a month of milestones. The Potton Green Wheel walking route was unveiled, offering residents and visitors a new way to explore the natural beauty of the area. The Bedfordshire Mental Health Alliance held its first meeting, a collaborative effort between Beds RCC, Mind BLMK, and Carers in Bedfordshire, reflecting our commitment to mental health support. The launch of Dunstable Community Halls and 'Lily's Garden' after extensive renovations provided a renewed space for community activities. Our efforts were further validated as Warden Abbey Vineyard won the 'Made in Bedfordshire' category at the CPRE Bedfordshire Living Countryside Awards, with Lily's Garden earning a Highly Commended recognition at the Dunstable in Bloom awards.

October 2023: Royal Encounters and Local Innovations October was a month of royal connections and local creativity. Beds RCC staff had the honour of meeting Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal at the Rural Housing Conference, a prestigious event hosted by the English Rural Housing Association. The launch of Ridgmont Heritage's new 'Rail Ale' at our Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre brought a fusion of local art and craft beer to the community, whilst the Jubilation Community Hub opened its doors, providing a warm, welcoming space for Bedford residents.

Achievements and performance (continued)

November 2023: Celebrating Service and Innovation In November, Houghton Regis Helpers received the King's Award for Voluntary Service 2023, a testament to their unwavering dedication to providing Good Neighbour help. Additionally, our M.E.E.T. (Men, Exercise, Engage, Talk) program was shortlisted for the Self-Care Forum's Innovation Awards, recognising its impact on men's health and well-being.

December 2023: Milestones and Festive Cheer The year closed on a festive note with Meppershall GNOMES celebrating their 10th anniversary with an Afternoon Tea. Meanwhile, the Jubilation Hub brought the community together with natural craft sessions, teaching members how to create handmade festive decorations and gifts, fostering a spirit of creativity and togetherness during the holiday season.

January 2024: Winter Wellbeing and New Opportunities As winter set in, Beds RCC extended its Green Social Prescribing offer with the Ivel Valley Winter Wellbeing Group. This program provided a sanctuary for individuals to engage in gardening and relaxation at Dunton Community Garden, proving that the benefits of green spaces are year-round.

February 2024: Strategic Vision and Legacy February was a time for reflection and future planning as BRCC held its Strategic Plan Launch. This event brought together staff, trustees, patrons, and partners to celebrate our achievements and outline our vision for the future. We also premiered our 70th Anniversary video, a timely reminder of our enduring commitment to the communities we serve.

March 2024: Going Green and Embracing the Future The reporting year culminated in March with Village Halls Week, where we shared exciting updates on our efforts to help village halls and community buildings across Bedfordshire 'Go Green'. This initiative aligns with our commitment to sustainability and community resilience, setting the stage for a greener, more connected future.

This year has been one of growth, celebration, and impactful change for Beds RCC. From new projects and royal recognitions to national spotlights and community milestones, we have continued to fulfil our mission of supporting and enriching rural and urban communities across Bedfordshire. As we look ahead, we remain committed to building on this year's successes and creating even more opportunities for connection, wellbeing, community and collaboration.

As always the team of staff, volunteers, trustees and patrons support our organisation selflessly with passion and enthusiasm and for that they need a special thank you in our report.

Supporting and Engaging Communities

Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
Good Neighbour and Village Care Schemes play a vital role within their communities by facilitating access to occasional voluntary assistance, akin to the support one neighbour might offer another. This assistance serves as a crucial factor in allowing individuals to maintain their independence and continue residing in their own homes.

This year we supported 31 groups within the Bedfordshire network. We had 465 volunteers who carried out more than 15,788 tasks. We ran training sessions covering safeguarding and DBS checks.

Village and Community Agents
Our Village Agents operate in all the villages within Bedford Borough, primarily funded by the Bedford Borough Council. This dedicated team of part-time Agents identifies individuals in hard-to-reach rural areas and assists them in enhancing their quality of life by connecting them with mainstream services or community support networks.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Furthermore, we have Community Agents who work with specific communities in Central Bedfordshire, thanks to local funding arrangements.

Our Agents supported 1,315 individual clients, including 684 new clients. 569 home visits were undertaken.

During this year we also developed a Town Agent pilot post for Bedford Borough who was based in Bedford and Kempston.

Village Hall & Community Buildings support
Hall committees have gradually resumed normality post-Covid. The VHA service was able to support and guide this process, helping to relieve the residual anxiety felt by many committees.

We supported 93 halls with advice and guidance this year. We worked with Stevington Village to develop a church room into a Community Hall supporting them to secure a grant of £19000 towards the adaptions needed.

Housing and planning
Beds RCC supports local communities to plan for their future through Neighbourhood and Green Infrastructure (GI) planning. During the year we supported 10 Neighbourhood Plan groups; we provided support to groups via phone and email and also through attending their Neighbourhood plan steering group meetings. We worked with 3 communities on Green Infrastructure Plans.

In addition, we help rural parishes to meet their affordable housing needs by carrying out household surveys. This year we carried out 2 housing needs surveys, working in partnership with Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Plan steering groups, Local Authorities, Housing Associations and local landowners.

We continue to work as part of Eastern Community Homes, a community led housing hub for the Eastern region – formed with our ACRE colleagues in the East of England. We continue to raise awareness of the benefits of community-led housing projects.

We facilitate the Community-led Planning and Rural Housing across Bedfordshire, offering advice and support in creating a Parish, Town, Neighbourhood or Green Infrastructure Plan, and we are part of the ACRE national network of Village Hall Advisors, we provide information, advice and support to Charitable Village Hall Committees.

Health and Wellbeing
The Community and Wellbeing team is there to promote and facilitate health and wellbeing for individuals and communities.

Community Referral
Our Community Referral (Social Prescribing) service allows GPs, nurses and other care professionals to refer people for non-medical, community based support and services via our Community Wellbeing Champions. It bridges the gap between the NHS and the community and frees up GP time.

During the past year our Community Wellbeing Champions received close to 1400 referrals.

Targeted Mental Health Social Prescribing
Through our role as a key VCSE partner, in partnership with ELFT, we supported colleagues in the transformation of secondary mental health services. We have been able to embed the Community Wellbeing Champion into the new 'front door' to enable residents access support provided by Community Mental Health Teams. In the second year of this role we are seeing the benefits of this resource, supporting people to access quick and responsive care, offering holistic strategies to enable them to maintain their mental health and be independent of services.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Community Wellbeing Champions are working across clinical teams to support sustainable changes for people with serious mental health.

Youth 2 Adults
As part of the Mental Health Collaboration Fund we partnered with Music 24 and Dunstable Cultural Consortium to deliver Y2A. This was a new opportunity for Beds RCC, offering an early intervention to young people meets our aims set in our strategy. The group was funded to support young people in Dunstable and the surrounding area who were struggling with their mental health and may not be in education, employment or training (NEET) and may have a diagnosis of ASD or ADHD.

This group met twice a week at Dunstable Community Halls where they could engage in art sessions, creative music sessions and access support services to build connections and improve their confidence. The young people who engaged with our sessions report they were able to build friendships and discover new opportunities, beyond the group.

Jubilation Hub
In partnership with our funder BIG LOCAL, we have successfully launch the Jubilation Community Drop in to support residents to access support services, become physically active, enjoy a hot drink, soup or roll and make connections in their community.

The group runs every Monday with the support from our Community Hub Coordinator and Assistant. Our collaboration with residents who attend the session, our hub team have co-designed a variety of groups and sessions to engage everyone.

A highlight from our Christmas programme was our free festive door wreath session and a bookable 5- week wood carving course both sessions are delivered by our skilled team as part of our Green Social Prescribing offer.

Green Infrastructure and Sustainability

We also provide a range of Community and Countryside initiatives, including wildlife conservation and volunteering. This year we have been developing several new Green Infrastructure plans for villages including facilitated workshops, online surveys and drop in engagement sessions. We host the Upper and Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership. Beds RCC also leads on a number of 'Green Wheels' (linking publicly accessible green spaces and routes within and around rural towns) in the Ivel Valley area. During this year we were pleased to launch the Potton Green Wheel.

Beds RCC continues to deliver a variety of other activities that involve local people in designing, conserving and being active in their local green spaces, including our Ivel Valley Conservation Volunteers.

For over 17 years, we have run Wellbeing Walks across Bedfordshire, through which we deliver over 40 walk programmes - free and open to all.

Green Social Prescribing
Our Green Social Prescribing work has continued to grow, providing individuals with healthy outdoor activities to benefit their physical and mental wellbeing. We supported a number of community gardens in addition to creating gardens at our sites at Dunstable Community Halls & Ridgmont Station. We continued to coordinate over 40 Wellbeing Walks within the county, establish a low-cost bike hire scheme in Biggleswade, ran taster conservation volunteer courses and led numerous natural wellbeing activities.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Ecology and Conservation Volunteering
Our in-house Ecologist supported landowners and Local Authorities in undertaking a number of habitat and species surveys to inform planning applications and land management decisions. Our hosting of the Upper & Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership continued our involvement in caring for the wildlife of our rivers. Our Ivel Valley Conservation Volunteer group undertook over 40 tasks including habitat creation and management; and access enhancements to countryside sites.

Community Engagement
We supported 10 communities with the development of their Neighbourhood Plans. This support often included undertaking Housing Needs Surveys and facilitating the production of Green Infrastructure Plans. Using online and postal surveys, facilitated workshops and face to face drop-in sessions, we enabled many residents to have a voice in planning and decision making within their communities.

Dunstable Community Halls
Dunstable Community Halls provides affordably priced space for hire either to individuals, organisations or local groups. During the year we supported a range of local community activities, including children's dance classes, adult pilates and zumba, ball room dancing, line dancing, educational presentations, health and wellbeing sessions. In September we welcomed staff, trustees, volunteers and past users to the opening of our Community Garden.

Voluntary Sector Support
We continued to provide information, support and signposting to a range of community groups seeking assistance with funding, governance and community engagement. We supported the planning and hosting of Central Bedfordshire Council's Cheering Volunteering event.

Community Transport
Community transport plays a vital role in meeting the needs of vulnerable individuals throughout Bedfordshire. This year was a challenging year with the previous year trading loss. We were focussed on gaining additional work whilst still delivering a great service to our existing contracts. In 23/24 we travelled 52,164 miles with 9445 journeys.

Door to Door / Greensand Country
Beds RCC operates two personalised transport services, commonly known as 'dial-a-ride,' to cater to individuals facing substantial challenges in utilising conventional public transportation. These services are 'Door to Door,' which serves the entirety of Bedford Borough, and 'Greensand Country' community transport, focusing on northern Central Bedfordshire.

Together, they extend their coverage across 75% of Bedfordshire, encompassing areas from Dean & Shelton in the north to Harlington in the south. Both services are closely intertwined, often utilising the same vehicles and drivers to provide efficient transportation solutions for the community.

The Dial-a-ride services continued to make a difference to those in our communities who needed it. Both contracts are running via an extension arrangement. Communications with both Councils for continued service has begun and we hope will be successful in 2024.

Road – Contract Work
Community Transport has needed to look at additional contract work to support sustainability and has built gradually. We will continue to look for additional work across Bedfordshire.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Bedford Mobility Hub
The Mobility Hub was an element of our original Dial-a-ride Contact with Bedford Borough which lapsed. We released the building back to the Council on the 9th March 2023 and the building is no longer Beds RCC's responsibility.

Community Rail Partnerships
BedsRCC oversees the operations of two Community Rail Partnerships: One for the Bedford to Bletchley line, known as the Marston Vale line, and the other for the Bedford-St Albans City line, referred to as Beds & Herts. Both CRPs work to engage the local community and help people get the most from their railway, promoting social inclusion and sustainable travel, working alongside Train Operating Companies to bring about improvements.

2023-24 was a challenging year for both CRPs, primarily due to regular rail strikes and the ongoing lack of a full train service on the Marston Vale Line. Marston Vale CRP launched a marketing campaign to celebrate the resumption of the full service and introduction of £1 ticket offer in February 2024.

Marston Vale CRP secured funding from Rookery South Community Trust Fund for phase two of the Lidlington Youth Engagement Project (a youth group meeting weekly in term-time).

Beds & Herts CRP marked the 50th anniversary of the rebuilding of St Albans City Station with the unveiling of a mural in the Booking Hall and a photo exhibition.

The CRPs worked together to arrange Christmas concerts at Bedford Station raising over £350 for Tibbs Dementia Foundation and over £420 for Bedford Foodbank respectively.

Digital Connection
Digital connection sees us working with people in Bedfordshire to help them become more digitally included, to teach and equip them to access online services that improve their health and wellbeing helping reduce loneliness and inspire confidence.

You Can Do IT!
The 'You Can Do IT!' project, which supports people to learn how to use digital technology has gone from development phase last year to delivering sessions across Bedford and Central Bedfordshire. 12 active volunteers continue to support us as Digital Health Champions to provide that help within our established groups. We expanded this year and are looking for additional funding to continue the programme well in to 2024. The project has welcomed 150 learners across all groups and delivered 1023 sessions of individual tuition.

Supporting Culture and Heritage

Supporting culture and heritage was a new area for us this year introduced by our new Strategic Plan. We want to support the culture and heritage of our communities to ensure the preservation of the rich history, traditions and identities of different communities and societies.

Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre
We are responsible for Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre, a Grade II Listed building dating back to 1846, designed by the Duke of Bedford. We restored it between 2007 and 2013. We are open to the public with a museum, gift shop, tourist information point, tea room and office & meeting space. This year was quieter due to the lack of regular trains on the Marston Vale line but the volunteers continue to do a wonderful job manning the shop, conducting tours of the building and museum.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Dunstable Cultural Consortium
Dunstable Cultural Consortium is a partnership led by Beds RCC focused on enhancing and promoting the cultural landscape of Dunstable. The consortium aims to bring together various cultural organisations, artists, historians and community groups to create a vibrant cultural scene in the town. This was the final year for the programme funded by Historic England and during the year the Consortium delivered projects such as The HeART trail, Talking plaques, Memory workshops, 1960's and 1940's days. 100% of attendees rated the events as "good" or "very good" and excellent outcome.

Corporate and Community Business
This section combines our two new Strategic Plan areas of Community Business and People and Partners. This area focuses on our Corporate teams, people and partnerships and our not for profit Trading arm. This area operates across the whole organisation providing services and support to all departments, as well as our two not-for-profit businesses.

Financial and HR management
The finance team grew this year with the addition of an Assistant Accountant is September, along with the appointment of an Executive Assistant who took over the HR records function. This has really supported the team to grow and support the organisations policies and procedures.

Marketing and IT
This was a hugely busy year for our Marketing and IT teams. The Marketing team took on the responsibility for the marketing of our Vineyard and along with other new projects this has meant lots of new design briefs using our skills in-house rather than externally. Our following across social media was increased and we were very lucky to win some awards with the support of the team.

Ridgmont Station Tea Room
This is covered in the review of activities for BRCC Trading Services.

Warden Abbey Community Vineyard
This is covered in the review of activities for BRCC Trading Services.

b. Review of activities – BRCC Trading Services Ltd

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity operates a wholly-owned subsidiary company entitled BRCC Services Ltd, the purpose of which is to raise funds to support the charity. The officers of the company are:

- P Grayson
- I Riches
- T Harcus (resigned Feb 2024)
- M Robins (appointed 27 February 2024, resigned Feb 2024)
- T Cowan (Secretary)

The main trading activities of BRCC Services Ltd are currently:

Ridgmont Station Tea Room
The Tea Room had a productive year with close to 4% growth on 2022/23. There were some themed events such as "Festive Afternoon Tea, "Mother's Day Afternoon Tea" along with some of the Community Rail Partnership Heritage events and Baby Shower bookings.

Achievements and performance (continued)

The external area has been improved with flowers and cared for by the BRCC Rails to Roots Group. They are hopeful to plant vegetables in April 2024. The impact of the trains not running continued until February 2024 (from December 2022) and there are still reliability issues which is disappointing. We ended the year with some staff mobility which will need to be addressed in the new financial year to enable the provision to continue to grow.

Warden Abbey Community Vineyard
Beds RCC manages the Warden Abbey vineyard as a community project, in order to provide rewarding volunteering opportunities locally while also continuing to make award-winning local wines. This year was extremely challenging. We had issues with disease on the vines coupled with an inexperienced new Vineyard Manager who left in October 2023. The original Vineyard Manager came back for an interim period and to steady the decline of the vines. During the harvesting day, the team picked around 0.6 tonnes of our grapes. This has been our lowest yield and will affect us in a couple of years' time in terms of new stock. We have chosen to make this batch of harvest into a new variety of pink sparkling wine which should produce around 600 bottles and will be a limited edition to help us recoup financially with a more expensive product for sale in the future.

Financial review

a. Reserves policy

The trustees have identified the need for the Charity to hold unrestricted reserves for three principal reasons:

a) To remain resilient and manage risk in an increasingly uncertain and volatile operating environment

b) To accommodate cash flow pressures at a time when a number of BRCC's income streams involve payment in arrears

c) To allow for significant contingency, particularly the costs incurred in the event of closing down the Charity

Its unrestricted reserves will therefore contain two elements:

1. Resilience funds: BRCC will hold between 1 and 3 months' total budgeted operating costs in order to provide sufficient cash flow for the organisation while enabling it to address future opportunities, threats and risks as part of its long-term financial planning, as well as sensitively managing the cessation of services to beneficiaries where required.

2. Designated funds: the trustees have designated a Contingency Fund (to cover the costs of winding up the organisation); a Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve (to cover extraordinary repairs or maintenance costs); and a Fixed Assets Reserve (reflecting the current value of its Fixed Assets). These funds will not be used day to day for the purposes outlined in 1 and 2. The trustees review the levels of these designated funds annually.

The Charity will not hold more reserves than it needs to deliver the aims of this policy, in order to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its current beneficiaries as effectively as possible.

The level of reserves held will be monitored monthly by the Management Team and quarterly by the Finance Committee. The Board will review this reserves policy annually.

b. Financial review

During the year, the charity and its trading subsidiary BRCC Services Ltd raised income of £2,370,069 (2022/23 £3,548,222) to enable it to deliver a range of activities under its charitable objects. This income came principally from local and central government, Lottery distributing bodies and other funders through a range of service level agreements, grants and contracts. A proportion also came directly from clients and beneficiaries (through fees and charges), and some from retail activities and donations.

Total expenditure during the year amounted to £2,571,804 (2022/23 £2,808,071), with the result that the overall net movement in funds for the year amounted to a deficit of £201,735 (2022/23 surplus of £740,151 of which £715,736 was recognised from the amalgamation of BRCC with LuBYA, the Luton and Bedforshire Youth Association which was previously an independent registered charity).

The operating deficit evident in 2024 primarily reflects situations where income was received for the purposes of delivering specific projects and programs in 2023 and the resulting expenditure fell within 2024. This is an appropriate presentation of the income and expenditure and reflects our commitment to responsibly manage and allocate resources over the duration of our projects including those which span more than one financial year.

Transfers have been made to increase the balance in the Fixed Asset Reserve to £1,155,911, to match the total net book value of the fixed assets as at 31 March 2024. The other designated reserves (Contingency and Buildings & Vehicle Maintenance reserves) have been maintained at the same level.

As a result of this year's activity, the Charity's General Fund deficit has increased to £68,382 (2022/23 £25,530). The general fund is, therefore, below the minimum level set out in the Reserves Policy (above). Restoring the General Fund to above the minimum level has therefore been identified as a priority for the trustees over the coming years.

The trading subsidiary, BRCC Services Ltd, reported a loss of £3,909 in the year (2022/23 loss of £71,435) and the cumulative losses amounted to £159,946 at 31 March 2024 (2022/23 £156,037).

c. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

Plans for the future

- Continue to grow our Community and Wellbeing Service securing funding from LA's/ ICB and the Primary Care Networks and further expand into Green Social Prescribing, Digital Isolation and Children and Young People areas
- Expand our Community Transport Service through increasing the range of services and projects and look for greener opportunities for the fleet
- Look for opportunities to continue the refurbishment Dunstable Community Halls
- Continue to develop our presence in the South of the County and Luton
- Continue to expand our Rural Housing offer to provide the full Rural Housing Enabler service
- Continue to develop the Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
- To acquire full Museum accreditation for Ridgmont Heritage Centre and develop the offer
- Develop our Culture and Heritage offer including a feasibility study for developing a community eco-building for our Community Vineyard
- Continue to develop collaborative relationships with other local organisations and within the ACRE Network
- Continue to look for opportunities and diversify income streams where possible

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Group and the charitable company and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their 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 Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Streets Audit LLP, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 29 October 2024

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Charitable company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the company and sector in which it operates;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, compliance with NHS Social Prescribing requirements and safeguarding of adults and children (including passenger assistance), requirements of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, employment and taxation legislation, anti-bribery, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

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

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

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

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statements and disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of governor meetings of those charged with governance; and
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Linda J Lord BSc BFP FCA TEP (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Streets Audit LLP
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditors

Date: 16 December 2024

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	*Total funds 2023 £*
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	**20,691**	**2,316**	**23,007**	*744,860*
Charitable activities	4	**2,097,184**	**67,766**	**2,164,950**	*2,388,191*
Other trading activities	5	**-**	**173,609**	**173,609**	*413,064*
Investments	6	**-**	**8,503**	**8,503**	*2,107*
Total income		**2,117,875**	**252,194**	**2,370,069**	*3,548,222*
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	**-**	**53,406**	**53,406**	*231,049*
Charitable activities	8	**2,319,201**	**199,197**	**2,518,398**	*2,577,022*
Total expenditure		**2,319,201**	**252,603**	**2,571,804**	*2,808,071*
Net (expenditure)/income		**(201,326)**	**(409)**	**(201,735)**	*740,151*
Transfers between funds	20	**50,650**	**(50,650)**	**-**	-
Net movement in funds		**(150,676)**	**(51,059)**	**(201,735)**	*740,151*
Reconciliation of funds:	20				
Total funds brought forward		**957,139**	**1,153,642**	**2,110,781**	*1,370,630*
Net movement in funds		**(150,676)**	**(51,059)**	**(201,735)**	*740,151*
Total funds carried forward		**806,463**	**1,102,583**	**1,909,046**	*2,110,781*

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

The notes on pages 28 to 54 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note		2024 £		2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**1,155,911**		*1,150,708*
			1,155,911		*1,150,708*
Current assets					
Stocks	15	**40,320**		*42,017*	
Debtors	16	**205,925**		*532,181*	
Investments	17	**87,976**		*85,999*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**691,228**		*619,499*	
		1,025,449		*1,279,696*	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(259,610)**		*(297,395)*	
Net current assets			**765,839**		*982,301*
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		**(12,704)**		*(22,228)*
Total net assets			**1,909,046**		*2,110,781*

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Charity funds	20		
Restricted funds	20	**806,463**	*957,139*
Unrestricted funds	20	**1,102,583**	*1,153,642*
Total funds		**1,909,046**	*2,110,781*

The charitable company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the entity to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

However, an audit is required in accordance with section 151 of the Charities Act 2011.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 29 October 2024

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 28 to 54 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note		2024 £		*2023 £*
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**1,155,911**		*1,150,708*
Investments	14		**100**		*100*
			1,156,011		*1,150,808*
Current assets					
Debtors	16	**382,583**		*704,384*	
Investments	17	**87,976**		*85,999*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**688,248**		*608,437*	
		1,158,807		*1,398,820*	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(245,826)**		*(282,810)*	
Net current assets			**912,981**		*1,116,010*
Total net assets			**2,068,992**		*2,266,818*

CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note		2024 £		2023 £
Charity funds	20				
Restricted funds	20	**806,463**		*957,139*	
Restricted funds	20		**806,463**		*957,139*
Unrestricted funds	20		**1,262,529**		*1,309,679*
Total funds			**2,068,992**		*2,266,818*

The charitable company's net movement in funds for the year was £(197,826) *(2023 - £811,586)*.

The charitable company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the entity to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

However, an audit is required in accordance with section 151 of the Charities Act 2011.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 29 October 2024

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 28 to 54 form part of these financial statements.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	2024 £	*2023* *£*
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash used in operating activities	**114,314**	*(177,485)*
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**8,503**	*2,107*
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets	**6,069**	*5,526*
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	**(45,656)**	*(35,697)*
Net cash used in investing activities	**(31,084)**	**(28,064)**
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayments of borrowing	**(9,524)**	*(9,293)*
Movement in fixed term deposit	**(1,977)**	*(999)*
Net cash used in financing activities	**(11,501)**	**(10,292)**
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	**71,729**	**(215,841)**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	**619,499**	*835,340*
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**691,228**	*619,499*

The notes on pages 28 to 54 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. General information

As set out in the trustees' report, Bedfordshire Rural Communiies Charity is an unincorporated charity registered in England and Wales. The address of their registered office is The Old School, Cardington, Beds, MK44 3SX.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

The charity's objects are stated in the trustees' report.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 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 2015), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and Consolidated Balance Sheet consolidate the financial statements of the Group and its subsidiary undertaking. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

The Group has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

2.2 Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

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

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

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described below:

Allocation of costs - Direct expenses are charged to individual cost centres wherever possible. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of those resources.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Company status

The charitable company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page . In the event of the charitable company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member of the charitable company.

2.4 Going concern

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate, i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

The trustees have reviewed the level of reserves held by the charity and are satisfied that they are sufficient to enable the charity to continue its activities for the foreseeable future and, accordingly, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

2.5 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

2.6 Income

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.7 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. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

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

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is made except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end are noted as a commitment, but not accrued as expenditure.

2.8 Interest receivable

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

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition are included in the measurement of cost.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation (continued)

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold property	- Over the remaining life of the property, assessed as 10% per annum straight line
Long-term leasehold property: Ridgmont Station improvements	Over the remaining life of the leasehold property The 99 year lease for the Ridgmont Station building and 25 year lease for the car park land both commenced March 2009
Long-term leasehold property: Other	- Over the remaining life of the leasehold property 10% or 4% per annum straight line
Short-term leasehold property	- 10% or 20% per annum straight line
Motor vehicles	- 25% per annum straight line
Office equipment	- 25% or 33% per annum straight line

2.10 Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

2.11 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

2.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

2.13 Cash at 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 from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

2.14 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.15 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.16 Pensions

The charity provides a workplace pension scheme, compliant with Auto-enrolment procedures. The charity also continues to contribute to the previous stakeholder pension scheme for those staff who are eligible for membership under the terms of their contracts of employment. Pension contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities for the year in which they are payable.

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	*Total funds 2023 £*
Donations				
Transfer of cash assets from LuBYA	-	-	-	*32,736*
Transfer of property from LuBYA (at valuation)	-	-	-	*683,000*
	-	-	-	*715,736*
Other donations	20,691	2,316	**23,007**	*29,124*
	20,691	2,316	**23,007**	*744,860*
Total 2023	*26,620*	*718,240*	*744,860*	

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	**Total funds 2024 £**	*Total funds 2023 £*
Income from charitable activities	2,097,184	67,766	**2,164,950**	*2,388,191*
Total 2023	*2,303,123*	*85,068*	*2,388,191*	

5. Income from other trading activities

Income from fundraising events

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	**Total funds 2024 £**	*Total funds 2023 £*
Rent received	62,930	**62,930**	*27,339*
Sundry income	3,163	**3,163**	*76*
	66,093	**66,093**	*27,415*

Income from non charitable trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	**Total funds 2024 £**	*Total funds 2023 £*
Sales	107,516	**107,516**	*376,732*
Rent receivable	-	**-**	*6,250*
Other income	-	**-**	*2,667*
	107,516	**107,516**	*385,649*
Total 2023	*385,649*	*385,649*	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	*Total funds 2023 £*
Bank interest	8,503	**8,503**	*2,107*
Total 2023	*2,107*	*2,107*	

7. Expenditure on raising funds

Other trading expenses

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	*Total funds 2023 £*
Cost of sales	48,042	**48,042**	*221,739*
Administration expenses	4,666	**4,666**	*8,380*
Interest payable	698	**698**	*930*
	53,406	**53,406**	*231,049*
Total 2023	*231,049*	*231,049*	

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

8. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	*Total 2023 £*
Charitable Activities	2,319,201	199,197	**2,518,398**	*2,577,022*
Total 2023	*2,168,823*	*408,199*	*2,577,022*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	*Total funds 2023 £*
Charitable Activities	2,110,368	408,030	**2,518,398**	*2,577,022*
Total 2023	*2,176,545*	*400,477*	*2,577,022*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2024 £	*Total funds 2023 £*
Staff costs	**1,620,600**	*1,532,525*
Room hire, meetings and conferences	**16,737**	*20,745*
Publicity, publications and subscriptions	**45,721**	*32,210*
Printing, postage, stationery and telephone	**62,419**	*60,806*
Repairs and renewals	**70,949**	*67,220*
Contractors fees	**111,139**	*123,127*
Travel and susbistence	**12,031**	*11,612*
Recruitment and other staff costs	**7,033**	*13,039*
Volunteer's expenses	**3,085**	*1,913*
Rent, rates and service charges	**19,053**	*90,454*
Legal and professional fees	**6,066**	*6,004*
Grants paid	**59,253**	*156,923*
Vehicle costs	**50,212**	*44,524*
Lease costs	**16,374**	*15,443*
Marketing costs	**9,696**	-
	2,110,368	*2,176,545*

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2024 £	*Total funds 2023 £*
Staff costs	**246,939**	*218,035*
Depreciation	**37,851**	*62,978*
VAT lost on partial exemption	**13,270**	*8,664*
Premises costs	**92,742**	*80,775*
Bank charges	**2,180**	*2,159*
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	**(3,467)**	*7,235*
Bad debts	**3,010**	*4,138*
Governance costs	**15,505**	*16,493*
	408,030	*400,477*

10. Auditors' remuneration

	2024 £	*2023 £*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor for the audit of the charitable company's annual accounts	**12,250**	*12,000*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor in respect of:		
All non-audit services not included above	**4,250**	*4,000*

11. Staff costs

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*	Charity 2024 £	*Charity 2023 £*
Wages and salaries	**1,693,706**	*1,586,031*	**1,693,706**	*1,586,031*
Social security costs	**136,872**	*132,141*	**136,872**	*132,141*
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**36,961**	*32,388*	**36,961**	*32,388*
	1,867,539	*1,750,560*	**1,867,539**	*1,750,560*

11. Staff costs (continued)

The average number of persons employed by the charitable company during the year was as follows:

	Group 2024 No.	*Group 2023 No.*	Charity 2024 No.	*Charity 2023 No.*
Project staff	**80**	*91*	**80**	*91*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	83	*94*	**83**	*94*

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	Group 2024 No.	*Group 2023 No.*	Charity 2024 No.	*Charity 2023 No.*
Project staff	**51**	*52*	**52**	*52*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	54	*55*	**55**	*55*

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	Group 2024 No.	*Group 2023 No.*
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	**1**	-

The key management personnel of the charity are the trustees (who all give their time voluntarily), the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team. A total of £174,105 was paid to 3 members of staff for their roles as key management personnel (2023: £158,877 was paid to 3 members of staff).

12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits *(2023 - £NIL)*.

During the year ended 31 March 2024, no Trustee expenses have been incurred *(2023 - £NIL)*.

13. Tangible fixed assets

Group and Charity

	Freehold property £	Long-term leasehold property - Ridgmont Station £	Long-term leasehold property - Other £	Short-term leasehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation							
At 1 April 2023	709,568	509,045	82,120	35,535	155,222	62,473	1,553,963
Additions	-	-	25,382	-	-	20,274	45,656
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(34,195)	(3,750)	(37,945)
At 31 March 2024	709,568	509,045	107,502	35,535	121,027	78,997	1,561,674
Depreciation							
At 1 April 2023	37,151	66,025	53,979	35,535	150,497	60,068	403,255
Charge for the year	10,865	6,818	16,488	-	2,123	1,557	37,851
On disposals	-	-	-	-	(31,593)	(3,750)	(35,343)
At 31 March 2024	48,016	72,843	70,467	35,535	121,027	57,875	405,763

13. Tangible fixed assets (continued)

Group and Charity (continued)

	Freehold property £	Long-term leasehold property - Ridgmont Station £	Long-term leasehold property - Other £	Short-term leasehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Net book value							
At 31 March 2024	**661,552**	**436,202**	**37,035**	**-**	**-**	**21,122**	**1,155,911**
At 31 March 2023	*672,417*	*443,020*	*28,141*	*-*	*4,725*	*2,405*	*1,150,708*

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

14. Subsidiary Undertakings

The following was a subsidiary undertaking of the charitable company:

Name	Company number	Registered office or principal place of business	Principal activity	Class of shares	Holding	Included in consolidation
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	4475077	England and Wales	Operation of farm shop, wine production and other commercial activities	Ordinary	100%	Yes

The financial results of the subsidiary for the year were:

Name	Income £	Expenditure £	Profit/(Loss) / Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year £	Net assets £
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	**103,275**	**(107,184)**	**(3,909)**	**(159,846)**

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

15. Stocks

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*
Goods for resale	**40,320**	*42,017*

16. Debtors

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*	Charity 2024 £	*Charity 2023 £*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**178,283**	*495,973*	**176,076**	*482,937*
Amounts owed by group undertakings	**-**	*-*	**178,865**	*185,239*
Other debtors	**22,826**	*27,446*	**22,826**	*27,446*
Prepayments and accrued income	**4,816**	*8,762*	**4,816**	*8,762*
	205,925	*532,181*	**382,583**	*704,384*

17. Current asset investments

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*	Charity 2024 £	*Charity 2023 £*
Bank deposit (over 90 days)	**87,976**	*85,999*	**87,976**	*85,999*

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*	Charity 2024 £	*Charity 2023 £*
Bank loans	**9,600**	*9,600*	**-**	*-*
Trade creditors	**33,169**	*28,582*	**32,717**	*28,090*
Other taxation and social security	**40,054**	*64,877*	**40,037**	*63,384*
Other creditors	**62,518**	*14,075*	**60,803**	*14,075*
Accruals and deferred income	**114,269**	*180,261*	**112,269**	*177,261*
	259,610	*297,395*	**245,826**	*282,810*

The trading subsidiary received a Bounce Back Loan which is guaranteed by the UK government and repayable in instalments.

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*	Charity 2024 £	*Charity 2023 £*
Deferred income at 1 April 2023	**138,266**	*127,144*	**138,266**	*127,144*
Resources deferred during the year	**62,478**	*138,266*	**62,478**	*138,266*
Amounts released from previous periods	**(138,266)**	*(127,144)*	**(138,266)**	*(127,144)*
	62,478	*138,266*	**62,478**	*138,266*

The charity receives some funding which has performance related criteria and is recognised when the income has been earned. Any income received in advance of the performance related criteria being met is deferred at the reporting date.

19. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*
Bank loans	**12,704**	*22,228*

The trading subsidiary received a Bounce Back Loan which is guaranteed by the UK government, repayable in instalments and is due for repayment within 5 years.

20. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	**1,150,708**	**-**	**(37,851)**	**43,054**	**1,155,911**
Contingency Fund	**150,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**150,000**
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	**25,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**25,000**
	1,325,708	**-**	**(37,851)**	**43,054**	**1,330,911**
General funds					
General Fund	**(25,530)**	**140,412**	**(132,896)**	**(50,368)**	**(68,382)**
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	**(156,037)**	**107,516**	**(53,406)**	**(58,019)**	**(159,946)**
VCSE funds	**9,501**	**4,266**	**(28,450)**	**14,683**	**-**
	(172,066)	**252,194**	**(214,752)**	**(93,704)**	**(228,328)**
Total Unrestricted funds	**1,153,642**	**252,194**	**(252,603)**	**(50,650)**	**1,102,583**

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Bedford Borough Agents & GNS	20,241	135,740	(170,122)	14,141	-
Central Bedfordshire Agents & GNS	70,530	88,836	(126,949)	(14,141)	18,276
Green Infrastructure	147,255	288,301	(238,907)	-	196,649
CBC Infrastructure	15,916	15,443	(16,635)	(14,724)	-
Rural Housing Enabler	-	23,844	(1,830)	-	22,014
Y2A (Youth 2 Adult)	-	24,349	(12,932)	-	11,417
Community Rail Partnerships	92,241	110,679	(115,254)	-	87,666
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	17,009	(35,689)	18,680	-
Ridgmont Station	-	1,746	(30,922)	29,176	-
Dunstable Consortium	49,955	-	(67,473)	17,518	-
Community Transport	11,942	372,973	(379,016)	-	5,899
Timebank	41,172	112,712	(101,906)	-	51,978
Community Connectors	150,000	-	(1,474)	-	148,526
Mental Health Social Prescribing	35,889	166,304	(140,714)	-	61,479
Primary Care Networks	35,921	239,454	(254,236)	-	21,139
Social Prescribing CBC	133,393	264,957	(284,564)	(519)	113,267
Social Prescribing BBC	5,255	231,903	(237,677)	519	-
GCLP Projects	58,639	30	(42,104)	-	16,565
You Can Do It	88,790	23,595	(60,797)	-	51,588
	957,139	2,117,875	(2,319,201)	50,650	806,463
Total of funds	2,110,781	2,370,069	(2,571,804)	-	1,909,046

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2023* £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	*503,424*	-	*(71,413)*	*718,697*	*1,150,708*
Contingency Fund	*150,000*	-	-	-	*150,000*
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	*25,000*	-	-	-	*25,000*
	678,424	-	*(71,413)*	*718,697*	*1,325,708*
General funds					
General Fund	*127*	*44,381*	*(269,651)*	*199,613*	*(25,530)*
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	*(84,602)*	*385,649*	*(231,048)*	*(226,036)*	*(156,037)*
LuBYA	-	*770,953*	*(34,141)*	*(736,812)*	-
VCSE funds	*25,000*	*17,496*	*(32,995)*	-	*9,501*
	(59,475)	*1,218,479*	*(567,835)*	*(763,235)*	*(172,066)*
Total Unrestricted funds	*618,949*	*1,218,479*	*(639,248)*	*(44,538)*	*1,153,642*

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2023* £
Restricted funds					
Bedford Borough Agents & GNS	-	*96,967*	*(76,726)*	-	*20,241*
Central Bedfordshire Agents & GNS	*94,813*	*92,504*	*(116,787)*	-	*70,530*
Green Infrastructure	*41,833*	*293,469*	*(188,047)*	-	*147,255*
CBC Infrastructure	*4,330*	*32,885*	*(21,299)*	-	*15,916*
Y2A (Youth 2 Adult)	-	*18,483*	*(44,907)*	*26,424*	-
Community Rail Partnerships	*94,784*	*101,762*	*(104,305)*	-	*92,241*
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	*2,813*	*(26,532)*	*23,719*	-
Dunstable Consortium	*19,667*	*56,250*	*(25,962)*	-	*49,955*
Community Transport	*67,136*	*316,721*	*(371,915)*	-	*11,942*
Timebank	*21,226*	*111,969*	*(92,023)*	-	*41,172*
Community Connectors	-	*150,000*	-	-	*150,000*
Mental Health Social Prescribing	*7,377*	*108,801*	*(80,289)*	-	*35,889*
Primary Care Networks	*45,099*	*232,624*	*(239,942)*	*(1,860)*	*35,921*
Social Prescribing CBC	*131,902*	*248,342*	*(244,991)*	*(1,860)*	*133,393*
Social Prescribing BBC	*30,580*	*219,947*	*(243,412)*	*(1,860)*	*5,255*
GCLP Projects	*81,900*	*211,687*	*(234,923)*	*(25)*	*58,639*
You Can Do It	*111,034*	*34,519*	*(56,763)*	-	*88,790*
	751,681	*2,329,743*	*(2,168,823)*	*44,538*	*957,139*
Total of funds	*1,370,630*	*3,548,222*	*(2,808,071)*	-	*2,110,781*

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Designated Funds:

Fixed Asset Reserve:
This fund represents the total net book value of the Charity's Tangible Fixed Assets which comprise: Freehold Property (transferred from Luton and Bedfordshire Youth Association), Leasehold Land & Buildings, Renovation at Ridgmont Station, Improvements made to the Cardington office, Motor vehicles and Fixtures, fittings & equipment. Transfers to the fund represent the value of assets purchased or donated during the year and depreciation is charged as an expense of the fund.

Contingency Reserve:
This fund represents the Trustees' calculation of the likely costs that would be incurred in the event of having to wind up the Charity. It comprises staff redundancy payments and commitments on leases.

Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve:
This fund has been designated to cover any extraordinary repairs and maintenance that may be required to the Cardington office and the Charity's vehicles.

Restricted Funds:

Bedford Borough Agents & Good Neighbours Scheme (formerly Care in Bedford Borough):
This fund was established in April 2009, following the formation of the two new Unitary Authorities in the county. Funding from the Borough Council (Adult Services) has been received to continue support for the Carers Short Break Bureau; the Good Neighbours Schemes and the Village Agents "Just Ask" initiative. Income and costs associated with the services provided have been charged to the project with £10,000 of unrestricted funding being allocated towards the cost of providing these services.

Central Bedfordshire Agents & Good Neighbours Scheme (formerly Care in Central Bedfordshire):
The charity provides care for adults in Central Bedfordshire through the Village Care Scheme.

Green Infrastructure:
This fund comprises several funding streams that are ring fenced for the provision of services and the purchase of capital items and/or payments to contractors in respect of the various environmental sites that are managed by the Beds RCC's Green Infrastructure Team. Costs are charged to the fund as and when the various projects are delivered, in partnership with local authorities.

CBC Infrastructure Grant:
In 2021/2022, the charity was awarded funding to deliver and provide support for the VCS in Central Bedfordshire. This funding awarded jointly to Beds RCC and CVS Bedfordshire was an agreement for a 3-year period to 2023/24. A further 3-year agreement has been agreed from 1st April 2024.

Rural Housing Enabler:
In 2023/24 the charity secured funding from Defra (administered by ACRE) to expand its Rural Housing Service. The funding, secured to March 2025, was awarded to appoint a Rural Housing Enabler and set up the Bedfordshire Rural Housing Partnership; with the aim of increasing the provision of affordable rural housing. Delays in recruitment have limited the work undertaken in 2023/24.

Y2A (Youth 2 Adult):
In 2023/24 the charity secured funding from BLCF's Mental Health Collaboration Fund to run a 12 month youth engagement programme. Delays in the funder agreeing the service specification led to the late recruitment of a Children & Young People's Worker, resulting in the delivery of the project being extended into 2024/25.

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Community Rail Partnerships
- Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership (MVCRP):
Beds RCC employs the MVCRP Officer, which is funded primarily through a Service Level Agreement with London Midland Trains, West Midlands Trains Ltd and Milton Keynes Borough Councils. MVCRP seeks to publicise and promote increased usage of the Marston Vale Community Rail Line.
- Beds and Herts CRP (formerly Bedford to St Albans CRP):
BRCC continues to receive funding from Greater Thameslink Railway to employ a community rail officer on the Bedford to St Albans Line.

Warden Abbey Vineyard:
The charity continued to receive grant income and donations to assist with the costs of managing the Warden Abbey Vineyard, which provides opportunities for volunteering. The vineyard management costs have been charged to the restricted fund and a transfer of £18,680 (2023 £26,424) has been made from general funds to support the project.

Ridgmont Station:
The charity completed the refurbishment of Ridgmont Station in 2014 and continues to receive specific donations for the ongoing development of the facility. The restricted funding, together with a transfer of £29,176 (2023 £23,719) from unrestricted funds, is used to cover the maintenance and upkeep of the station building.

Dunstable Consortium:
In 2021/22 the charity received a grant from Historic England as part of the High Streets Heritage Action Zones ("HS HAZ") Programme, a nationwide initiative designed to secure lasting improvements to historic high streets for the communities who use them..

Community Transport:
The charity took over the assets and activities of North Bedfordshire Community Transport on 1 April 2013 and now provides community transport services under the Door to Door and Greensand Community Transport agreements, and to individuals with special needs.

Timebank:
In 2021/22 the charity took over the Timebank activities from Community Action Bedfordshire (CAB). Funds have been provided to encourage and support the development of new Timebanks, across Central Bedfordshire, where people can help their neighbours and those within their community by sharing their time, interests and skills.

Community Connectors:
Funding of £150,000 was received in February 2023 – this was to fund community connectors in Bedford Borough and in Central Bedfordshire. The project had a delayed start with little expenditure in 23/24. The funds will be spent in the new financial year.

Prinary Care Networks and Social Prescribing:
BRCC has been commissioned by Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council to provide Social Prescribing services to Primary Care Networks and GP surgeries across Bedfordshire. The programme supports patients with social, emotional or practical needs by finding non-clinical solutions that will improve their health and wellbeing.

Greensand Country Landscape Programme (GCLP):
BRCC was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, on behalf of the Greensand Ridge Landscape Partnership, to establish the Greensand Ridge area of Bedfordshire as a living and working landscape. Landscape Partnership scheme started in July 2016 and was expected to run until December 2020 but

20. Statement of funds (continued)

was subsequently extended and BRCC's involvement has been concluded since the end of the financial year.

You Can Do It:
In 2021/22 the charity secured funding from NHS Charities Together and NHS England (via BLMK CCG) to develop and deliver a digital inclusion project, seeking to ensure the digitally excluded / inactive had the skills, devices and connectivity to enable them to access online health and wellbeing services. Project efficiencies and additional smaller grants have enabled the project to extend beyond 2023/24.

21. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Designated funds	**1,325,708**	**-**	**(37,851)**	**43,054**	**1,330,911**
General funds	**(172,066)**	**252,194**	**(214,752)**	**(93,704)**	**(228,328)**
Restricted funds	**957,139**	**2,117,875**	**(2,319,201)**	**50,650**	**806,463**
	2,110,781	**2,370,069**	**(2,571,804)**	**-**	**1,909,046**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	*Income £*	*Expenditure £*	*Transfers in/out £*	*Balance at 31 March 2023 £*
Designated funds	*678,424*	*-*	*(71,413)*	*718,697*	*1,325,708*
General funds	*(59,475)*	*1,218,479*	*(567,835)*	*(763,235)*	*(172,066)*
Restricted funds	*751,681*	*2,329,743*	*(2,168,823)*	*44,538*	*957,139*
	1,370,630	*3,548,222*	*(2,808,071)*	*-*	*2,110,781*

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current period

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	1,155,911	**1,155,911**
Current assets	932,386	93,063	**1,025,449**
Creditors due within one year	(125,923)	(133,687)	**(259,610)**
Creditors due in more than one year	-	(12,704)	**(12,704)**
Total	806,463	1,102,583	**1,909,046**

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	Restricted funds 2023 £	*Unrestricted funds 2023 £*	*Total funds 2023 £*
Tangible fixed assets	-	*1,150,708*	*1,150,708*
Current assets	*957,139*	*322,557*	*1,279,696*
Creditors due within one year	-	*(297,395)*	*(297,395)*
Creditors due in more than one year	-	*(22,228)*	*(22,228)*
Total	*957,139*	*1,153,642*	*2,110,781*

23. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*
Net income/expenditure for the period (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**(201,735)**	*740,151*
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	**37,851**	*62,978*
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**(8,503)**	*(2,107)*
Loss/(profit) on the sale of fixed assets	**(3,467)**	*2,909*
Decrease in stocks	**1,697**	*658*
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**326,256**	*(257,120)*
Decrease in creditors	**(37,785)**	*(41,954)*
Gift in kind - transfer of property from LuBYA	**-**	*(683,000)*
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**114,314**	*(177,485)*

24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*
Cash in hand	**691,228**	*619,499*
Total cash and cash equivalents	**691,228**	*619,499*

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2023 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	**619,499**	**71,729**	**691,228**
Debt due within 1 year	**(9,600)**	**-**	**(9,600)**
Debt due after 1 year	**(22,228)**	**9,524**	**(12,704)**
Liquid investments	**85,999**	**1,977**	**87,976**
	673,670	**83,230**	**756,900**

26. Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2024 the Group and the charitable company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2024 £	*Group 2023 £*	Charity 2024 £	*Charity 2023 £*
Not later than 1 year	**14,352**	*14,352*	**14,352**	*14,352*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**33,488**	*47,840*	**33,488**	*47,840*
	47,840	*62,192*	**47,840**	*62,192*

27. Related party transactions

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary company, BRCC Trading Services Limited, operates from the Cardington Office and is managed by staff employed by the parent charity. Staff costs and overhead costs totalling £48,643 (2023: £172,013) were recharged to BRCC Trading Services Limited during the year, together with rent and rates £Nil (2023: £25,216) and recharged expenses of £11,506 (2023: £55,182). BRCC Trading Services Limited reported a loss of £3,756 (2023: loss of £71,435) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The charity advanced a loan of £30,000 to the subsidiary company in previous years. Interest of £2,408 (2023: £1,591) has been charged on the loan at a rate of 3.0% above the bank base rate. At the balance sheet date, BRCC Trading Services Limited owed the charity a total of £178,865 (2023: £185,239) in respect of the loans and staff recharges which remained unpaid at the balance sheet date.

The charity also worked with the following organisations:

- Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council - organisations where some trustees and their close family members are employed, or where trustees serve as local or borough councillors,
- Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation where E Masih is a trustee

No one person is considered to be in a position to exercise significant influence over these organisations and consequently no details of the related party transactions are disclosed in these financial statements.

28. Taxation

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a registered charity and therefore is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

29. Members' liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

England & Wales - Charity number 1061538

Accounts

Registered number: 03327628
Charity number: 1061538

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Trustees	C Barker J M Barnes B S George P Grayson, Chair Cllr T Hill Rev S C Holroyd (resigned 29 September 2022) I J Kelly (resigned 29 September 2022) S Kooner (appointed 21 November 2022) A Lovesey E Masih B G Prickett I Riches H Shafi (resigned 9 March 2023) C J Smith (appointed 21 November 2022)
Company registered number	03327628
Charity registered number	1061538
Registered office	The Old School Cardington Beds MK44 3SX
Company secretary	Mrs T Cowan
Chief executive officer	Mrs T Cowan
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ National Westminster Bank plc 81 High Street Bedford MK40 1NE Scottish Widows PO Box 12757 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Virgin Money Jubilee House Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4PL
Senior Management Team	Mr Cliff Andrews Ms Janice Janes Mr Simon Bailes (left October 2022 Mrs Kate Ellis Mr Bill Simmons (Joined October 2022)
Solicitors	Woodfines LLP 16 St Cuthberts Street Bedford MK40 3JG
Independent Auditors	Streets Audit LLP Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors Potton House Wyboston Lakes Great North Road Wyboston Bedford MK44 3BZ

TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charitable company for the year from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Since the group and the charitable company qualify as small under section 383 of the Companies Act 2006, the Group Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

The group and the charitable company also trade under the names Beds RCC and BRCC.

Founded in 1953 as Bedfordshire Rural Community Council, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) is a member of a national network of Rural Community Councils under an umbrella organisation, Action for Rural Communities in England (ACRE).

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a company limited by guarantee, having no share capital, and is a registered charity.

The charity was incorporated on 4 March 1997 and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The liability of its members in the event of the charitable company being wound up is limited to a sum not exceeding £10 per member.

b. Objects

The charity's objects are:

- to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community primarily in the historic county of Bedfordshire, and in particular, the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress or sickness.

- in furtherance of that said purpose, but not otherwise, to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same and to that end to bring together representatives of the voluntary organisations and statutory authorities in the historic county of Bedfordshire.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

c. Governance (including appointment, induction and training of Trustees)

The directors and senior managers of the organisation who served during the year are set out on page one. The directors of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. Members of the charity are entitled to nominate directors, from whom the Board is elected at the Annual General Meeting. All new directors are provided with an induction by the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board.

The Board of Directors meets quarterly. Many of its responsibilities are delegated to three Board Committees: the Strategic Development Committee, the Finance Committee, and the People and Projects Committee, which also meet quarterly.

Day-to-day responsibility for the running of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive and four departmental managers (as listed on page three).

d. Pay policy for key management personnel

The charity uses the NJC payscales as a basis for all staff salaries, including the CEO and management team who make up the Key Management Personnel.

e. Related party relationships

The charity's trustees and officers are involved in a wide range of other businesses and organisations, as directors, trustees, employees and councillors.

Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council provide funding to BRCC but the trustees do not consider that any councillors who are also trustees of BRCC are able to influence the charity's relationship with those organisations.

Details of related party transactions are given in note 27 to the financial statements.

f. Financial risk management

The directors recognise that there are potential risks to which the charity may be exposed. The directors have identified five main areas of risk:

- governance and management of the charity
- operational risks
- financial risks
- environmental and external factors
- compliance with law and regulation

The processes for monitoring and mitigation of these risks have been identified and are recorded in a risk register. The directors have delegated the day-to-day implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the risk register to the senior management team. During the year the Board received reports from the Chief Executive and agreed actions to mitigate any serious risks.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

g. Grant making policies

In administering grant schemes, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity will ensure that:

- it only manages funding programmes that clearly fit in with its own priorities, objectives and mission
- there is an independent and representative panel of people established as the body accountable for making decisions on grant allocation
- staff carrying out developmental work with projects are not involved in any way with decision making
- all grants funds will be promoted and advertised in ways that aim to reach the full range of target beneficiaries, and the application procedures are straightforward, transparent and clearly explained
- once awarded, expenditure of the grant and monitoring of progress is carried out at appropriate intervals to ensure that the funding is spent for the purpose for which it is given
- all conditions attached to the offer of the grant are met – in the event of this not being the case, the grant offer will be withdrawn
- final reports are submitted from the recipients of the grant outlining the outcome of the funding
- appropriate financial records are kept and reporting obligations of funders are met.

h. Fixed Assets

Acquisitions and disposals of fixed assets during the year are recorded in the notes forming part of the financial statements.

Objectives and activities

a. Mission and role

BRCC exists to support local community life in Bedfordshire. Its role is as follows:

- A **coordinator** of local community activity to enable communities to do more for themselves and reduce reliance on the state

- An **intermediary** between public (and private) service providers and the people in local communities they need to reach

- A **manager of partnerships** across public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve common objectives (e.g. conservation, rural economic development)

- A direct **provider of services** (e.g. community transport) that help people to participate in the community

Objectives and activities (continued)

b. Areas of benefit

BRCC is still unquestionably the leading countywide organisation working with rural communities in Bedfordshire. However, it is not always helpful to make the distinction between urban and rural when services are delivered across whole local authority areas. While retaining its rural specialism, BRCC increasingly supports 'local community life' across all areas of the county.

Also, BRCC now operates outside Bedfordshire in some cases (e.g. where projects based in Bedfordshire have extended across county boundaries).

c. Desired outcomes

The high level outcomes that BRCC seeks to achieve are as follows:

- Communities are more involved in delivering local services and managing their local assets
- Potentially vulnerable and/or disadvantaged people gain more independence
- People increase their physical, mental and social well-being
- People with barriers to the labour market gain skills and employment
- Rural communities have a more thriving local economy
- Bedfordshire's built and natural environment is conserved and enhanced

d. Public benefit

Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 requires the Board of Directors to comply with their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

The Board of Directors has reviewed the organisation's mission and values (as listed above) in the context of its charitable purposes and considers that they meet the two key principles of public benefit as identified by the Charity Commission:

- there must be an identifiable benefit or benefits
- benefit must be to the public, or section of the public

BRCC has introduced a checklist for use to ensure that all of its activities are for public benefit. It is based on the two principles above and the relevant factors under each principle identified by the Charity Commission. All existing work has been assessed against the checklist, and it is used by the Strategic Development Committee to assess proposed new areas of work. As a result, all areas of the charity's work are deemed to be for the public benefit according to Charity Commission guidance.

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities

Overview

During the first full year post the Covid-19 pandemic the Charity continues to grow with an expanded portfolio of activities and new staff members. In January 2023 BedsRCC started celebrating its 70th anniversary.

It was a busy year with the development of new and existing projects. In April Our Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership (MVCRP) celebrated its 15th birthday and the Marston Vale Line also continued its celebration of 175 years with a series of events.

In May we continued the development of our 'You Can Do IT!' project, which allows people to learn how to use digital technology. New groups started in Biggleswade, Putnoe and Houghton Regis.

June saw Biggleswade Good Neighbour Group awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, recognising their continued hard work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. BedsRCC continues to support a network of over 40 Good Neighbour Schemes across Bedfordshire.

In July Staff, trustees, patrons and volunteers from across BRCC's teams came together for the first time post Covid to celebrate the hard work done in the previous year.

The end of August was a key point for the Charity as we took over the Luton and Bedfordshire Youth Association. Consisting of two Halls located in the centre of Dunstable, used primarily for letting to the community and young people, it was a great opportunity to develop our services in that area of the County. It also had an added bonus of bringing assets into the Charity.

September saw the expansion and development of the Charities Green Social Prescribing initiative with family friendly seasonal walks, A Green Wellbeing Online Directory and the start of our Community Garden project.

Thanks to funding by Leighton-Linslade Town Council we were also able to create a new Community Agent post in the Leighton-Linslade area of Central Bedfordshire. In September the Charity also won Gold at the SME Luton and Bedfordshire Business Awards in the Positive Impact category.

In December, the Charity won 'Community Business of the Year' Award at the SME National Awards for the second time!

We appeared several times in the media, including when Warden Abbey Community Vineyard were invited on to BBC Three Counties Radio to talk about the work they do and their wine.

The continued hard work and commitment of our staff has been remarkable. All our staff are a credit to BedsRCC and we are very fortunate to have such a superb staff and volunteer team.

Community and Wellbeing

Community and Wellbeing is our largest department and has had a number of new projects this year including the ongoing development of Green Social Prescribing.

Community Referral
Our Community Referral (Social Prescribing) service allows GPs, nurses and other care professionals to refer people for non-medical, community based support and services via our Community Wellbeing Champions. It bridges the gap between the NHS and the community and frees up GP time.

Achievements and performance (continued)

During the past year our Community Wellbeing Champions received close to 3500 referrals.

You Can Do IT!
Within this year, we continued to develop the 'You Can Do IT!' project, which allows people to learn how to use digital technology. 17 volunteers have been recruited as Digital Health Champions to provide support within the established groups and efforts are ongoing to attract more in order to expand capacity. The project has welcomed 93 learners across all groups and delivered 740 sessions of individual tuition.

Green Social Prescribing
This was the first year in post for Nicola, our Green Social Prescribing Officer. Significant networks were created of organisations offering green wellbeing provision. This led to the creation of an online Green Wellbeing Directory. Other achievements included seasonal walks, work during Great Big Green Week and ongoing development of our GSP offer which focused on Community Gardens and nature based wellbeing groups.

Village and Community Agents
Our Village Agents operate in all the villages within Bedford Borough, primarily funded by the Bedford Borough Council. This dedicated team of part-time Agents identifies individuals in hard-to-reach rural areas and assists them in enhancing their quality of life by connecting them with mainstream services or community support networks.

Furthermore, we have three Community Agents who work with specific communities in Central Bedfordshire, thanks to local funding arrangements.

Our Agents supported 1,315 individual clients, including 684 new clients. 569 home visits were undertaken.

During this year we worked with Bedford Borough council to lay the groundwork for a brand new Town Agent post that would be based in Bedford and Kempston.

Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
Good Neighbour and Village Care Schemes play a vital role within their communities by facilitating access to occasional voluntary assistance, akin to the support one neighbour might offer another. This assistance serves as a crucial factor in allowing individuals to maintain their independence and continue residing in their own homes.

The ongoing coordination of the Bedfordshire network involves 37 groups, currently comprising just over 667 regularly active volunteers, with an additional 571 volunteers available for occasional assistance. Throughout Bedfordshire, these groups have collectively reported performing nearly 34,000 tasks or acts of support this year. On average, they have assisted approximately 1,275 residents each quarter, many of whom are recurring beneficiaries receiving help on a regular basis.

Supporting Communities

Village Hall & Community Buildings support
Hall committees have gradually resumed normality post-Covid. The VHA service was able to support and guide this process, helping to relieve the residual anxiety felt by many committees.

We supported 8 halls in becoming Warm Spaces, including securing LA grants. During the year we were able to offer support 240 times covering a wide range of issues. We also worked to ensure that Halls were better equipped to face the energy crisis to keep them viable.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Housing and planning
BRCC supports local communities to plan for their future through Neighbourhood and Green Infrastructure (GI) planning. During the year we supported 10 Neighbourhood Plan groups; we provided support to groups via phone and email and also through attending their Neighbourhood plan steering group meetings. We worked with 8 communities on Green Infrastructure Plans, including the identification of important sites to be designated and protected as Local Green Spaces.

In addition we help rural parishes to meet their affordable housing needs by carrying out household surveys. This year we carried out 3 housing needs surveys, working in partnership with Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Plan steering groups, Local Authorities, Housing Associations and local landowners.

We continue to work as part of Eastern Community Homes, a community led housing hub for the Eastern region – formed with our ACRE colleagues in the East of England. We continue to raise awareness of the benefits of community-led housing projects.

We facilitate the Community-led Planning and Rural Housing across Bedfordshire, offering advice and support in creating a Parish, Town, Neighbourhood or Green Infrastructure Plan, and we are part of the ACRE national network of Village Hall Advisors, we provide information, advice and support to Charitable Village Hall Committees.

Green Infrastructure
We also provide a range of Community and Countryside initiatives, including wildlife conservation and volunteering. We host the Upper and Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership. BRCC also leads on a number of 'Green Wheels' (linking publicly accessible green spaces and routes within and around rural towns) in the Ivel Valley area. During this year we continued to work on the Potton Green Wheels which is due to launch in summer 2023.

BRCC continues to deliver a variety of other activities that involve local people in designing, conserving and being active in their local green spaces, including our Ivel Valley Conservation Volunteers.

For over 16 years, we have run Wellbeing Walks across Bedfordshire, through which we deliver over 30 walk programmes - free and open to all.

b. Community Transport

Door to Door / Greensand Country
BRCC operates two personalised transport services, commonly known as 'dial-a-ride,' to cater to individuals facing substantial challenges in utilising conventional public transportation. These services are 'Door to Door,' which serves the entirety of Bedford Borough, and 'Greensand Country' community transport, focusing on northern Central Bedfordshire.

Together, they extend their coverage across 75% of Bedfordshire, encompassing areas from Dean & Shelton in the north to Harlington in the south. Both services are closely intertwined, often utilising the same vehicles and drivers to provide efficient transportation solutions for the community.

In July we received two contract new buses to enhance our fleet which will help reduce maintenance costs which had been rising due to the age of some of the buses that have now been sold on.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Community Rail Partnerships
BedsRCC oversees the operations of two Community Rail Partnerships: One for the Bedford to Bletchley line, known as the Marston Vale line, and the other for the Bedford-St Albans City line, referred to as Beds & Herts. These partnerships play a crucial role in bridging the gap between the railway industry and local communities.

The past year has presented a mixture of challenges and opportunities for our engagement with the community, primarily due to the suspension of train services on the Marston Vale line since December 2022. This was caused by the unfortunate closure of a vital train maintenance company.

However, despite this setback, our dedicated team has persisted in actively engaging with the local community, ensuring they remain informed and updated on the progress and plans for the resumption of services.

Prior to the suspension of services Marston Vale CRP arranged special services for Bedford River Festival in July 2022 and continued to celebrate the 175th Anniversary Year of the Marston Vale Line with a series of events.

Marston Vale CRP worked with Beds & Herts CRP to arrange a series of Christmas Concerts at Bedford Station in December 2022 In aid of Bedford Foodbank.

Beds & Herts CRP secured funding during the year to publish a 'Days Out by Bike on a Train' leaflet.

We are also responsible for Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre, a Grade II Listed building dating back to 1846, designed by the Duke of Bedford. We restored it between 2007 and 2013. Following Covid it is now fully open to the public with a museum, gift shop, tourist information point, tea room and office & meeting space'.

c. Finance and Business Services

Financial and HR management
The finance team remained strong this year and despite losing a member of the team in September, the addition of a temporary experienced Accountant and the appointment of an Executive Assistant who took over the HR records function, really supported the team to remain positive.

IT and Website
The Social Prescribing Team in conjunction with the CCG and Primary care ensured that Community Wellbeing Champions were able to securely access patient records via the clinical software SystmOne. This required a significant amount of partnership work and technical support for each team member while software was installed and configured.

New websites were designed for Ridgmont Heritage Centre and Dunstable Community Halls.

Marketing
During the year the Marketing team continues to be very busy. Our Marketing Officer has developed her expertise and skills in a number of areas producing engaging printed, online and social material. This continues to have a huge positive impact on our brand and wider promotional activities.

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership
The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership programme finally finished the project development and delivery phase in March 2023 and moved to the Greensand Trust for business as usual. The final BRCC staff member of GCLP moved across to the Greensand Trust and the programme is now closed.

Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre
We are alos responsible for Ridgmont Staion Heritage Centre, a Grade II listed building dating back to 1846,

Achievements and performance (continued)

designed by the Duke of Bedford. We restored it between 2007 and 2013. Following covid, it is now fully open to the public with a museum, gift shop, tourist information point, tea room and office & meeting space.

d. Rural development (paused)

Rural Development Programmes
The LEADER programme whilst now closed has some small project monitoring (minimal) but this is only an ongoing tiny administrative and archive task.

e. BRCC Trading Services Ltd

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity operates a wholly-owned subsidiary company entitled BRCC Trading Services Ltd, the purpose of which is to raise funds to support the charity. The directors of the company are:

P Grayson
I Kelly (resigned July 2022)
I Riches
T Harcus

T Cowan is the Company Secretary

The main trading activities of BRCC Services Ltd are currently:

The Barn Cardington
This year was extremely challenging and despite the best efforts of the Finance Director, Chief Executive along with the staff members at The Barn, the decision was taken to close the Business. The cost of living crisis, extortionate energy rates and staffing issues meant the business had become unwieldy, resource consuming and a drain on the Trading Company. The Barn ceased trading on the 28th February 2023. Huge thanks must go to the staff team that worked tirelessly above and beyond their paid duties to try and save the business and then the work involved in winding down and closing the business.

Ridgmont Station Tea Room
The Tearoom had a productive year and was able to start to grow. There were some themed events such as "Festive Afternoon Tea" and a successful "Beauty and the Beast" event along with some of the CRP events. There was an impact of the trains ceasing to run from December 2022 but there was a Christmas pop-up shop to encourage new visitors to the Centre. Due to the focus on The Barn, the Tearoom ran as business as usual but there are plans to develop the whole Centre and Tearoom for 2023/24 and hopefully the re-introduction of the trains will support that.

Warden Abbey Community Vineyard
BedsRCC manages the Warden Abbey vineyard as a community project, in order to provide rewarding volunteering opportunities locally while also continuing to make award-winning local wines. During the two harvesting days, the team picked around 3 tonnes of our grapes. As we had previously put lots of the previous harvest for sparkling wine this year's harvest would go mainly to produce our still wine with a smaller amount for sparkling. Altogether this will produce around 2000 bottles combined. Thank you to our volunteers for their continued hard work this year tending to the vines, planning and running events, harvesting grapes - among other jobs. This year we needed to replace our wonderful Vineyard Manager who decided to retire and so a new Vineyard Manager was appointed and took over in October 2022.

Financial review

a. Reserves policy

The trustees have identified the need for the Charity to hold unrestricted reserves for three principal reasons:

a) To remain resilient and manage risk in an increasingly uncertain and volatile operating environment

b) To accommodate cash flow pressures at a time when a number of BRCC's income streams involve payment in arrears

c) To allow for significant contingency, particularly the costs incurred in the event of closing down the Charity

Its unrestricted reserves will therefore contain two elements:

1. Resilience funds: BRCC will hold between 1 and 3 months' total budgeted operating costs in order to provide sufficient cash flow for the organisation while enabling it to address future opportunities, threats and risks as part of its long-term financial planning, as well as sensitively managing the cessation of services to beneficiaries where required.

2. Designated funds: the trustees have designated a Contingency Fund (to cover the costs of winding up the organisation); a Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve (to cover extraordinary repairs or maintenance costs); and a Fixed Assets Reserve (reflecting the current value of its Fixed Assets). These funds will not be used day to day for the purposes outlined in 1 and 2. The trustees review the levels of these designated funds annually.

The Charity will not hold more reserves than it needs to deliver the aims of this policy, in order to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its current beneficiaries as effectively as possible.

The level of reserves held will be monitored monthly by the Management Team and quarterly by the Finance Committee. The Board will review this reserves policy annually.

b. Financial review

During the year, the charity and its trading subsidiary BRCC Services Ltd raised income of £3,548,222 (2021/22 £2,888,801) to enable it to deliver a range of activities under its charitable objects. This income came principally from local and central government, Lottery distributing bodies and other funders through a range of service level agreements, grants and contracts, as well as including the value of Dunstable Community Halls on the transfer of assets from Luton and Bedfordshire Youth Association. A proportion of income also came directly from clients and beneficiaries (through fees and charges), and some from retail activities and donations.

Total expenditure during the year amounted to £2,808,071 (2022 £2,661,143), with the result that the overall net movement in funds for the year is reported as a surplus of £740,151 (2022 £227,658). However, the surplus includes the cash and property transferred from Luton and Bedfordshire Youth Association at £715,736, leaving an operating activities of £24,415 for the year.

Transfers have been made to increase the balance in the Fixed Asset Reserve to £1,150,708 (2022 £503,424) to match the total net book value of the fixed assets as at 31 March 2023. The other designated reserves (Contingency and Buildings & Vehicle Maintenance reserves) have been maintained at the same level.

During the year, the charity has continued to spend grants which were recognised in the previous financial year, but has also been awarded new funding for future projects. As a result, the balance held for restricted projects increased from £751,681 at 31 March 2022 to £957,139 at 31 March 2023. However, the number of grants available to support the running costs for Warden Abbey Vineyard and Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre were far below the expenses incurred, hence the surplus of £127 on the charity's General Fund has been eliminated and the General Fund was overdrawn by £25,530 at the year end. Restoring the General Fund to at least the minimum level set out in the Reserves Policy above has been identified as a priority for the trustees over the coming years.

The deficit balance on the accumulated Profit and Loss Account for the trading subsidiary, BRCC Trading Services Limited, stands at £156,037 (2022 £84,602).

c. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

Plans for the future

- The launch of the Strategic Plan 2023
- Refurbishment and launch of the Dunstable Community Halls
- Expand our Community Transport Service through increasing the range of services and projects
- Continue to develop our presence in the South of the County and Luton
- Expand our Rural Housing offer to provide the full Rural Housing Enabler service
- Continue to grow our Community and Wellbeing Service securing funding from LA's/Primary Care Networks and the Integrated Care Board, and further expand into Green Social Prescribing, Digital Isolation and Children and Young People areas
- Continue to develop the Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
- To acquire full Museum accreditation for Ridgmont Heritage Centre and develop the offer
- Continue to grow our Culture and Heritage offer
- Continue to develop collaborative relationships with other local organisations and within the ACRE Network
- Continue to look for opportunities and diversify income streams where possible

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities (CONTINUED)

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Group and the charitable company and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their 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 Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Streets Audit LLP, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 30 November 2023

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Charitable company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the company and sector in which it operates;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, compliance with NHS Social Prescribing requirements and safeguarding of adults and children (including passenger assistance), requirements of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, employment and taxation legislation, anti-bribery, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

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

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

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

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non -compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statements and disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of governor meetings of those charged with governance; and
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Linda J Lord

Linda J Lord BSc BFP FCA TEP (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Streets Audit LLP
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditors

Date: 20/12/2023

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	**26,620**	**718,240**	**744,860**	*23,311*
Charitable activities	4	**2,303,123**	**85,068**	**2,388,191**	*2,401,959*
Other trading activities	5	**-**	**413,064**	**413,064**	*462,179*
Investments	6	**-**	**2,107**	**2,107**	*1,352*
Total income		**2,329,743**	**1,218,479**	**3,548,222**	*2,888,801*
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	**-**	**231,049**	**231,049**	*243,271*
Charitable activities	8	**2,168,823**	**408,199**	**2,577,022**	*2,417,872*
Total expenditure		**2,168,823**	**639,248**	**2,808,071**	*2,661,143*
Net income		**160,920**	**579,231**	**740,151**	*227,658*
Transfers between funds	20	**44,538**	**(44,538)**	**-**	*-*
Net movement in funds		**205,458**	**534,693**	**740,151**	*227,658*
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		**751,681**	**618,949**	**1,370,630**	*1,142,972*
Net movement in funds		**205,458**	**534,693**	**740,151**	*227,658*
Total funds carried forward		**957,139**	**1,153,642**	**2,110,781**	*1,370,630*

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

The notes on pages 23 to 49 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Note		2023 £		*2022 £*
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**1,150,708**		*503,424*
			1,150,708		*503,424*
Current assets					
Stocks	15	**42,017**		*42,675*	
Debtors	16	**532,181**		*275,061*	
Investments	17	**85,999**		*85,000*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**619,499**		*835,340*	
		1,279,696		*1,238,076*	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(297,395)**		*(339,349)*	
Net current assets			**982,301**		*898,727*
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		**(22,228)**		*(31,521)*
Total net assets			**2,110,781**		*1,370,630*
Charity funds					
Restricted funds	20		**957,139**		*751,681*
Unrestricted funds	20		**1,153,642**		*618,949*
Total funds			**2,110,781**		*1,370,630*

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 30 November 2023

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 23 to 49 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Note		2023 £		*2022 £*
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**1,150,708**		*503,424*
Investments			**100**		*100*
			1,150,808		*503,524*
Current assets					
Debtors	16	**704,384**		*372,982*	
Investments	17	**85,999**		*85,000*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**608,437**		*809,225*	
		1,398,820		*1,267,207*	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(282,810)**		*(315,499)*	
Net current assets			**1,116,010**		*951,708*
Total net assets			**2,266,818**		*1,455,232*
Charity funds					
Restricted funds	20		**957,139**		*751,681*
Unrestricted funds	20		**1,309,679**		*703,551*
Total funds			**2,266,818**		*1,455,232*

The charitable company's net movement in funds for the year was £811,586 *(2022 - £241,118)*.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 30 November 2023

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 23 to 49 form part of these financial statements.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	2023 £	*2022* *£*
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash used in operating activities	**(177,485)**	*343,133*
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**2,107**	*4,565*
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets	**5,526**	*202*
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	**(35,697)**	*(13,800)*
Net cash used in investing activities	**(28,064)**	**(9,033)**
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayments of borrowing	**(9,293)**	*(6,879)*
Movement in fixed term deposit	**(999)**	*25,093*
Net cash (used in)/provided by financing activities	**(10,292)**	**18,214**
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	**(215,841)**	**352,314**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	**835,340**	*483,026*
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**619,499**	*835,340*

The notes on pages 23 to 49 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. General information

As set out in the trustees' report, Bedfordshire Rural Communiies Charity is an unincorporated charity registered in England and Wales. The address of their registered office is The Old School, Cardington, Beds, MK44 3SX.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

The charity's objects are stated in the trustees' report.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 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 2015), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and Consolidated Balance Sheet consolidate the financial statements of the Group and its subsidiary undertaking. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

The Group has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

2.2 Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

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

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

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described below:

Allocation of costs - Direct expenses are charged to individual cost centres wherever possible. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of those resources.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Company status

The charitable company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page . In the event of the charitable company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member of the charitable company.

2.4 Going concern

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate, i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

The trustees have reviewed the level of reserves held by the charity and are satisfied that they are sufficient to enable the charity to continue its activities for the foreseeable future and, accordingly, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

2.5 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

2.6 Income

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.7 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. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

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

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is made except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end are noted as a commitment, but not accrued as expenditure.

2.8 Interest receivable

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

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition are included in the measurement of cost.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation (continued)

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold property	- Over the remaining life of the property, assessed as 10% per annum straight line
Long-term leasehold property: Ridgmont Station improvements	Over the remaining life of the leasehold property The 99 year lease for the Ridgmont Station building and 25 year lease for the car park land both commenced March 2009
Long-term leasehold property: Other	- Over the remaining life of the leasehold property 10% or 4% per annum straight line
Short-term leasehold property	- 10% or 20% per annum straight line
Motor vehicles	- 25% per annum straight line
Office equipment	- 25% or 33% per annum straight line

2.10 Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

2.11 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

2.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

2.13 Cash at 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 from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

2.14 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.15 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.16 Pensions

The charity provides a workplace pension scheme, compliant with Auto-enrolment procedures. The charity also continues to contribute to the previous stakeholder pension scheme for those staff who are eligible for membership under the terms of their contracts of employment. Pension contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities for the year in which they are payable.

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Donations				
Transfer of cash assets from LuBYA	-	32,736	**32,736**	-
Transfer of property from LuBYA (at valuation)	-	683,000	**683,000**	-
Subtotal detailed disclosure	-	715,736	**715,736**	-
Donations	26,620	2,504	**29,124**	*23,311*
	26,620	718,240	**744,860**	*23,311*
Total 2022	*21,254*	*2,057*	*23,311*	

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Income from charitable activities	2,303,123	85,068	**2,388,191**	*2,401,959*
Total 2022	*2,273,697*	*128,262*	*2,401,959*	

5. Income from other trading activities

Income from fundraising events

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Rent received	27,339	**27,339**	*3,213*
Sundry income	76	**76**	*668*
	27,415	**27,415**	*3,881*

Income from non charitable trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Sales	376,732	**376,732**	*420,608*
Rent receivable	6,250	**6,250**	*11,900*
Other income	2,667	**2,667**	*25,790*
	385,649	**385,649**	*458,298*
Total 2022	*458,298*	*458,298*	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Bank interest	2,107	**2,107**	*1,352*
Total 2022	*1,352*	*1,352*	

7. Expenditure on raising funds

Other trading expenses

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Cost of sales	221,739	**221,739**	*216,587*
Administration expenses	8,380	**8,380**	*25,596*
Interest payable	930	**930**	*1,088*
	231,049	**231,049**	*243,271*
Total 2022	*243,271*	*243,271*	

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

8. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	*Total 2022 £*
Charitable Activities	2,168,823	408,199	**2,577,022**	*2,417,872*
Total 2022	*2,095,656*	*322,216*	*2,417,872*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2023 £	Support costs 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Charitable Activities	2,192,545	384,477	**2,577,022**	*2,417,872*
Total 2022	*2,132,107*	*285,765*	*2,417,872*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Staff costs	**1,532,525**	*1,405,274*
Room hire, meetings and conferences	**20,745**	*8,183*
Publicity, publications and subscriptions	**32,210**	*58,522*
Printing, postage, stationery and telephone	**60,806**	*68,108*
Repairs and renewals	**67,220**	*37,642*
Contractors fees	**123,127**	*112,180*
Travel and susbistence	**11,612**	*7,061*
Recruitment and other staff costs	**13,039**	*5,568*
Volunteer's expenses	**1,913**	*2,056*
Rent, rates and service charges	**90,454**	*60,277*
Legal and professional fees	**22,004**	*4,974*
Grants paid	**156,923**	*317,165*
Vehicle costs	**44,524**	*44,867*
Lease costs	**15,443**	*230*
	2,192,545	*2,132,107*

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2023 £	*Total funds 2022 £*
Staff costs	**218,035**	*170,343*
Depreciation	**62,978**	*33,452*
VAT lost on partial exemption	**8,664**	*5,062*
Premises costs	**80,775**	*61,868*
Bank charges	**2,159**	*1,406*
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	**7,235**	*1,467*
Bad debts	**4,138**	*2,953*
Governance costs	**493**	*9,214*
	384,477	*285,765*

10. Auditors' remuneration

	2023 £	*2022 £*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor for the audit of the charitable company's annual accounts	**12,000**	*9,200*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor in respect of:		
All non-audit services not included above	**4,000**	*3,600*

11. Staff costs

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*	Charity 2023 £	*Charity 2022 £*
Wages and salaries	**1,586,031**	*1,431,078*	**1,586,031**	*1,431,078*
Social security costs	**132,141**	*114,955*	**132,141**	*114,955*
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**32,388**	*29,584*	**32,388**	*29,584*
	1,750,560	*1,575,617*	**1,750,560**	*1,575,617*

11. Staff costs (continued)

The average number of persons employed by the charitable company during the year was as follows:

	Group 2023 No.	*Group 2022 No.*	Charity 2023 No.	*Charity 2022 No.*
Project staff	**91**	*86*	**91**	*86*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	94	*89*	**94**	*89*

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	Group 2023 No.	*Group 2022 No.*	Charity 2023 No.	*Charity 2022 No.*
Project staff	**52**	*51*	**52**	*51*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	55	*54*	**55**	*54*

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

The key management personnel of the charity are the trustees (who all give their time voluntarily), the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team. A total of £158,877 was paid to 3 members of staff for their roles as key management personnel (2022 £164,947 was paid to 4 members of staff, one of whom retired during the year).

12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits *(2022 - £NIL)*.

During the year ended 31 March 2023, no Trustee expenses have been incurred *(2022 - £NIL)*.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

13. Tangible fixed assets

Group and Charity

	Freehold property £	Long-term leasehold property - Ridgmont Station £	Long-term leasehold property - Other £	Short-term leasehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation							
At 1 April 2022	-	509,045	82,120	35,535	162,722	87,910	877,332
Additions	709,568	-	-	-	-	9,129	718,697
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(7,500)	(34,566)	(42,066)
At 31 March 2023	709,568	509,045	82,120	35,535	155,222	62,473	1,553,963
Depreciation							
At 1 April 2022	-	59,175	51,151	35,535	147,279	80,768	373,908
Charge for the year	37,151	6,850	2,828	-	10,718	5,431	62,978
On disposals	-	-	-	-	(7,500)	(26,131)	(33,631)
At 31 March 2023	37,151	66,025	53,979	35,535	150,497	60,068	403,255

13. Tangible fixed assets (continued)

Group and Charity (continued)

	Freehold property £	Long-term leasehold property - Ridgmont Station £	Long-term leasehold property - Other £	Short-term leasehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Net book value							
At 31 March 2023	**672,417**	**443,020**	**28,141**	**-**	**4,725**	**2,405**	**1,150,708**
At 31 March 2022	*-*	*449,870*	*30,969*	*-*	*15,443*	*7,142*	*503,424*

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

14. Subsidiary Undertakings

The following was a subsidiary undertaking of the charitable company:

Name	Company number	Registered office or principal place of business	Principal activity	Class of shares	Holding	Included in consolidation
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	4475077	England and Wales	Operation of farm shop, wine production and other commercial activities	Ordinary	100%	Yes

The financial results of the subsidiary for the year were:

Name	Income £	Expenditure £	Profit/(Loss) / Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year £	Net assets £
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	**419,836**	**(491,271)**	**(71,435)**	**(155,937)**

15. Stocks

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*
Goods for resale	**42,017**	*42,675*

16. Debtors

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*	Charity 2023 £	*Charity 2022 £*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**495,973**	*203,366*	**482,937**	*202,907*
Amounts owed by group undertakings	**-**	*-*	**185,239**	*102,500*
Other debtors	**27,446**	*3,485*	**27,446**	*-*
Prepayments and accrued income	**8,762**	*68,210*	**8,762**	*67,575*
	532,181	*275,061*	**704,384**	*372,982*

17. Current asset investments

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*	Charity 2023 £	*Charity 2022 £*
Bank deposit (over 90 days)	**85,999**	*85,000*	**85,999**	*85,000*

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*	Charity 2023 £	*Charity 2022 £*
Bank loans	**9,600**	*9,600*	**-**	*-*
Trade creditors	**28,582**	*67,900*	**28,090**	*57,042*
Other taxation and social security	**64,877**	*43,392*	**63,384**	*43,300*
Other creditors	**14,075**	*13,053*	**14,075**	*13,053*
Accruals and deferred income	**180,261**	*205,404*	**177,261**	*202,104*
	297,395	*339,349*	**282,810**	*315,499*

The trading subsidiary received a Bounce Back Loan which is guaranteed by the UK government and repayable in instalments.

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*	Charity 2023 £	*Charity 2022 £*
Deferred income at 1 April 2022	**127,144**	*61,031*	**127,144**	*61,031*
Resources deferred during the year	**138,266**	*127,144*	**138,266**	*127,144*
Amounts released from previous periods	**(127,144)**	*(61,031)*	**(127,144)**	*(61,031)*
	138,266	*127,144*	**138,266**	*127,144*

The charity receives some funding which has performance related criteria and is recognised when the income has been earned. Any income received in advance of the performance related criteria being met is deferred at the reporting date.

19. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*
Bank loans	**22,228**	*31,521*

The trading subsidiary received a Bounce Back Loan which is guaranteed by the UK government, repayable in instalments and is due for repayment within 5 years. At 31 March 2022 £2,000 of the bank loans were due for repayment after 5 years from the reporting date.

20. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	503,424	-	(71,413)	718,697	1,150,708
Contingency Fund	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
	678,424	-	(71,413)	718,697	1,325,708
General funds					
General Fund	127	44,381	(269,651)	199,613	(25,530)
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	(84,602)	385,649	(231,048)	(226,036)	(156,037)
LuBYA	-	770,953	(34,141)	(736,812)	-
VCSE funds	25,000	17,496	(32,995)	-	9,501
	(59,475)	1,218,479	(567,835)	(763,235)	(172,066)
Total Unrestricted funds	618,949	1,218,479	(639,248)	(44,538)	1,153,642

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds					
Care in Bedford Borough	-	96,967	(76,726)	-	20,241
Care in Central Bedfordshire	94,813	92,504	(116,787)	-	70,530
Green Infrastructure	41,833	293,469	(188,047)	-	147,255
CBC Infrastructure	4,330	32,885	(21,299)	-	15,916
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	18,483	(44,907)	26,424	-
Community Rail Partnerships	94,784	101,762	(104,305)	-	92,241
Ridgmont Station	-	2,813	(26,532)	23,719	-
Dunstable Consortium	19,667	56,250	(25,962)	-	49,955
Door to Door	67,136	316,721	(371,915)	-	11,942
CAB Timebank	21,226	111,969	(92,023)	-	41,172
Community Connectors	-	150,000	-	-	150,000
Mental Health Social Prescribing	7,377	108,801	(80,289)	-	35,889
Primary Care Networks	45,099	232,624	(239,942)	(1,860)	35,921
Social Prescribing CBC	131,902	248,342	(244,991)	(1,860)	133,393
Social Prescribing BBC	30,580	219,947	(243,412)	(1,860)	5,255
GCLP Projects	81,900	211,687	(234,923)	(25)	58,639
You Can Do It	111,034	34,519	(56,763)	-	88,790
	751,681	2,329,743	(2,168,823)	44,538	957,139
Total of funds	1,370,630	3,548,222	(2,808,071)	-	2,110,781

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2022* £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	*524,745*	-	*(35,121)*	*13,800*	*503,424*
Contingency Fund	*150,000*	-	-	-	*150,000*
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	*25,000*	-	-	-	*25,000*
	699,745	-	*(35,121)*	*13,800*	*678,424*
General funds					
General Fund	*(6,879)*	*102,623*	*(249,585)*	*153,968*	*127*
LuBYA	-	*7,928*	*(7,928)*	-	-
VCSE funds	-	*25,000*	-	-	*25,000*
BRCC Trading Service Ltd	*(71,142)*	*458,299*	*(243,271)*	*(228,488)*	*(84,602)*
	(78,021)	*593,850*	*(500,784)*	*(74,520)*	*(59,475)*
Total Unrestricted funds	*621,724*	*593,850*	*(535,905)*	*(60,720)*	*618,949*

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds					
Care in Bedford Borough	-	51,253	(61,253)	23,152	13,152
Care in Central Bedfordshire	31,198	133,734	(80,119)	(3,152)	81,661
Green Infrastructure	18,516	113,904	(90,587)	-	41,833
CBC Infrastructure	-	29,000	(24,670)	-	4,330
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	10,172	(27,050)	16,878	-
Community Rail Partnerships	75,771	148,128	(129,115)	-	94,784
Ridgmont Station	-	3,209	(32,792)	29,583	-
Dunstable Consortium	-	25,000	(5,333)	-	19,667
Greensand Country Community Transport	1,507	103,559	(108,873)	3,807	-
Door to Door	91,905	198,623	(211,085)	(12,307)	67,136
CAB Timebank	-	88,290	(67,064)	-	21,226
Mental Health Social Prescribing	-	53,333	(45,956)	-	7,377
Primary Care Networks	-	362,599	(317,500)	-	45,099
Social Prescribing CBC	125,042	227,970	(221,110)	-	131,902
Social Prescribing BBC	37,620	195,369	(202,409)	-	30,580
GCLP Projects	139,689	429,854	(490,402)	2,759	81,900
You Can Do It	-	120,954	(9,920)	-	111,034
	521,248	2,294,951	(2,125,238)	60,720	751,681
Total of funds	1,142,972	2,888,801	(2,661,143)	-	1,370,630

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Designated Funds:

Fixed Asset Reserve
This fund represents the total net book value of the Charity's Tangible Fixed Assets which comprise: Freehold Property (transferred from Luton and Bedfordshire Youth Assocuation), Leasehold Land & Buildings, Renovation at Ridgmont Station, Improvements made to the Cardington office, Motor vehicles and Fixtures, fittings & equipment. Transfers to the fund represent the value of assets purchased or donated during the year and depreciation is charged as an expense of the fund.

Contingency Reserve
This fund represents the Trustees' calculation of the likely costs that would be incurred in the event of having to wind up the Charity. It comprises staff redundancy payments and commitments on leases.

Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve
This fund has been designated to cover any extraordinary repairs and maintenance that may be required to the Cardington office and the Charity's vehicles.

Restricted Funds:

Care in Bedford Borough:
This fund was established in April 2009, following the formation of the two new Unitary Authorities in the county. Funding from the Borough Council (Adult Services) has been received to continue support for the Carers Short Break Bureau; the Good Neighbours Schemes and the Village Agents "Just Ask" initiative. Income and costs associated with the services provided have been charged to the project with £10,000 of unrestricted funding being allocated towards the cost of providing these services.

Care in Central Bedfordshire:
The charity provides care for adults in Central Bedfordshire through the Village Care Scheme.

Green Infrastructure:
This fund comprises several funding streams that are ring fenced for the provision of services and the purchase of capital items and/or payments to contractors in respect of the various environmental sites that are managed by the RCC's Green Infrastructure Team. Costs are charged to the fund as and when the various projects are delivered, in partnership with local authorities.

CBC Infrastructure Grant:
In 2016/17, the charity became the lead body in administering the Central Bedfordshire Council's Voluntary and Community Sector funding. The agreement was initially for a 3-year period to 2019 but has been subsequently been extended. Costs are charged to the fund as and when projects are delivered, in partnership with local authority.

Warden Abbey Vineyard:
The charity continued to receive grant income and donations to assist with the costs of managing the Warden Abbey Vineyard, which provides opportunities for volunteering. The vineyard management costs have been charged to the restricted fund and a transfer of £26,424 (2022 £16,878) has been made from general funds to support the project.

Community Rail Partnerships
Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership (MVCRP):
BRCC employs the MVCRP Officer, which is funded primarily through a Service Level Agreement with London Midland Trains, West Midlands Trains Ltd and Milton Keynes Borough Councils. MVCRP seeks to publicise and promote increased usage of the Marston Vale Community Rail Line.

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership (ALCRP):
BRCC employs the ALCRP Officer, funded primarily through a Service Level Agreement with London Midland Trains and West Midlands Trains Ltd. ALCRP seeks to publicise and promote increased usage of the Abbey Line Community Rail Line.

Beds and Herts CRP (formerly Bedford to St Albans CRP):
BRCC continues to receive funding from Greater Thameslink Railway to employ a community rail officer on the Bedford to St Albans Line.

Ridgmont Station:
The charity completed the refurbishment of Ridgmont Station in 2014 and continues to receive specific donations for the ongoing development of the facility. The restricted funding, together with a transfer of £23,719 (2022 £29,583) from unrestricted funds, is used to cover the maintenance and upkeep of the station building.

Dunstable Consortium:
In 2021/22 the charity received a grant from Historic England as part of the High Streets Heritage Action Zones ("HS HAZ") Programme, a nationwide initiative designed to secure lasting improvements to historic high streets for the communities who use them.

Door to Door:
The charity took over the assets and activities of North Bedfordshire Community Transport on 1 April 2013 and now provides community transport services for individuals with special needs.

CAB Timebank:
In 2021/22 the charity took over the Timebank activities from Community Action Bedfordshire (CAB). Funds have been provided to encourage and support the development of new Timebanks, across Central Bedfordshire, where people can help their neighbours and those within their community by sharing their time, interests and skills.

Community Connectors:
In February 2023, the charity received £150,000 to fund two community connectors in Bedford Borough and in Central Bedfordshire. The project has commenced in the new financial year.

Prinary Care Networks and Social Prescribing:
BRCC has been commissioned by Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council to provide Social Prescribing services to Primary Care Networks and GP surgeries across Bedfordshire. The programme supports patients with social, emotional or practical needs by finding non-clinical solutions that will improve their health and wellbeing.

Greensand Country Landscape Programme (GCLP):
BRCC was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, on behalf of the Greensand Ridge Landscape Partnership, to establish the Greensand Ridge area of Bedfordshire as a living and working landscape. Landscape Partnership scheme started in July 2016 and was expected to run until December 2020 but was subsequently extended and BRCC's involvement has been concluded since the end of the financial year.

21. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Designated funds	**678,424**	**-**	**(71,413)**	**718,697**	**1,325,708**
General funds	**(59,475)**	**1,218,479**	**(567,835)**	**(763,235)**	**(172,066)**
Restricted funds	**751,681**	**2,329,743**	**(2,168,823)**	**44,538**	**957,139**
	1,370,630	**3,548,222**	**(2,808,071)**	**-**	**2,110,781**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2022* £
Designated funds	*699,745*	*-*	*(35,121)*	*13,800*	*678,424*
General funds	*(78,021)*	*593,850*	*(500,784)*	*(74,520)*	*(59,475)*
Restricted funds	*521,248*	*2,294,951*	*(2,125,238)*	*60,720*	*751,681*
	1,142,972	*2,888,801*	*(2,661,143)*	*-*	*1,370,630*

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	1,150,708	**1,150,708**
Current assets	957,139	322,557	**1,279,696**
Creditors due within one year	-	(297,395)	**(297,395)**
Creditors due in more than one year	-	(22,228)	**(22,228)**
Total	957,139	1,153,642	**2,110,781**

22. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Restricted funds 2022 £	*Unrestricted funds 2022* £	*Total funds 2022* £
Tangible fixed assets	-	*503,424*	*503,424*
Current assets	*751,681*	*486,395*	*1,238,076*
Creditors due within one year	-	*(339,349)*	*(339,349)*
Creditors due in more than one year	-	*(31,521)*	*(31,521)*
Total	*751,681*	*618,949*	*1,370,630*

23. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022* £
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**740,151**	*227,658*
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	**62,978**	*33,452*
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**(2,107)**	*(4,565)*
Loss on the sale of fixed assets	**2,909**	*1,467*
Decrease in stocks	**658**	*6,891*
Increase in debtors	**(257,120)**	*(8,778)*
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**(41,954)**	*87,008*
Gift in kind - transfer of property from LuBYA	**(683,000)**	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**(177,485)**	*343,133*

24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*
Cash in hand	**619,499**	*835,340*
Total cash and cash equivalents	**619,499**	*835,340*

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2022 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	**835,340**	**(215,841)**	**619,499**
Debt due within 1 year	**(9,600)**	**-**	**(9,600)**
Debt due after 1 year	**(31,521)**	**9,293**	**(22,228)**
Liquid investments	**85,000**	**999**	**85,999**
	879,219	**(205,549)**	**673,670**

26. Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2023 the Group and the charitable company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*	**Charity 2023 £**	*Charity 2022 £*
Not later than 1 year	**14,352**	*17,534*	**14,352**	*17,534*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**47,840**	*28,704*	**47,840**	*28,704*
Later than 5 years	**-**	*2,392*	**-**	*2,392*
	62,192	*48,630*	**62,192**	*48,630*

The following lease payments and changes in lease payments have been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities:

	Group 2023 £	*Group 2022 £*	**Charity 2023 £**	*Charity 2022 £*
Operating lease rentals	**54,384**	*43,432*	**54,384**	*43,432*
Changes in lease payments arising from COVID-19 related rent concessions	**-**	*3,400*	**-**	*3,400*

27. Related party transactions

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary company, BRCC Trading Services Limited, operates from the Cardington Office and is managed by staff employed by the parent charity. Staff costs and overhead costs totalling £172,013 (2022 £172,222) were recharged to BRCC Trading Services Limited during the year, together with rent and rates £25,216 (2022 £26,386) and recharged expenses of £55,182 (2022 £29,880). BRCC Trading Services Limited reported a loss of £71,435 (2022 loss of £14,339) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The charity advanced a loan of £30,000 to the subsidiary company in previous years. Interest of £1,591 (2022 £953) has been charged on the loan at a rate of 3.0% above the bank base rate. At the balance sheet date, BRCC Trading Services Limited owed the charity a total of £185,239 (2022 £102,500) in respect of the loans and staff recharges which remained unpaid at the balance sheet date.

The charity took over the activities and net assets of Luton and Bedfordshire Youth Association (LuBYA) in August 2022 before the LuBYA charity was closed. BRCC recognised the transfer as a donation of property at a value of £683,000 and net cash reserves at cost of £32,736. At the reporting date, £2,736 of the cash reserves and £1,070 of hal hire generated since the transfer remained in the LuBYA bank account and has been included in debtors. Mrs T Cowan's father-in-law was a trustee of LuBYA.

The charity also worked with the following organisations:

- Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council - organisations where some trustees and their close family members are employed, or where trustees serve as local or borough councillors,
- Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation where E Masih is a trustee

No one person is considered to be in a position to exercise significant influence over these organisations and consequently no details of the related party transactions are disclosed in these financial statements.

28. Taxation

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a registered charity and therefore is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

29. Members' liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

England & Wales - Charity number 1061538

Accounts

Registered number: 03327628
Charity number: 1061538

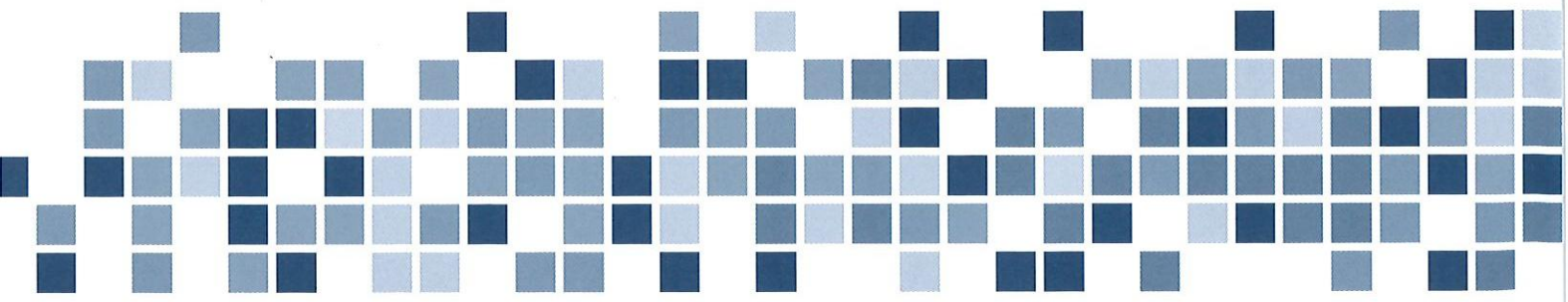
BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

STREETS®
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Trustees	C Barker J M Barnes B S George P Grayson, Chair Cllr T Hill Rev S C Holroyd I J Kelly A Lovesey E Masih Cllr C Maudlin B G Prickett I Riches H Shafi (appointed 1 March 2022)
Company registered number	03327628
Charity registered number	1061538
Registered office	The Old School Cardington Beds MK44 3SX
Company secretary	Mrs T Cowan
Chief executive officer	Mrs T Cowan
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ National Westminster Bank plc 81 High Street Bedford MK40 1NE Scottish Widows PO Box 12757 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Virgin Money Jubilee House Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4PL
Senior Management Team	Mr Cliff Andrews Ms Janice Janes Mr Neville Jephcote (retired October 2021) Mr Simon Bailes Mrs Kate Ellis Mr Matthew Phillcox (BRCC Trading Services Limited - left March 2022)
Solicitors	Woodfines LLP 16 St Cuthberts Street Bedford MK40 3JG
Independent Auditors	Streets Audit LLP Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors Potton House Wyboston Lakes Great North Road Wyboston Bedford MK44 3BZ

TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charitable company for the year from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Since the group and the charitable company qualify as small under section 383 of the Companies Act 2006, the Group Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

The group and the charitable company also trade under the names Beds RCC and BRCC.

Founded in 1953 as Bedfordshire Rural Community Council, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) is a member of a national network of Rural Community Councils under an umbrella organisation, ACRE.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a company limited by guarantee, having no share capital, and is a registered charity.

The charity was incorporated on 4 March 1997 and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The liability of its members in the event of the charitable company being wound up is limited to a sum not exceeding £10 per member.

b. Objects

The charity's objects are:

- to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community primarily in the historic county of Bedfordshire, and in particular, the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress or sickness.

- in furtherance of that said purpose, but not otherwise, to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same and to that end to bring together representatives of the voluntary organisations and statutory authorities in the historic county of Bedfordshire.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

c. Governance (including appointment, induction and training of Trustees)

The directors and senior managers of the organisation who served during the year are set out on page one. The directors of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. Members of the charity are entitled to nominate directors, from whom the Board is elected at the Annual General Meeting. All new directors are provided with an induction by the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board.

The Board of Directors meets quarterly. Many of its responsibilities are delegated to three Board Committees: the Strategic Development Committee, the Finance Committee, and the People and Projects Committee, which also meet quarterly.

Day-to-day responsibility for the running of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive and five departmental managers (as listed on page two).

d. Pay policy for key management personnel

The charity uses the NJC payscales as a basis for all staff salaries, including the CEO and management team who make up the Key Management Personnel.

e. Related party relationships

The charity's trustees and officers are involved in a wide range of other businesses and organisations, as directors, trustees, employees and councillors.

Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council provide funding to BRCC but the trustees do not consider that any councillors who are also trustees of BRCC are able to influence the charity's relationship with those organisations.

Details of related party transactions are given in note 25 to the financial statements.

f. Financial risk management

The directors recognise that there are potential risks to which the charity may be exposed. The directors have identified five main areas of risk:

- governance and management of the charity
- operational risks
- financial risks
- environmental and external factors
- compliance with law and regulation

The processes for monitoring and mitigation of these risks have been identified and are recorded in a risk register. The directors have delegated the day-to-day implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the risk register to the management team. During the year the Board received reports from the Chief Executive and agreed actions to mitigate any serious risks.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

g. Grant making policies

In administering grant schemes, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity will ensure that:

- it only manages funding programmes that clearly fit in with its own priorities, objectives and mission
- there is an independent and representative panel of people established as the body accountable for making decisions on grant allocation
- staff carrying out developmental work with projects are not involved in any way with decision making
- all grants funds will be promoted and advertised in ways that aim to reach the full range of target beneficiaries, and the application procedures are straightforward, transparent and clearly explained
- once awarded, expenditure of the grant and monitoring of progress is carried out at appropriate intervals to ensure that the funding is spent for the purpose for which it is given
- all conditions attached to the offer of the grant are met – in the event of this not being the case, the grant offer will be withdrawn
- final reports are submitted from the recipients of the grant outlining the outcome of the funding
- appropriate financial records are kept and reporting obligations of funders are met.

h. Fixed Assets

Acquisitions and disposals of fixed assets during the year are recorded in the notes forming part of the financial statements.

Objectives and activities

a. Mission and role

BRCC exists to support local community life in Bedfordshire. Its role is as follows:

- A **coordinator** of local community activity to enable communities to do more for themselves and reduce reliance on the state

- An **intermediary** between public (and private) service providers and the people in local communities they need to reach

- A **manager of partnerships** across public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve common objectives (e.g. conservation, rural economic development)

- A direct **provider of services** (e.g. community transport) that help people to participate in the community

Objectives and activities (continued)

b. Areas of benefit

BRCC is still unquestionably the leading countywide organisation working with rural communities in Bedfordshire. However, it is not always helpful to make the distinction between urban and rural when services are delivered across whole local authority areas. While retaining its rural specialism, BRCC increasingly supports 'local community life' across all areas of the county.

Also, BRCC now operates outside Bedfordshire in some cases (e.g. where projects based in Bedfordshire have extended across county boundaries).

c. Desired outcomes

The high level outcomes that BRCC seeks to achieve are as follows:

- Communities are more involved in delivering local services and managing their local assets
- Potentially vulnerable and/or disadvantaged people gain more independence
- People increase their physical, mental and social well-being
- People with barriers to the labour market gain skills and employment
- Rural communities have a more thriving local economy
- Bedfordshire's built and natural environment is conserved and enhanced

d. Public benefit

Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 requires the Board of Directors to comply with their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

The Board of Directors has reviewed the organisation's mission and values (as listed above) in the context of its charitable purposes and considers that they meet the two key principles of public benefit as identified by the Charity Commission:

- there must be an identifiable benefit or benefits
- benefit must be to the public, or section of the public

BRCC has introduced a checklist for use to ensure that all of its activities are for public benefit. It is based on the two principles above and the relevant factors under each principle identified by the Charity Commission. All existing work has been assessed against the checklist, and it is used by the Strategic Development Committee to assess proposed new areas of work. As a result, all areas of the charity's work are deemed to be for the public benefit according to Charity Commission guidance.

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities

Overview

Following on from the previous year the pandemic continued to affect the normal day to day operation of the Charity. We continued to support our contracts and projects with different ways of working and some of our usual activities did not happen fully until the end of the reporting period. This ensured that, whilst we did not deliver our entire portfolio, we continued to support and meet the needs of our Communities.

Covid 19 affected the day to day lives of many across Bedfordshire and our Supporting Communities Department rose to the challenge.

Our Good Neighbour Network Team supported Central Bedfordshire Council's Covid-19 Community hub by contacting 1,750 residents identified as potentially vulnerable to find out who needed help.

Between April to June, our Team of 5 Village and Community Agents worked to support 537 isolated and vulnerable residents by phone instead of the usual home visits, and are now able to hold open-air meetings with clients in their garden or a local public space to tackle issues too complicated for the phone.

Our Village Hall Advisor has been very busy at both ends of lockdown, providing information, guidance and support to dozens of community building committees, which are integral to so many groups and activities in making communities what they are.

Our Community Transport Department Team re-purposed itself to support the Covid-19 response in Bedford Borough, using volunteers and those drivers not isolating. At one point drivers were delivering around 120 shopping orders a week to residents in and around Bedford, with the help of volunteers.

The effort has been immense and all our teams have worked tirelessly and with determination to provide vital support in such a difficult time, and we are incredibly proud of them.

It was also a busy year with new projects and staff members joining us. In May we were very honoured to welcome two members of staff and their projects Timebanking and Time2Connect as part of a service transfer from Community Action Bedfordshire who sadly ceased as a Charity in 2021.

Our Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership (MVCRP) gave a unique commemorative bench in memory of Captain Sir Tom Moore, which was unveiled at Millbrook Station on 29th May 2021 by Captain Tom's daughter, Hannah Ingram-Moore, and Eric Robinson MBE, County President Royal British Legion Bedfordshire. It was also the starting point for the Routes of Remembrance gathering on the 10th November 2021.

July saw us win the SME National Business Gold Awards for "Community Business of the Year" which was a testament to all the hard work our teams put in every day.

In October we were proud to be asked to host the Dunstable Cultural Consortium, an Historic England funded programme that aims to make our high streets more attractive, engaging and vibrant places for people to live, work and spend time.

The MVCRP began celebrating the 175th Anniversary Year of the Marston Vale Line in November 2021, which included unveiling commemorative plaques at Bletchley Station and our very own Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre, distributing goody bags to rail passengers and staff, and an Anniversary Exhibition and Family Fun Day at Fenny Stratford.

In December, our CEO Tracy won the SME National Silver Winner Award for "Lockdown Leader".

Achievements and performance (continued)

We appeared several times on the television – including for a "view from a window" item featuring our tiny museum at Ridgmont and then our Deputy Chief Executive Cliff Andrew, also appeared on Escape to the Country showing off the Biggleswade Green Wheel.

We were fortunate to receive funding to enable us to introduce specialist Mental Health Community Wellbeing Champions to work alongside our current Community Referral Social Prescribing (CRSP) team.

The work ethic, passion and tenacity of our staff has been amazing in this extremely difficult year. All staff whether frontline facing or back office have been an absolute credit to BRCC and we are very privileged to have such a wonderful staff and volunteer team.

Supporting Communities

Supporting Communities continues to be our largest department and has had many new projects this year. This area of our work focusses on the health and wellbeing of people, and the environment they live in.

Community and Wellbeing Department
The Community and Wellbeing Department continued to grow and expand.

Our Community Referral (Social Prescribing) service allows GPs, nurses and other care professionals to refer people for non-medical, community based support and services via our Community Wellbeing Champions. It bridges the gap between the NHS and the community and frees up GP time.

Our dedicated website www.yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk provides information and guidance to our communities to support them and a referral pathway into the service.

Within this year, we secured funding and started our 'You Can Do IT!' project, which allows people to learn how to use digital technology. This scheme is run by a small team of Digital Co-ordinators who support volunteers to become Digital Champions.

Village and Community Agents
Our Village Agents operate across all of the villages in Bedford Borough, funded principally by Bedford Borough Council. A team of part-time Agents identify hard-to-reach people in rural areas and help them to improve their quality of life by referring them to mainstream services, or support networks within the community.

In addition, we have x3 Community Agents working with individual communities in Central Bedfordshire through local funding arrangements.

Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
Good Neighbour and Village Care Schemes play a valuable role in their communities, enabling people in need to access the kind of occasional voluntary help that one neighbour might provide for another, which can be a factor in enabling people to continue living independently in their own homes.

We have over 40 Good Neighbours schemes with over 1,000 volunteers, each independently run and offering help to around 1,000 recipients each quarter with lifts, shopping, befriending, and more.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Housing and planning
BRCC supports local communities to plan for their future through Neighbourhood and Green Infrastructure (GI) planning. During the year we supported 14 Neighbourhood Plan groups; we provide support to groups via phone and email and also though attending their Neighbourhood plan steering group meetings. We worked with six communities on Green Infrastructure Plans, including the identification of important sites to be designated and protected as Local Green Spaces.

In addition we help rural parishes to meet their affordable housing needs by carrying out household surveys. This year we carried out 3 housing needs surveys, working in partnership with Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Plan steering groups, Local Authorities, Housing Associations and local landowners.

We actively support Eastern Community Homes, a community led housing hub for the eastern region – formed with our ACRE colleagues in the East of England. We continue to raise awareness of the benefits of community-led housing projects.

We facilitate the Community-led Planning and Rural Housing across Bedfordshire, offering advice and support in creating a Parish, Town, Neighbourhood or Green Infrastructure Plan, and we are part of the ACRE national network of Village Hall Advisors, we provide information, advice and support to Charitable Village Hall Committees.

Green Infrastructure
We also provide a range of Community and Countryside initiatives, including wildlife conservation and volunteering. We host the Upper and Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership. BRCC also leads on a number of 'Green Wheels' (linking publicly accessible green spaces and routes within and around rural towns) in the Ivel Valley area. During 2020/21 we continued to work on X Green Wheels which will launch in the future.

BRCC continues to deliver a variety of other activities that involve local people in designing, conserving and being active in their local green spaces, including our Ivel Valley Conservation Volunteers.

For over 15 years, we have run Walk 4 Health (now called Wellbeing Walks) Bedfordshire, through which we deliver 38 walk programmes - free and open to all.

Voluntary sector support
BRCC continues to deliver support services to voluntary and community sector groups, including group transport hire, DBS checking and specialist advice to community building committees. During the year we provided COVID-19 guidance and support for Community buildings throughout Bedfordshire.

b. Community Transport

Community transport assists with the needs of vulnerable people across Bedfordshire.

Door to Door / Greensand Country
BRCC operates two personalised transport ('dial-a-ride') service for individuals who experience significant difficulties in accessing conventional public transport. 'Door to Door' covers the whole of Bedford Borough and 'Greensand Country' community transport covers northern Central Bedfordshire. Between them, they cover 75% of Bedfordshire's area, from Dean & Shelton in the north to Harlington in the south. The services operate jointly, with vehicles and drivers often covering both services on the same journey.

Bedford Mobility Hub
Our Mobility Hub at Bedford Bus Station enables those with limited mobility to hire or purchase a range of mobility equipment. Due to the impact of Covid-19, the Mobility Hub was closed for the year.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Community Rail Partnerships
BRCC hosts two Community Rail Partnerships (for the Bedford to Bletchley line (Marston Vale) and the Bedford-St Albans City line (Beds & Herts), which act as a bridge between the railway industry and local communities. This was a quiet start to the year for train engagement as many train services were stopped (Marston Vale) or reduced (Beds & Herts Line). However, the team continued to engage with the community and keep them up to date and by the end of the year services where mostly back to normal with events planned and happening.

We are also responsible for Ridgmont Station Heritage Centre, a Grade II Listed building dating back to 1846, designed by the Duke of Bedford. We restored it between 2007 and 2013. It was closed for part of the year but is now open to the public with a heritage centre, tea rooms and office space.

c. Finance and Business Services

Financial and HR management
During this year the progress that was started in 2020/21 continued to be consolidated and developed. The team ensured that the focus remained on maintaining the positive changes from the previous year and continued to improve finance procedures and debtors.

IT and Website
Due to Covid and lockdowns many staff contained to work at home for most of the working week. Our flexible IT infrastructure enabled staff to work in any location and still have access to their own and shared files through the cloud.

The Social Prescribing Team in conjunction with the CCG and Primary care worked towards Community Wellbeing Champions being able to securely access patient records via the clinical software SystmOne.

A new website was designed for Beds & Herts Community Rail Partnership and the Time2Connect community website directory was launched to promote community activities in Houghton Regis.

Marketing
During the year we grew the Marketing function across the Charity with a Data marketing manager and a Marketing Officer. These appointments have had a huge positive impact on our online, brand and promotion footprint.

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership
The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership programme was scheduled to be in it's final year of delivery. An extension to the programme was granted and this meant the handover to the Forward Plan/Legacy phase will be in December 2022. The Greensand Country Festival was held virtually with events across the month in May 2021. It is hope it can be back to face to face in May 2022..

Ridgmont Heritage Centre
The management of the centre moved into Finance and Business Services. This was to enable to development of the Centre.

Achievements and performance (continued)

d. Rural development (paused)

Rural Development Programmes
The LEADER programme was due to complete by December 2021. Due to the pandemic this was extended again and only a small amount of scheme administration is happening to close down the programme by end of 2022..

e. BRCC Services Ltd

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity operates a wholly-owned subsidiary company entitled BRCC Services Ltd, the purpose of which is to raise funds to support the charity. The directors of the company are:

P Grayson
B George (resigned October 2021)
I Kelly
I Riches
T Harcus
T Cowan (Secretary)

The main trading activities of BRCC Services Ltd are currently:

The Barn Cardington
This was a very unusual year for our Farm shop – The Barn. After a good 2020/21 during the pandemic, this year was a rollercoaster with the early part of the year only opening up for food shopping, then outside dining only until the middle of the year. Combined with unusual shopping/eating activity from customers and the loss of most of the management team, The Barn finished in a lower position than hoped. Action has taken place to re-focus and rectify this including creating a more community focussed environment and nurturing new small businesses within the footprint of the Farm shop units.

Ridgmont Station Tea Room
The Tearoom is now managed by BRCC Trading Services and although the pandemic affected the opening and operation throughout the early part of the year, the Tearoom finished in a positive place which was very much to do with the positive team attitude and we are hopeful we can continue on this with more development in 2022/23.

Warden Abbey Community Vineyard
BRCC manages the Warden Abbey vineyard as a community project, in order to provide rewarding volunteering opportunities locally while also continuing to make award-winning local wines. The vineyard team navigated hurdles thrown up by the weather, pandemic and haulage shortages to bring in a very respectable harvest this year, which meant they had good stocks of both still and sparkling wine for the coming year. During the two harvesting days, the team picked almost 4.4 tonnes, of which over 2 tonnes was Bacchus, making it one of our best ever Bacchus years. Thank you to our volunteers for their continued hard work this year tending to the vines, planning and running events, harvesting grapes - among other jobs.

Financial review

a. Reserves policy

The trustees have identified the need for the Charity to hold unrestricted reserves for three principal reasons:

a. To remain resilient and manage risk in an increasingly uncertain and volatile operating environment
b. To accommodate cash flow pressures at a time when a number of BRCC's income streams involve payment in arrears
c. To allow for significant contingency, particularly the costs incurred in the event of closing down the Charity

Its unrestricted reserves will therefore contain two elements:

1. Resilience funds: BRCC will hold between 1 and 3 months' total budgeted operating costs in order to provide sufficient cash flow for the organisation while enabling it to address future opportunities, threats and risks as part of its long-term financial planning, as well as sensitively managing the cessation of services to beneficiaries where required.

2. Designated funds: the trustees have designated a Contingency Fund (to cover the costs of winding up the organisation); a Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve (to cover extraordinary repairs or maintenance costs); and a Fixed Assets Reserve (reflecting the current value of its Fixed Assets). These funds will not be used day to day for the purposes outlined in 1 and 2. The trustees review the levels of these designated funds annually.

The Charity will not hold more reserves than it needs to deliver the aims of this policy, in order to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its current beneficiaries as effectively as possible.

The level of reserves held will be monitored monthly by the Management Team and quarterly by the Board of Directors. The Board will review this reserves policy annually.

b. Financial review

During the year, the charity and its trading subsidiary BRCC Services Ltd raised income of £2,888,801 (2020/21 £2,345,953) to enable it to deliver a range of activities under its charitable objects. This income came principally from local and central government, the European Union, lottery distributing bodies and other funders through a range of service level agreements, grants and contracts. A sizeable proportion also came directly from clients and beneficiaries (through fees and charges), and some from retail activities and donations.

Total expenditure during the year amounted to £2,661,143 (2020/21 £2,305,528), with the result that the overall net movement in funds for the year amounted to a surplus of £227,658 (2020/21 £40,425). The surplus reported for 2021/22 includes grant income totalling £220,844 which has been recognised as income in these financial statements and carried forward in reserves at 31 March 2022 for projects which will start in 2022/23..

Transfers have been made to increase/reduce the balance in the Fixed Asset Reserve to £503,424, to match the total net book value of the fixed assets as at 31 March 2022. The other designated reserves (Contingency and Buildings & Vehicle Maintenance reserves) have been maintained at the same level.

As a result of this year's activity, the Charity's General Fund has increased to £127 (2021 deficit of £6,879). The trustees recognise that this is less than the minimum level set by the Reserves Policy (above) and it will take time to improve the position as most funding opportunities are specific to particular projects. The trustees and management team recognise that the charity needs to restore and build the General Fund above the minimum level as a priority for the foreseeable future.

At 31 March 2022, the charity's trading subsidiary, BRCC Services Ltd, had a deficiency of shareholders funds amounting to £84,602 (2020/21 £71,142).

c. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

Plans for the future

- To produce a new 3 year Strategic Plan
- Complete the merger with Luton and Bedfordshire Youth Association and develop our offer for Children and Young People.
- Continue to develop our presence in the South of the County and Luton.
- Continue to grow our Community and Wellbeing Service securing funding from LA's/ CCG and the Primary Care Networks and further expand into Green Social Prescribing and Digital Isolation areas
- Continue to develop the Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
- To acquire full Museum accreditation for Ridgmont Heritage Centre and develop the offer
- To build on the success of the LEADER programme and look for further opportunities (Shared Prosperity Fund) to be announced in April 2022
- Deliver the HLF funded Greensand Country Landscape Partnership programme
- Continue to develop collaborative relationships with other local organisations and within the ACRE Network
- Continue to diversify income streams where possible

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities (CONTINUED)

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Group and the charitable company and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their 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 Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Streets Audit LLP, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 29 September 2022

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Charitable company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

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

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the company and sector in which it operates;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, compliance with NHS Social Prescribing requirements and safeguarding of adults and children (including passenger assistance), requirements of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, employment and taxation legislation, anti-bribery, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

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

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

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

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in Note 2 were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Linda J Lord BSc BFP FCA TEP (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Streets Audit LLP
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditors

Date: 18 November 2022

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Note	Restricted funds 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	**21,254**	**2,057**	**23,311**	*13,970*
Charitable activities	4	**2,273,697**	**128,262**	**2,401,959**	*1,902,184*
Other trading activities	5	**-**	**462,179**	**462,179**	*427,325*
Investments	6	**-**	**1,352**	**1,352**	*2,474*
Total income		**2,294,951**	**593,850**	**2,888,801**	*2,345,953*
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	**-**	**243,271**	**243,271**	*231,052*
Charitable activities	8	**2,125,238**	**292,634**	**2,417,872**	*2,074,476*
Total expenditure		**2,125,238**	**535,905**	**2,661,143**	*2,305,528*
Net income		**169,713**	**57,945**	**227,658**	*40,425*
Transfers between funds	20	**60,720**	**(60,720)**	**-**	*-*
Net movement in funds		**230,433**	**(2,775)**	**227,658**	*40,425*
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		**521,248**	**621,724**	**1,142,972**	*1,102,547*
Net movement in funds		**230,433**	**(2,775)**	**227,658**	*40,425*
Total funds carried forward		**751,681**	**618,949**	**1,370,630**	*1,142,972*

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

The notes on pages 23 to 48 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Note		2022 £		2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**503,424**		*524,745*
			503,424		*524,745*
Current assets					
Stocks	15	**42,675**		*49,566*	
Debtors	16	**275,061**		*266,283*	
Investments	17	**85,000**		*110,093*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**835,340**		*483,026*	
		1,238,076		*908,968*	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(339,349)**		*(252,341)*	
Net current assets			**898,727**		*656,627*
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		**(31,521)**		*(38,400)*
Total net assets			**1,370,630**		*1,142,972*
Charity funds					
Restricted funds	20		**751,681**		*521,248*
Unrestricted funds	20		**618,949**		*621,724*
Total funds			**1,370,630**		*1,142,972*

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 29 September 2022

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 23 to 48 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Note		2022 £		2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**503,424**		*524,745*
Investments			**100**		*100*
			503,524		*524,845*
Current assets					
Debtors	16	**372,982**		*334,758*	
Investments	17	**85,000**		*110,093*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**809,225**		*454,188*	
		1,267,207		*899,039*	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(315,499)**		*(209,770)*	
Net current assets			**951,708**		*689,269*
Total net assets			**1,455,232**		*1,214,114*
Charity funds					
Restricted funds	20		**751,681**		*521,248*
Unrestricted funds	20		**703,551**		*692,866*
Total funds			**1,455,232**		*1,214,114*

The charitable company's net movement in funds for the year was £241,118 *(2021 - £13,369)*.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 29 September 2022

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 23 to 48 form part of these financial statements.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash used in operating activities	**343,133**	*76,358*
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**4,565**	*14,008*
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets	**202**	*1,875*
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	**(13,800)**	*(5,036)*
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities	**(9,033)**	**10,847**
Cash flows from financing activities		
Cash inflows from new borrowing	**-**	*48,000*
Repayments of borrowing	**(6,879)**	-
Movement in fixed term deposit	**25,093**	*(1,591)*
Net cash provided by financing activities	**18,214**	**46,409**
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	**352,314**	**133,614**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	**483,026**	*349,412*
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**835,340**	*483,026*

The notes on pages 23 to 48 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. General information

As set out in the trustees' report, Bedfordshire Rural Communiies Charity is an unincorporated charity registered in England and Wales. The address of their registered office is The Old School, Cardington, Beds, MK44 3SX.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

The charity's objects are stated in the trustees' report.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 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 2015), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and Consolidated Balance Sheet consolidate the financial statements of the Group and its subsidiary undertaking. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

The Group has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

2.2 Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the Charitable Company's accounting policies, which are described further in note 1 below, management is required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

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

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described below:

Allocation of costs - Direct expenses are charged to individual cost centres wherever possible. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of those resources.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Company status

The charitable company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page . In the event of the charitable company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member of the charitable company.

2.4 Going concern

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate, i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

The trustees have reviewed the level of reserves held by the charity and are satisfied that they are sufficient to enable the charity to continue its activities for the foreseeable future and, accordingly, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

2.5 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

2.6 Income

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.7 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. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

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

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is made except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end are noted as a commitment, but not accrued as expenditure.

2.8 Interest receivable

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

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition are included in the measurement of cost.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation (continued)

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Long-term leasehold property: Ridgmont Station improvements	- Over the remaining life of the leasehold property The 99 year lease for the Ridgmont Station building and 25 year lease for the car park land both commenced March 2009
Long-term leasehold property: Other	- Over the remaining life of the leasehold property 10% or 4% per annum straight line
Short-term leasehold property	- 10% or 20% per annum straight line
Motor vehicles	- 25% per annum straight line
Office equipment	- 25% or 33% per annum straight line

2.10 Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

2.11 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

2.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

2.13 Cash at 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 from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

2.14 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.15 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.16 Pensions

The charity provides a workplace pension scheme, compliant with Auto-enrolment procedures. The charity also continues to contribute to the previous stakeholder pension scheme for those staff who are eligible for membership under the terms of their contracts of employment. Pension contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities for the year in which they are payable.

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Restricted funds 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Donations	21,254	2,057	**23,311**	*13,970*
Total 2021	*11,261*	*2,709*	*13,970*	

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted funds 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Income from charitable activities	2,273,697	128,262	**2,401,959**	*1,902,184*
Total 2021	*1,761,369*	*140,815*	*1,902,184*	

5. Income from other trading activities

Income from fundraising events

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Rent received	3,213	**3,213**	*11,534*
Sundry income	668	**668**	*207*
	3,881	**3,881**	*11,741*

Income from non charitable trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Sales	420,608	**420,608**	*365,791*
Rent receivable	11,900	**11,900**	*8,750*
Other income	25,790	**25,790**	*41,043*
	458,298	**458,298**	*415,584*
Total 2021	*415,584*	*415,584*	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Bank interest	1,352	**1,352**	*2,474*
Total 2021	*2,474*	*2,474*	

7. Expenditure on raising funds

Other trading expenses

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Cost of sales	216,587	**216,587**	*202,172*
Administration expenses	25,596	**25,596**	*27,980*
Interest payable	1,088	**1,088**	*900*
	243,271	**243,271**	*231,052*
Total 2021	*231,052*	*231,052*	

8. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Charitable Activities	2,125,238	292,634	**2,417,872**	*2,074,476*
Total 2021	*1,783,137*	*291,339*	*2,074,476*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2022 £	Support costs 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Charitable Activities	2,153,002	264,870	**2,417,872**	*2,074,476*
Total 2021	*1,745,171*	*329,305*	*2,074,476*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Staff costs	**1,426,169**	*1,268,834*
Room hire, meetings and conferences	**8,183**	*1,508*
Publicity, publications and subscriptions	**58,522**	*46,721*
Printing, postage, stationery and telephone	**68,108**	*43,738*
Repairs and renewals	**37,642**	*64,016*
Contractors fees	**112,180**	*117,857*
Travel and susbistence	**7,061**	*4,001*
Recruitment and other staff costs	**5,568**	*5,855*
Volunteer's expenses	**2,056**	*138*
Rent, rates and service charges	**60,277**	*25,936*
Legal and professional fees	**4,974**	*4,052*
Grants paid	**317,165**	*140,860*
Vehicle costs	**44,867**	*20,827*
Lease costs	**230**	*828*
	2,153,002	*1,745,171*

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2022 £	*Total funds 2021 £*
Staff costs	**149,448**	*214,738*
Depreciation	**33,452**	*35,653*
VAT lost on partial exemption	**5,062**	*(3,435)*
Premises costs	**61,868**	*70,698*
Bank charges	**1,406**	*1,227*
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	**1,467**	*(1,875)*
Bad debts	**2,953**	*2,359*
Governance costs	**9,214**	*9,940*
	264,870	*329,305*

10. Auditors' remuneration

	2022 £	*2021 £*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor for the audit of the charitable company's annual accounts	**9,500**	*9,220*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor in respect of:		
All non-audit services not included above	**3,600**	*3,600*

11. Staff costs

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*	Charity 2022 £	*Charity 2021 £*
Wages and salaries	**1,431,078**	*1,352,641*	**1,431,078**	*1,352,641*
Social security costs	**114,955**	*100,437*	**114,955**	*100,437*
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**29,584**	*30,494*	**29,584**	*30,494*
	1,575,617	*1,483,572*	**1,575,617**	*1,483,572*

11. Staff costs (continued)

The average number of persons employed by the charitable company during the year was as follows:

	Group 2022 No.	*Group 2021 No.*	Charity 2022 No.	*Charity 2021 No.*
Project staff	**86**	*83*	**86**	*83*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	89	*86*	**89**	*86*

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	Group 2022 No.	*Group 2021 No.*	Charity 2022 No.	*Charity 2021 No.*
Project staff	**51**	*42*	**51**	*42*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	54	*45*	**54**	*45*

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

The key management personnel of the charity are the trustees (who all give their time voluntarily), the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team. A total of £164,947 (2021 £169,016) was paid to staff for their roles as key management personnel.

12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits *(2021 - £NIL)*.

During the year ended 31 March 2022, no Trustee expenses have been incurred *(2021 - £NIL)*.

13. Tangible fixed assets

Group and Charity

	Long-term leasehold property - Ridgmont Station £	Long-term leasehold property - Other £	Short-term leasehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation						
At 1 April 2021	**509,045**	**82,120**	**35,535**	**141,722**	**84,046**	**852,468**
Additions	**-**	**-**	**-**	**8,500**	**5,300**	**13,800**
Disposals	**-**	**-**	**-**	**(7,500)**	**(1,436)**	**(8,936)**
At 31 March 2022	**509,045**	**82,120**	**35,535**	**142,722**	**87,910**	**857,332**
Depreciation						
At 1 April 2021	**52,289**	**48,323**	**35,535**	**114,419**	**77,157**	**327,723**
Charge for the year	**6,886**	**2,828**	**-**	**19,421**	**4,317**	**33,452**
On disposals	**-**	**-**	**-**	**(6,562)**	**(705)**	**(7,267)**
At 31 March 2022	**59,175**	**51,151**	**35,535**	**127,278**	**80,769**	**353,908**
Net book value						
At 31 March 2022	**449,870**	**30,969**	**-**	**15,444**	**7,141**	**503,424**
At 31 March 2021	*456,756*	*33,797*	*-*	*27,303*	*6,889*	*524,745*

14. Subsidiary Undertakings

The following was a subsidiary undertaking of the charitable company:

Name	Company number	Registered office or principal place of business	Principal activity	Class of shares	Holding	Included in consolidation
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	4475077	England and Wales	Operation of farm shop, wine production and other commercial activities	Ordinary	100%	Yes

The financial results of the subsidiary for the year were:

Name	Income £	Expenditure £	Profit/(Loss) / Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year £	Net assets £
BRCC Trading Services Ltd	**458,299**	**(471,759)**	**(13,460)**	**(84,502)**

15. Stocks

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*
Goods for resale	**42,675**	*49,566*

16. Debtors

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*	Charity 2022 £	*Charity 2021 £*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**203,366**	*189,686*	**202,907**	*188,239*
Amounts owed by group undertakings	**-**	*-*	**102,500**	*74,593*
Other debtors	**3,485**	*7,044*	**-**	*2,373*
Prepayments and accrued income	**68,210**	*69,553*	**67,575**	*69,553*
	275,061	*266,283*	**372,982**	*334,758*

17. Current asset investments

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*	Charity 2022 £	*Charity 2021 £*
Bank deposit (over 90 days)	**85,000**	*110,093*	**85,000**	*110,093*

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*	Charity 2022 £	*Charity 2021 £*
Bank loans	**9,600**	*9,600*	**-**	*-*
Trade creditors	**67,900**	*73,676*	**57,042**	*45,617*
Other taxation and social security	**43,392**	*35,501*	**43,300**	*35,339*
Other creditors	**13,053**	*8,550*	**13,053**	*8,550*
Accruals and deferred income	**205,404**	*125,014*	**202,104**	*120,264*
	339,349	*252,341*	**315,499**	*209,770*

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*	Charity 2022 £	*Charity 2021 £*
Deferred income at 1 April 2021	**61,031**	*30,165*	**61,031**	*30,165*
Resources deferred during the year	**127,144**	*61,031*	**127,144**	*61,031*
Amounts released from previous periods	**(61,031)**	*(30,165)*	**(61,031)**	*(30,165)*
	127,144	*61,031*	**127,144**	*61,031*

19. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*
Bank loans	**31,521**	*38,400*

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

20. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	524,745	-	(35,121)	13,800	503,424
Contingency Fund	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
	699,745	-	(35,121)	13,800	678,424
General funds					
General Fund	(6,879)	102,623	(249,585)	153,968	127
LuBYA	-	7,928	(7,928)	-	-
VCSE funds	-	25,000	-	-	25,000
BRCC Trading Service Ltd	(71,142)	458,299	(243,271)	(228,488)	(84,602)
	(78,021)	593,850	(500,784)	(74,520)	(59,475)
Total Unrestricted funds	621,724	593,850	(535,905)	(60,720)	618,949

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds					
Care in Bedford Borough	-	51,253	(61,253)	10,000	-
Care in Central Bedfordshire	31,198	133,734	(80,119)	10,000	94,813
Green Infrastructure	18,516	113,904	(90,587)	-	41,833
CBC Infrastructure	-	29,000	(24,670)	-	4,330
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	10,172	(27,050)	16,878	-
Community Rail Partnerships	75,771	148,128	(129,115)	-	94,784
Ridgmont Station	-	3,209	(32,792)	29,583	-
Dunstable Consortium	-	25,000	(5,333)	-	19,667
Greensand Country Community Transport	1,507	103,559	(108,873)	3,807	-
Door to Door	91,905	198,623	(211,085)	(12,307)	67,136
CAB Timebank	-	88,290	(67,064)	-	21,226
Mental Health Social Prescribing	-	53,333	(45,956)	-	7,377
Primary Care Networks	-	362,599	(317,500)	-	45,099
Social Prescribing CBC	125,042	227,970	(221,110)	-	131,902
Social Prescribing BBC	37,620	195,369	(202,409)	-	30,580
GCLP Projects	139,689	429,854	(490,402)	2,759	81,900
You Can Do It	-	120,954	(9,920)	-	111,034
	521,248	2,294,951	(2,125,238)	60,720	751,681
Total of funds	1,142,972	2,888,801	(2,661,143)	-	1,370,630

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2021* £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	*555,362*	-	*(35,653)*	*5,036*	*524,745*
Contingency Fund	*150,000*	-	-	-	*150,000*
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	*25,000*	-	-	-	*25,000*
	730,362	-	*(35,653)*	*5,036*	*699,745*
General funds					
General Fund	*(3,408)*	*157,739*	*(255,686)*	*94,476*	*(6,879)*
BRCC Trading Service Ltd	*(98,198)*	*415,584*	*(231,052)*	*(157,476)*	*(71,142)*
	(101,606)	*573,323*	*(486,738)*	*(63,000)*	*(78,021)*
Total Unrestricted funds	*628,756*	*573,323*	*(522,391)*	*(57,964)*	*621,724*

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2021* £
Restricted funds					
Care in Bedford Borough	-	*58,141*	*(68,141)*	*10,000*	-
Care in Central Bedfordshire	*20,673*	*80,517*	*(78,992)*	*9,000*	*31,198*
Green Infrastructure	*36,767*	*68,950*	*(87,201)*	-	*18,516*
CBC Infrastructure	-	*50,400*	*(50,400)*	-	-
Greensand Ridge and Claylands RDPE	-	*24,012*	*(41,530)*	*17,518*	-
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	*6,545*	*(24,790)*	*18,245*	-
Community Rail Partnerships	*83,943*	*65,027*	*(74,199)*	-	*74,771*
Ridgmont Station	-	*1,000*	-	-	*1,000*
Bedford-St Albans CRP	*20,535*	*17,924*	*(41,143)*	*2,684*	-
Dunstable Consortium	*149*	-	*(149)*	-	-
Greensand Country Community Transport	-	*96,249*	*(94,742)*	-	*1,507*
Door to Door	*50,563*	*207,687*	*(153,353)*	*(12,992)*	*91,905*
Mobility Hub	-	-	*(12,992)*	*12,992*	-
Mental Health Social Prescribing	-	*102,550*	*(101,071)*	-	*1,479*
Primary Care Networks	-	*307,700*	*(307,700)*	-	-
Social Prescribing CBC	*112,373*	*239,326*	*(226,657)*	-	*125,042*
Social Prescribing BBC	*3,886*	*95,979*	*(63,724)*	-	*36,141*
GCLP Projects	*144,902*	*333,352*	*(338,565)*	-	*139,689*
You Can Do It	-	*17,271*	*(17,788)*	*517*	-
	473,791	*1,772,630*	*(1,783,137)*	*57,964*	*521,248*
Total of funds	*1,102,547*	*2,345,953*	*(2,305,528)*	-	*1,142,972*

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Designated Funds:

Fixed Asset Reserve
This fund represents the total net book value of the Charity's Tangible Fixed Assets which comprise: Leasehold Land & Buildings, Renovation at Ridgmont Station, Improvements made to the Cardington office, Motor vehicles and Fixtures, fittings & equipment. Transfers to the fund represent the value of assets purchased during the year.

Contingency Reserve
This fund represents the Trustees' calculation of the likely costs that would be incurred in the event of having to wind up the Charity. It comprises staff redundancy payments and commitments on leases.

Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve
This fund has been designated to cover any extraordinary repairs and maintenance that may be required to the Cardington office and the Charity's vehicles.

Restricted Funds:

Care in Bedford Borough/Care in Central Bedfordshire:
These funds were established in April 2009, following the formation of the two new Unitary Authorities. Funding from Bedford Borough Council (Adult Services) supports the Carers Short Break Bureau; the Good Neighbours Schemes and the Village Agents "Just Ask" initiative, and funding from Central Bedfordshire supports the Village Care Scheme. Income and costs associated with the services provided have been charged to the projects with £10,000 of unrestricted ACRE funding being allocated to each project..

Green Infrastructure:
This fund comprises several funding streams that are ring fenced for the provision of services and the purchase of capital items and/or payments to contractors in respect of the various environmental sites that are managed by the RCC's Green Infrastructure Team. Costs are charged to the fund as and when the various projects are delivered, in partnership with local authorities.

CBC Infrastructure Grant:
In 2016/17, the charity became the lead body in administering the Central Bedfordshire Council's Voluntary and Community Sector funding. The agreement was initially for a 3-year period to 2019 but has been subsequently been extended. Costs are charged to the fund as and when projects are delivered, in partnership with local authority.

Warden Abbey Vineyard:
The charity continues to receive some grant income and donations to assist with the costs of managing the Warden Abbey Vineyard, which enable the charity to provide opportunities for volunteering. The vineyard management costs have been charged to the restricted fund and a transfer of £16,878 (2021 £18,245) has been made from general funds to support the project.

Community Rail Partnerships:
BRCC employs officers for the Marston Vale and Bedford to St Albans Community Rail Partnerships which are funded primarily through Service Level Agreements with London Midland Trains, West Midlands Trains Ltd and Milton Keynes Borough Councils.

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Ridgmont Station:
The charity completed the refurbishment of Ridgmont Station in 2014 and continues to receive specific donations for the ongoing development of the facility. The restricted funding, together with unrestricted rental income, is used to cover the maintenance and upkeep of the station building. All costs have been charged to the restricted fund and a transfer of £29,583 (2021 £517) has been made from general funds to support the project.

Dunstable Consortium:
In 2021/22, the charity received a grant of £25,000 from Historic England to fund a programme aiming to make high streets more attractive, engaging and vibrant places for people to live, work and spend time. The project was ongoing at the reporting date.

Greensand Country Community Transport:
The charity receives ongoing funding from Central Bedfordshire Council to provide the Greensand Community Transport scheme.

Door to Door:
The charity took over the assets and activities of North Bedfordshire Community Transport on 1 April 2013. The charity continues to receive an annual grant of £80,000 from Bedford Borough Council for the provision of community transport services, together with contracts to operate services for individuals with special needs.

CAB Timebank:
In 2021/22, the charity took over the Timebanking and Tme2Connect projects from Community Action Bedfordshire. The projects were ongoing at the reporting date.

Mental Health Social Prescribing, Primary Care Networks and Social Prescribing:
BRCC has been commissioned by Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council to provide Social Prescribing services to Primary Care Networks and GP surgeries across Bedfordshire. The programme supports patients with social, emotional or practical needs by finding non-clinical solutions that will improve their health and wellbeing and has been extended to include specific support in respect of Mental Health issues.

Greensand Country Landscape Programme (GCLP):
BRCC was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, on behalf of the Greensand Ridge Landscape Partnership, to establish the Greensand Ridge area of Bedfordshire as a living and working landscape. The project seeks to create a strong, community led partnership and strategic framework to promote the area's interests and secure long-term financial and community investment. The Landscape Partnership scheme started in July 2016 and was expected to run until December 2020 but has subsequently been extended.

You Can Do It:
In 2021/22, the charity was awarded funding to start a new project, to allow people to learn how to use digital technology. The project started just before the year end and was ongoing at the reporting date.

21. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
Designated funds	**699,745**	**-**	**(35,121)**	**13,800**	**678,424**
General funds	**(78,021)**	**593,850**	**(500,784)**	**(74,520)**	**(59,475)**
Restricted funds	**521,248**	**2,294,951**	**(2,125,238)**	**60,720**	**751,681**
	1,142,972	**2,888,801**	**(2,661,143)**	**-**	**1,370,630**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2021* £
Designated funds	*730,362*	-	*(35,653)*	*5,036*	*699,745*
General funds	*(101,606)*	*573,323*	*(486,738)*	*(63,000)*	*(78,021)*
Restricted funds	*473,791*	*1,772,630*	*(1,783,137)*	*57,964*	*521,248*
	1,102,547	*2,345,953*	*(2,305,528)*	-	*1,142,972*

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Restricted funds 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	503,424	**503,424**
Current assets	751,681	486,395	**1,238,076**
Creditors due within one year	-	(339,349)	**(339,349)**
Creditors due in more than one year	-	(31,521)	**(31,521)**
Total	751,681	618,949	**1,370,630**

22. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Restricted funds 2021 £	*Unrestricted funds 2021* £	*Total funds 2021* £
Tangible fixed assets	-	*524,745*	*524,745*
Current assets	*521,248*	*387,720*	*908,968*
Creditors due within one year	-	*(252,341)*	*(252,341)*
Creditors due in more than one year	-	*(38,400)*	*(38,400)*
Total	*521,248*	*621,724*	*1,142,972*

23. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021* £
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**227,658**	*40,425*
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	**33,452**	*35,653*
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**(4,565)**	*(14,008)*
Loss/(profit) on the sale of fixed assets	**1,467**	*(1,875)*
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	**6,891**	*(9,597)*
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	**(8,778)**	*97,074*
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**87,008**	*(71,314)*
Net cash provided by operating activities	**343,133**	*76,358*

24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*
Cash in hand	**835,340**	*483,026*
Total cash and cash equivalents	**835,340**	*483,026*

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2021 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2022 £
Cash at bank and in hand	**483,026**	**352,314**	**835,340**
Debt due within 1 year	**(9,600)**	**-**	**(9,600)**
Debt due after 1 year	**(38,400)**	**6,879**	**(31,521)**
Liquid investments	**110,093**	**(25,093)**	**85,000**
	545,119	**334,100**	**879,219**

26. Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2022 the Group and the charitable company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*	**Charity 2022 £**	*Charity 2021 £*
Not later than 1 year	**17,534**	*19,316*	**17,534**	*19,316*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**28,704**	-	**28,704**	-
Later than 5 years	**2,392**	-	**2,392**	-
	48,630	*19,316*	**48,630**	*19,316*

The following lease payments and changes in lease payments have been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities:

	Group 2022 £	*Group 2021 £*	**Charity 2022 £**	*Charity 2021 £*
Operating lease rentals	**43,432**	*26,207*	**43,432**	*26,207*
Changes in lease payments arising from COVID-19 related rent concessions	**3,400**	*20,625*	**3,400**	*20,625*

27. Related party transactions

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary company, BRCC Trading Services Limited, operates from the Cardington Office and is managed by staff employed by the parent charity. Staff costs and overhead costs totalling £172,222 (2021 £124,076) were recharged to BRCC Trading Services Limited during the year, together with rent £26,386 (2021 £3,601) and recharged expenses of £29,880 (2021 £28,653). BRCC Trading Services Limited reported a loss of £14,339 (2021 profit of £27,056) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The charity advanced a loan of £30,000 to the subsidiary company in previous years. Interest of £953 (2021 £1,240) has been charged on the loan at a rate of 3.0% above the bank base rate. At the balance sheet date, BRCC Trading Services Limited owed the charity a total of £102,500 (2021 £74,593) in respect of the loans and staff recharges which remained unpaid at the balance sheet date.

The charity also worked with the following organisations:

- Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council - organisations where some trustees and their close family members are employed, or where trustees serve as local or borough councillors,
- Greensand Country Landscape Partnership where Cllr Maudlin is a co-chairman
- Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation where E Masih is a trustee
- Luton and Bedfordshire Youth Association (LuBYA) where Mrs T Cowan's father-in-law is a trustee

No one person is considered to be in a position to exercise significant influence over these organisations and consequently no details of the related party transactions are disclosed in these financial statements.

28. Taxation

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a registered charity and therefore is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

29. Members' liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

England & Wales - Charity number 1061538

Accounts

Registered number: 03327628
Charity number: 1061538

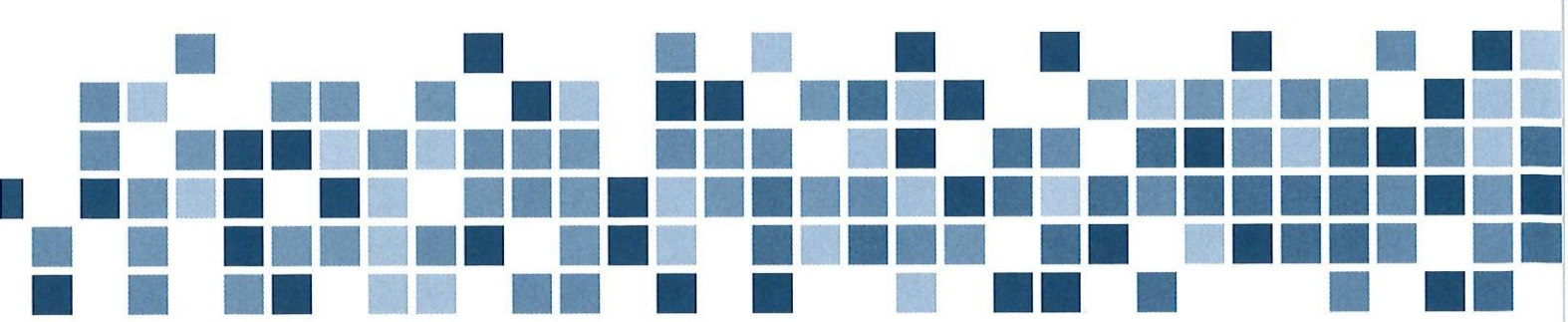
BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STREETS®
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Trustees	C Barker J M Barnes B S George P Grayson, Chair Dr T J Hedges (resigned 15 October 2020) Cllr T Hill Rev S C Holroyd I J Kelly J H Lewis (resigned 15 October 2020) A Lovesey E Masih Dr J S May (resigned 30 September 2020) Cllr C Maudlin (appointed 8 September 2020) B G Prickett I Riches
Company registered number	03327628
Charity registered number	1061538
Registered office	The Old School Cardington Beds MK44 3SX
Company secretary	Mrs T Cowan
Chief executive officer	Mrs T Cowan
Bankers	CAF Bank 25 Kings Hill Avenue Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ National Westminster Bank plc 81 High Street Bedford MK40 1NE Scottish Widows PO Box 12757 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Virgin Money Jubilee House Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4PL
Senior Management Team	Mr Cliff Andrews Ms Janice Janes Mr Neville Jephcote Mrs Kate Ellis Mr Matthew Phillcox (BRCC Trading Services Limited)
Solicitors	Woodfines LLP 16 St Cuthberts Street Bedford MK40 3JG
Independent Auditors	Streets Audit LLP Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors Potton House Wyboston Lakes Great North Road Wyboston Bedford MK44 3BZ

TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The Trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charitable company for the year from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Since the group and the charitable company qualify as small under section 383 of the Companies Act 2006, the Group Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

The group and the charitable company also trade under the names Beds RCC and BRCC.

Founded in 1953 as Bedfordshire Rural Community Council, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) is a member of a national network of Rural Community Councils under an umbrella organisation, ACRE.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a company limited by guarantee, having no share capital, and is a registered charity.

The charity was incorporated on 4 March 1997 and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The liability of its members in the event of the charitable company being wound up is limited to a sum not exceeding £10 per member.

b. Objects

The charity's objects are:

- to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community primarily in the historic county of Bedfordshire, and in particular, the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress or sickness.

- in furtherance of that said purpose, but not otherwise, to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same and to that end to bring together representatives of the voluntary organisations and statutory authorities in the historic county of Bedfordshire.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

c. Governance (including appointment, induction and training of Trustees)

The directors and senior managers of the organisation who served during the year are set out on page one. The directors of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. Members of the charity are entitled to nominate directors, from whom the Board is elected at the Annual General Meeting. All new directors are provided with an induction by the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board.

The Board of Directors meets quarterly. Many of its responsibilities are delegated to three Board Committees: the Strategic Development Committee, the Finance Committee, and the People and Projects Committee, which also meet quarterly.

Day-to-day responsibility for the running of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive and five departmental managers (as listed on page two).

d. Pay policy for key management personnel

The charity uses the NJC payscales as a basis for all staff salaries, including the CEO and management team who make up the Key Management Personnel.

e. Related party relationships

The charity's trustees and officers are involved in a wide range of other businesses and organisations, as directors, trustees, employees and councillors.

Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council provide funding to BRCC but the trustees do not consider that any councillors who are also trustees of BRCC are able to influence the charity's relationship with those organisations.

Details of related party transactions are given in note 26 to the financial statements.

f. Financial risk management

The directors recognise that there are potential risks to which the charity may be exposed. The directors have identified five main areas of risk:

- governance and management of the charity
- operational risks
- financial risks
- environmental and external factors
- compliance with law and regulation

The processes for monitoring and mitigation of these risks have been identified and are recorded in a risk register. The directors have delegated the day-to-day implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the risk register to the management team. During the year the Board received reports from the Chief Executive and agreed actions to mitigate any serious risks.

Structure, governance and management (continued)

g. Grant making policies

In administering grant schemes, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity will ensure that:

- it only manages funding programmes that clearly fit in with its own priorities, objectives and mission
- there is an independent and representative panel of people established as the body accountable for making decisions on grant allocation
- staff carrying out developmental work with projects are not involved in any way with decision making
- all grants funds will be promoted and advertised in ways that aim to reach the full range of target beneficiaries, and the application procedures are straightforward, transparent and clearly explained
- once awarded, expenditure of the grant and monitoring of progress is carried out at appropriate intervals to ensure that the funding is spent for the purpose for which it is given
- all conditions attached to the offer of the grant are met – in the event of this not being the case, the grant offer will be withdrawn
- final reports are submitted from the recipients of the grant outlining the outcome of the funding
- appropriate financial records are kept and reporting obligations of funders are met.

h. Fixed Assets

Acquisitions and disposals of fixed assets during the year are recorded in the notes forming part of the financial statements.

Objectives and activities

a. Mission and role

BRCC exists to support local community life in Bedfordshire. Its role is as follows:

- A **coordinator** of local community activity to enable communities to do more for themselves and reduce reliance on the state

- An **intermediary** between public (and private) service providers and the people in local communities they need to reach

- A **manager of partnerships** across public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve common objectives (e.g. conservation, rural economic development)

- A direct **provider of services** (e.g. community transport) that help people to participate in the community

Objectives and activities (continued)

b. Areas of benefit

BRCC is still unquestionably the leading countywide organisation working with rural communities in Bedfordshire. However, it is not always helpful to make the distinction between urban and rural when services are delivered across whole local authority areas. While retaining its rural specialism, BRCC increasingly supports 'local community life' across all areas of the county.

Also, BRCC now operates outside Bedfordshire in some cases (e.g. where projects based in Bedfordshire have extended across county boundaries).

c. Desired outcomes

The high level outcomes that BRCC seeks to achieve are as follows:

- Communities are more involved in delivering local services and managing their local assets
- Potentially vulnerable and/or disadvantaged people gain more independence
- People increase their physical, mental and social well-being
- People with barriers to the labour market gain skills and employment
- Rural communities have a more thriving local economy
- Bedfordshire's built and natural environment is conserved and enhanced

d. Public benefit

Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 requires the Board of Directors to comply with their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

The Board of Directors has reviewed the organisation's mission and values (as listed above) in the context of its charitable purposes and considers that they meet the two key principles of public benefit as identified by the Charity Commission:

- there must be an identifiable benefit or benefits
- benefit must be to the public, or section of the public

BRCC has introduced a checklist for use to ensure that all of its activities are for public benefit. It is based on the two principles above and the relevant factors under each principle identified by the Charity Commission. All existing work has been assessed against the checklist, and it is used by the Strategic Development Committee to assess proposed new areas of work. As a result, all areas of the charity's work are deemed to be for the public benefit according to Charity Commission guidance.

Achievements and performance

a. Review of activities

Overview

This was an unusual year for the charity with the COVID-19 pandemic affecting the whole country. This meant that some of the usual activities could not happen and that some of our projects and services had to adapt and change to meet the needs of our communities.

In October 2020 there was an organisational re-structure and the Head of Supporting Communities became the Deputy Chief Executive whilst retaining ownership of the Supporting Communities Department. Within Supporting Communities a new Department, Community and Wellbeing, was introduced under the leadership of Kate Ellis – Head of Community and Wellbeing.

Corporate Services became a new department called Finance and Business Services headed up by Janice Janes who became Director of Finance and Business Services. Matt Philcox joined as Head of Business Services and takes ownership of The Barn and Ridgmont Station Tearoom.

As well as the Finance Team, the Greensand Country Landscape Team moved across and management of BRCC Trading Services staff and projects moved into this area.

Rural Development as a department was paused as the LEADER Programme came to end.

The work ethic, passion and tenacity of our staff has been amazing in this extremely difficult year. All staff whether frontline facing or back office have been an absolute credit to BRCC and we are very privileged to have such a wonderful staff and volunteer team.

Supporting Communities

Supporting Communities continued to have a bumper year in what was a very challenging year. The introduction of the Community and Wellbeing Department has seen Supporting Communities to continue to be the largest department in the charity.

Community and Wellbeing Department
The Community and Wellbeing Department continued to grow and expand. The pandemic ensured that our Community Wellbeing Champions were in great demand – and although GP referrals reduced being part of the Community Response Hubs meant that other activities such as wellbeing calls and virtual patient sessions become the norm throughout 20/21. With all this additional work the team also managed over 1,000 patient referrals during the year.

Our SLA's with CBC and BBC were extended by a year and we now have 10 of the county's 11 PCN's who have bought into our service. By the end of the year the team had grown with 21 front-line Community Wellbeing Champions, 2 Area Leads and our Data Support Officer. Development work continued throughout the year and we were successful in securing funding from the NHS Charities Together (Captain Sir Tom Moore) fund for a Digital Inclusion Project which we hope to commence in 21/22 and we also agreed to develop a pilot with the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to pilot a Mental Health Social Prescriber. Again this project is due to commence in 2021/22.

Our dedicated website www.yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk launched during the year and provides information and guidance to our communities to support them and a referral pathway into the service.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Village and Community Agents
Our Village Agents operate across all of the villages in Bedford Borough, funded principally by Bedford Borough Council. A team of part-time Agents identify hard-to-reach people in rural areas and help them to improve their quality of life by referring them to mainstream services, or support networks within the community.

In addition, we have 3 Community Agents working with individual communities in Central Bedfordshire through local funding arrangements.

As part of the pandemic response our Village and Community Agents were assigned to the Response Hubs and over the course of 2020/21 they supported 1,590 vulnerable clients, including 395 people who had never used the service before.

Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
Good Neighbour and Village Care Schemes play a valuable role in their communities, enabling people in need to access the kind of occasional voluntary help that one neighbour might provide for another, which can be a factor in enabling people to continue living independently in their own homes.

This year saw how vital these schemes are in our communities and our Good Neighbour Team supported schemes across the county in undertaking nearly 37,000 tasks/acts of support. Over 2,300 residents contacted their local schemes directly to seek support and an additional 1,800 were referred to our groups via Local Authority Community Response Hubs.

Housing and planning
BRCC supports local communities to plan for their future through Neighbourhood and Green Infrastructure (GI) planning. During the year we supported 13 Neighbourhood Plan groups; including the delivery of workshops in partnership with LA's. We worked with 5 communities on Green Infrastructure Plans, including the identification of important sites to be designated and protected as Local Green Spaces.

In addition we help rural parishes to meet their affordable housing needs by carrying out household surveys: 4 housing needs surveys were completed during 2020/21.

Our Community Led Housing Hub Eastern Community Homes – formed with our ACRE colleagues in the East of England - officially launched with a two day conference. Eastern Community Homes supports groups from these geographical areas. We help them work with the necessary local authorities to deliver community-led housing projects. The main aim is to increase the number of experts at hand to locals interested in community-led housing.

Green Infrastructure
BRCC is leading on a number of 'Green Wheels' (linking publicly accessible green spaces and routes within and around rural towns) in the Ivel Valley area. During 2020/21 we continued to work on 4 Green Wheels which will launch in the future.

BRCC continues to deliver a variety of other activities that involve local people in designing, conserving and being active in their local green spaces, including Walking 4 Health and the Ivel Valley Conservation Volunteers – although during lockdown these activities were very restricted.

Voluntary sector support
BRCC continues to deliver support services to voluntary and community sector groups, including group transport hire, DBS checking and specialist advice to community building committees. During the year we provided COVID-19 guidance and support for Community buildings throughout Bedfordshire.

Achievements and performance (continued)

b. Community Transport

Door to Door / Greensand Country
BRCC operates two personalised transport ('dial-a-ride') service for individuals who experience significant difficulties in accessing conventional public transport. 'Door to Door' covers the whole of Bedford Borough and 'Greensand Country' community transport covers northern Central Bedfordshire. Between them, they cover 75% of Bedfordshire's area, from Dean & Shelton in the north to Harlington in the south. The services operate jointly, with vehicles and drivers often covering both services on the same journey.

The pandemic and Lockdown restrictions meant that our traditional services stopped completely. However we were honoured to be called to support the two Community Response Hubs for both Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils.

The drivers and staff were exemplary in switching roles and doing shopping, delivering food parcels, taking the vulnerable and isolated for COVID-19 vaccinations and generally supporting our communities in Bedfordshire. Drivers worked extra hours as volunteers to ensure we were able to get support to those that needed it. We completed over 1,300 shopping trips and 367 vaccination trips – a real achievement indeed.

Bedford Mobility Hub
The Mobility Hub was closed during the whole of 2020/21 at the request of Bedford Borough Council as Bedford was a pandemic hotspot.

Community Rail Partnerships
BRCC hosts two Community Rail Partnerships (for the Bedford to Bletchley line (Marston Vale) and the Bedford-St Albans City line (Beds & Herts), which act as a bridge between the railway industry and local communities. This has been a quiet year for train engagement as many train services were stopped (Marston Vale) or reduced (Beds & Herts Line). However the team continued to engage with the community and keep them up to date.

c. Finance and Business Services

Financial and HR management
During this year the progress that was started in 2019/20 was consolidated and developed. The team capacity was increased and the focus was on ensuring the positive changes were maintained whilst continuing to improve finance procedures and debtors. The Finance Officer become Finance and Records Officer and had some HR elements added to her role. This included COVID temporary work from home contract variations, an audit of all staff records and the implementation of a new HR filing system. This is still in progress.

IT and Website
With the impact of the pandemic and the instruction to lockdown and work from home – the investment of moving to a cloud based system paid off hugely. All staff members who needed access to work files were able to do this from any location. There was an increase in IT purchases – laptops, wireless keyboard, mice, headsets which enabled our teams to work from home effectively and safely. Where needed staff were able to "borrow" their office chair or screens, etc. to use at home.

Our newly developed website was launched during the year and provides a better opportunity for people to see the wide range of work we do and with the introduction of a part time web officer ensures it is up to date and current – which during the pandemic was vital.

Marketing
During the year we appointed a part-time Marketing Manager. This has enabled us to have a better social media presence and up to date and relevant information on our new website.

Achievements and performance (continued)

Greensand Country Landscape Partnership
The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership programme is now leading into its final year of delivery and will transition in 2021 to the Forward Plan/Legacy phase. The successful Greensand Country May Festival was cancelled in May 2020 due to the pandemic. This has impacted upon some project delivery due to either key staff being on furlough or planned projects having some seasonality limitations. Heritage Lottery Fund have agreed to a Programme End date extension of November 2022 but we are anticipating that the majority of project delivery will be completed by August/September 2021.

Ridgmont Heritage Centre
The management of the centre moved into Finance and Business Services. This was to enable to development of the Centre.

d. Rural development (paused)

Rural Development Programmes
The LEADER programme was due to complete in December 2020. Due to the pandemic this was extended and only a small amount of scheme administration is happening to close down the programme by end of 2021.

e. BRCC Trading Services Ltd

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity operates a wholly-owned subsidiary company entitled BRCC Trading Services Ltd (formerly BRCC Services Ltd), the purpose of which is to raise funds to support the charity. The directors of the company are:

P Grayson
B George
I Kelly
I Riches
T Harcus
T Cowan (Secretary)

The main trading activities of BRCC Services Ltd are currently:

The Barn Cardington
This has been a very positive year for our Farm shop – The Barn. After a difficult 2019/20 - a new manager – Matt Philcox - was appointed in May 2020 and has transformed the offering to ensure we are continuing to support local producers and suppliers; provide the local community with access to high quality produce on its doorstep; and provide employment and volunteering opportunities for local people.

During the pandemic, The Barn offered home delivery and contactless shopping options. The Marquee café became a place for people to meet safely outside, which was very valued by many customers.

Ridgmont Station Tea Room
BRCC took the Tearoom back under internal management in October 2020 after the tenant left unexpectedly. The Heritage Centre and Tearoom were renovated and refreshed over lockdown and a new focus on this area will happen during 2021/22.

Warden Abbey Community Vineyard
BRCC manages the Warden Abbey vineyard as a community project, in order to provide rewarding volunteering opportunities locally while also continuing to make award-winning local wines. The Friends group continues to be particularly active in helping to ensure the sustainability of the project. This year's harvest was affected by the late frost that happened in May 2020, which meant that sadly we only got around a quarter of what was picked

Achievements and performance (continued)

the year before. The 10th Anniversary and other planned events were unable to happen due to the pandemic but the core group of wonderful volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure the Vineyard was tended to and looked after during lockdown.

Financial review

a. Reserves policy

The trustees have identified the need for the Charity to hold unrestricted reserves for three principal reasons:

a) To remain resilient and manage risk in an increasingly uncertain and volatile operating environment

b) To accommodate cash flow pressures at a time when a number of BRCC's income streams involve payment in arrears

c) To allow for significant contingency, particularly the costs incurred in the event of closing down the Charity

Its unrestricted reserves will therefore contain two elements:

1. Resilience funds: BRCC will hold between 1 and 3 months' total budgeted operating costs in order to provide sufficient cash flow for the organisation while enabling it to address future opportunities, threats and risks as part of its long-term financial planning, as well as sensitively managing the cessation of services to beneficiaries where required.

2. Designated funds: the trustees have designated a Contingency Fund (to cover the costs of winding up the organisation); a Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve (to cover extraordinary repairs or maintenance costs); and a Fixed Assets Reserve (reflecting the current value of its Fixed Assets). These funds will not be used day to day for the purposes outlined in 1 and 2. The trustees review the levels of these designated funds annually.

The Charity will not hold more reserves than it needs to deliver the aims of this policy, in order to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of its current beneficiaries as effectively as possible.

The level of reserves held will be monitored monthly by the Management Team and quarterly by the Board of Directors. The Board will review this reserves policy annually.

b. Financial review

During the year, the charity and its trading subsidiary BRCC Services Ltd raised income of £2,345,953 (2020 £2,000,198) to enable it to deliver a range of activities under its charitable objects. This income came principally from local and central government, the European Union, lottery distributing bodies and other funders through a range of service level agreements, grants and contracts. A sizeable proportion also came directly from clients and beneficiaries (through fees and charges), and some from retail activities and donations.

Total expenditure during the year amounted to £2,305,528 (2020 £2,238,657), with the result that the overall net movement in funds for the year amounted to a surplus of £40,425 (2020 deficit of £238,459).

Transfers have been made to increase the balance in the Fixed Asset Reserve by £5,036, to reflect the additional assets purchased. Depreciation is charged to the Fixed Asset Reserve so that the reserve balancce matches the total net book value of the fixed assets at 31 March 2021. The other designated reserves (Contingency and Buildings & Vehicle Maintenance reserves) have been maintained at the same level.

As a result of this year's activity, the deficit on the charity's General Fund has increased to £6,879 (2020 deficit of £3,408). The deficit balance is less than the minimum level set by the Reserves Policy and restoring the General Fund to the minimum level and above has been identified as a priority for the trustees over the coming years.

The deficit balance on th accumulated Profit and Loss Account for the trading subsidiary, BRCC Trading Services Limited, stands at £71,142 (2020 £98,198).

c. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

Plans for the future

- Develop new Partnerships to enhance our current offer including potential mergers with other Charities
- Develop our presence in the South of the County and Luton.
- Continue to grow our Community and Wellbeing Service securing funding from LA's/CCG and the Primary Care Networks and further expand into Green Social Prescribing and Digital Isolation areas
- Continue to develop the Good Neighbour and Village Care Scheme Network
- A partnership with the Southill Estate will bring the development of a new café/restaurant concept in January 2022
- To acquire full Museum accreditation for Ridgmont Heritage Centre and develop the offer
- To build on the success of the LEADER programme and look for further opportunities (Shared Prosperity Fund) to be announced in April 2022
- Deliver the HLF funded Greensand Country Landscape Partnership programme
- Continue to develop collaborative relationships with other local organisations and within the ACRE Network
- Continue to diversify income streams where possible

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities (CONTINUED)

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Group and the charitable company and of their incoming resources and application of resources, including their 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 Group will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group and the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Group and the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable group's auditors are unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable group's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Streets Audit LLP, have indicated their willingness to continue in office. The designated Trustees will propose a motion reappointing the auditors at a meeting of the Trustees.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 4 August 2021

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiaries (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated Balance Sheet, the Charitable company Balance Sheet, the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the Group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the company through discussions with directors and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the company and sector in which it operates;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, compliance with NHS Social Prescribing requirements and safeguarding of adults and children (including passenger assistance), requirements of the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, employment and taxation legislation, anti-bribery, environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY (CONTINUED)

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

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

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

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in Note 1 were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Linda J Lord BSc BFP FCA TEP (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Streets Audit LLP
Chartered Accountants
Registered Auditors
Potton House
Wyboston Lakes
Great North Road
Wyboston
Bedford
MK44 3BZ

Date: 8 OCTOBER 2021

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Note	Restricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	**11,261**	**2,709**	**13,970**	*22,228*
Charitable activities	4	**1,761,369**	**140,815**	**1,902,184**	*1,758,471*
Other trading activities	5	**-**	**427,325**	**427,325**	*217,074*
Investments	6	**-**	**2,474**	**2,474**	*2,425*
Total income		**1,772,630**	**573,323**	**2,345,953**	*2,000,198*
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	**-**	**231,052**	**231,052**	*132,068*
Charitable activities	8	**1,783,137**	**291,339**	**2,074,476**	*2,106,589*
Total expenditure		**1,783,137**	**522,391**	**2,305,528**	*2,238,657*
Net (expenditure)/income		**(10,507)**	**50,932**	**40,425**	*(238,459)*
Transfers between funds	20	**57,964**	**(57,964)**	**-**	*-*
Net movement in funds		**47,457**	**(7,032)**	**40,425**	*(238,459)*
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		**473,791**	**628,756**	**1,102,547**	*1,341,006*
Net movement in funds		**47,457**	**(7,032)**	**40,425**	*(238,459)*
Total funds carried forward		**521,248**	**621,724**	**1,142,972**	*1,102,547*

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

The notes on pages 22 to 47 form part of these financial statements.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03327628

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Note		2021 £		2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**524,745**		*555,362*
Current assets					
Stocks	15	**49,566**		*39,969*	
Debtors	16	**266,283**		*363,357*	
Investments	17	**110,093**		*108,502*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**483,026**		*349,412*	
		908,968		*861,240*	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(252,341)**		*(314,055)*	
Net current assets			**656,627**		*547,185*
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		**(38,400)**		-
Total net assets			**1,142,972**		*1,102,547*
Charity funds					
Restricted funds	20		**521,248**		*473,791*
Unrestricted funds	20		**621,724**		*628,756*
Total funds			**1,142,972**		*1,102,547*

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 4 August 2021

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 22 to 47 form part of these financial statements.

CHARITABLE COMPANY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Note		2021 £		2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		**524,745**		*555,362*
Investments			**100**		*100*
			524,845		*555,462*
Current assets					
Debtors	16	**334,758**		*478,641*	
Investments	17	**110,093**		*108,502*	
Cash at bank and in hand		**454,188**		*346,530*	
		899,039		*933,673*	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**(209,770)**		*(288,390)*	
Net current assets			**689,269**		*645,283*
Total net assets			**1,214,114**		*1,200,745*
Charity funds					
Restricted funds	20		**521,248**		*473,791*
Unrestricted funds	20		**692,866**		*726,954*
Total funds			**1,214,114**		*1,200,745*

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

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

P Grayson
Chair of Trustees
Date: 4 August 2021

C Barker
Chair of Finance Committee

The notes on pages 22 to 47 form part of these financial statements.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash used in operating activities	**76,358**	*(77,466)*
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**14,008**	*19,823*
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets	**1,875**	*946*
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	**(5,036)**	*(5,862)*
Net cash provided by investing activities	**10,847**	**14,907**
Cash flows from financing activities		
Cash inflows from new borrowing	**48,000**	-
Movement in fixed term deposit	**(1,591)**	*(2,265)*
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	**46,409**	**(2,265)**
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	**133,614**	**(64,824)**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	**349,412**	*414,236*
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	**483,026**	*349,412*

The notes on pages 22 to 47 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. General information

As set out in the trustees' report, Bedfordshire Rural Communiies Charity is an unincorporated charity registered in England and Wales. The address of their registered office is The Old School, Cardington, Beds, MK44 3SX.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

The charity's objects are stated in the trustees' report.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 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 2015), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and Consolidated Balance Sheet consolidate the financial statements of the Group and its subsidiary undertaking. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

The Group has taken advantage of the exemption allowed under section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and has not presented its own Statement of Financial Activities in these financial statements.

2.2 Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the Charitable Company's accounting policies, which are described further in note 1 below, management is required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

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

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described below:

Allocation of costs - Direct expenses are charged to individual cost centres wherever possible. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of those resources.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Company status

The charitable company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page . In the event of the charitable company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member of the charitable company.

2.4 Going concern

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate, i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

The trustees have reviewed the level of reserves held by the charity and are satisfied that they are sufficient to enable the charity to continue its activities for the foreseeable future. During the year the UK has experienced a pandemic of the coronavirus. The potential effects to the charity and its future prospects cannot be fully quantified but the trustees remain committed to the protection of the organisation. This is being regularly reviewed by the trustees. In addition, the trustees are mindful of the significant ongoing support being offered by the Government. Accordingly the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

2.5 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Group and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Group for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

2.6 Income

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.7 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. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

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

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is made except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end are noted as a commitment, but not accrued as expenditure.

2.8 Interest receivable

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

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition are included in the measurement of cost.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation (continued)

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Long-term leasehold property: Ridgmont Station improvements	- Over the remaining life of the leasehold property The 99 year lease for the Ridgmont Station building and 25 year lease for the car park land both commenced March 2009
Long-term leasehold property: Other	- Over the remaining life of the leasehold property 10% or 4% per annum straight line
Short-term leasehold property	- 10% or 20% per annum straight line
Motor vehicles	- 25% per annum straight line
Office equipment	- 25% or 33% per annum straight line

2.10 Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

2.11 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

2.12 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

2.13 Cash at 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 from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

2.14 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

2.15 Financial instruments

The Group only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.16 Pensions

The charity provides a workplace pension scheme, compliant with Auto-enrolment procedures. The charity also continues to contribute to the previous stakeholder pension scheme for those staff who are eligible for membership under the terms of their contracts of employment. Pension contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities for the year in which they are payable.

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Restricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Donations	11,261	2,709	**13,970**	*22,228*
Total 2020	*20,237*	*1,991*	*22,228*	

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Income from charitable activities	1,761,369	140,815	**1,902,184**	*1,758,471*
Total 2020	*1,686,270*	*72,201*	*1,758,471*	

5. Income from other trading activities

Income from fundraising events

	Restricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Rent received	-	11,534	**11,534**	*17,398*
Sundry income	-	207	**207**	*337*
	-	11,741	**11,741**	*17,735*
Total 2020	*88*	*17,647*	*17,735*	

Income from non charitable trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Sales	365,791	**365,791**	*199,339*
Rent receivable	8,750	**8,750**	-
Other income	41,043	**41,043**	-
	415,584	**415,584**	*199,339*
Total 2020	*199,339*	*199,339*	

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Bank interest	2,474	**2,474**	*2,425*
Total 2020	*2,425*	*2,425*	

7. Expenditure on raising funds

Other trading expenses

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Cost of sales	202,172	**202,172**	*116,299*
Administration expenses	27,980	**27,980**	*15,769*
Interest payable	900	**900**	-
	231,052	**231,052**	*132,068*
Total 2020	*132,068*	*132,068*	

8. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Restricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Charitable Activities	1,783,137	291,339	**2,074,476**	*2,106,589*
Total 2020	*1,843,526*	*263,063*	*2,106,589*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2021 £	Support costs 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Charitable Activities	1,745,171	329,305	**2,074,476**	*2,106,589*
Total 2020	*1,860,964*	*245,625*	*2,106,589*	

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Staff costs	**1,268,834**	*1,184,919*
Room hire, meetings and conferences	**1,508**	*10,587*
Publicity, publications and subscriptions	**46,721**	*56,948*
Printing, postage, stationery and telephone	**43,738**	*57,274*
Repairs and renewals	**64,016**	*46,368*
Contractors fees	**117,857**	*141,121*
Travel and susbistence	**4,001**	*18,502*
Recruitment and other staff costs	**5,855**	*21,783*
Volunteer's expenses	**138**	*2,464*
Rent, rates and service charges	**25,936**	*63,510*
Legal and professional fees	**4,052**	*2,300*
Grants paid	**140,860**	*200,782*
Vehicle costs	**20,827**	*53,931*
Lease costs	**828**	*475*
	1,745,171	*1,860,964*

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2021 £	*Total funds 2020 £*
Staff costs	**214,738**	*115,222*
Depreciation	**35,653**	*48,006*
VAT lost on partial exemption	**(3,435)**	*12,942*
Premises costs	**70,698**	*56,704*
Bank charges	**1,227**	*915*
(Profit)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	**(1,875)**	*(1,000)*
Bad debts	**2,359**	*225*
Governance costs	**9,940**	*12,611*
	329,305	*245,625*

10. Auditors' remuneration

	2021 £	*2020 £*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor for the audit of the charitable company's annual accounts	**9,220**	*9,220*
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor in respect of:		
All non-audit services not included above	**3,600**	*2,944*

11. Staff costs

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*	Charity 2021 £	*Charity 2020 £*
Wages and salaries	**1,352,641**	*1,197,519*	**1,352,641**	*1,197,519*
Social security costs	**100,437**	*77,010*	**100,437**	*77,010*
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**30,494**	*25,612*	**30,494**	*25,612*
	1,483,572	*1,300,141*	**1,483,572**	*1,300,141*

11. Staff costs (continued)

The average number of persons employed by the charitable company during the year was as follows:

	Group 2021 No.	*Group 2020 No.*	Charity 2021 No.	*Charity 2020 No.*
Project staff	**83**	*80*	**83**	*80*
Administration and governance	**3**	*3*	**3**	*3*
	86	*83*	**86**	*83*

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	Group 2021 No.	*Group 2020 No.*	Charity 2021 No.	*Charity 2020 No.*
Project staff	**-**	*36*	**-**	*36*
Administration and governance	**-**	*2*	**-**	*2*
	-	*38*	**-**	*38*

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

The key management personnel of the charity are the trustees (who all give their time voluntarily), the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team. The management team was re-structured during 2020/21 with a total of £169,016 (2020 £183,979) being paid for their roles as key management personnel.

12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits *(2020 - £NIL)*.

During the year ended 31 March 2021, no Trustee expenses have been incurred *(2020 - £NIL)*.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

13. Tangible fixed assets

Group and Charity

	Long-term leasehold property - Ridgmont Station £	Long-term leasehold property - Other £	Short-term leasehold property £	Motor vehicles £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation						
At 1 April 2020	**505,445**	**82,120**	**35,535**	**178,718**	**90,041**	**891,859**
Additions	**3,600**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**1,436**	**5,036**
Disposals	**-**	**-**	**-**	**(16,996)**	**(7,431)**	**(24,427)**
At 31 March 2021	**509,045**	**82,120**	**35,535**	**161,722**	**84,046**	**872,468**
Depreciation						
At 1 April 2020	**45,729**	**44,597**	**32,842**	**132,055**	**81,274**	**336,497**
Charge for the year	**6,560**	**3,726**	**2,693**	**19,416**	**3,258**	**35,653**
On disposals	**-**	**-**	**-**	**(17,052)**	**(7,375)**	**(24,427)**
At 31 March 2021	**52,289**	**48,323**	**35,535**	**134,419**	**77,157**	**347,723**
Net book value						
At 31 March 2021	**456,756**	**33,797**	**-**	**27,303**	**6,889**	**524,745**
At 31 March 2020	*459,716*	*37,523*	*2,693*	*46,663*	*8,767*	*555,362*

. **Fixed asset investments (continued)**

14. Subsidiary Undertakings

The following was a subsidiary undertaking of the charitable company:

Name	Company number	Registered office or principal place of business	Principal activity	Class of shares	Holding	Included in consolidation
BRCC Trading Services Ltd (formerly BRCC Services Ltd)	4475077	England and Wales	Operation of farm shop, wine production and other commercial activities	Ordinary	100%	Yes

The financial results of the subsidiary for the year were:

Name	Income £	Expenditure £	Profit/(Loss) / Surplus/ (Deficit) for the year £	Net assets £
BRCC Trading Services Ltd (formerly BRCC Services Ltd)	**415,676**	**(388,620)**	**27,056**	**(71,142)**

15. Stocks

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*
Goods for resale	**49,566**	*39,969*

16. Debtors

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*	Charity 2021 £	*Charity 2020 £*
Due within one year				
Trade debtors	**189,686**	*272,251*	**188,239**	*269,224*
Amounts owed by group undertakings	**-**	*-*	**74,593**	*123,725*
Other debtors	**7,044**	*5,789*	**2,373**	*375*
Prepayments and accrued income	**69,553**	*85,317*	**69,553**	*85,317*
	266,283	*363,357*	**334,758**	*478,641*

17. Current asset investments

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*	Charity 2021 £	*Charity 2020 £*
Bank deposit (over 90 days)	**110,093**	*108,502*	**110,093**	*108,502*

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*	Charity 2021 £	*Charity 2020 £*
Bank loans	**9,600**	-	**-**	-
Trade creditors	**73,676**	*209,191*	**45,617**	*186,526*
Other taxation and social security	**35,501**	*31,955*	**35,339**	*31,955*
Other creditors	**8,550**	*6,563*	**8,550**	*6,563*
Accruals and deferred income	**125,014**	*66,346*	**120,264**	*63,346*
	252,341	*314,055*	**209,770**	*288,390*

The charity's subsidiary undertaking received a coronavirus bounce back loan during the year which is guaranteed by the UK government.

19. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*
Bank loans	**38,400**	-

The charity's subsidiary undertaking received a coronavirus bounce back loan during the year which is guaranteed by the UK government.

20. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	555,362	-	(35,653)	5,036	524,745
Contingency Fund	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
	730,362	-	(35,653)	5,036	699,745
General funds					
General Fund	(3,408)	157,739	(255,686)	94,476	(6,879)
Subsidiary Company Fund	(98,198)	415,584	(231,052)	(157,476)	(71,142)
	(101,606)	573,323	(486,738)	(63,000)	(78,021)
Total Unrestricted funds	628,756	573,323	(522,391)	(57,964)	621,724
Restricted funds					
Care in Bedford Borough	-	58,141	(68,141)	10,000	-
Care in Central Bedfordshire	20,673	80,517	(78,992)	9,000	31,198
Green Infrastructure	36,767	68,950	(87,201)	-	18,516
CBC Infrastructure	-	50,400	(50,400)	-	-
Greensand Ridge and Claylands RDPE	-	24,012	(41,530)	17,518	-
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	6,545	(24,790)	18,245	-
Marston Vale CRP	83,943	65,027	(74,199)	-	74,771
Abbey Line CRP	-	1,000	-	-	1,000
Beds and Herts CRP	20,535	17,924	(41,143)	2,684	-
Rural Transport Partnership	149	-	(149)	-	-
Greensand Country Community Transport	-	96,249	(94,742)	-	1,507
Door to Door	50,563	207,687	(153,353)	(12,992)	91,905

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - current year (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
Mobility Hub	-	-	(12,992)	12,992	-
Local Community Coordination	-	102,550	(101,071)	-	1,479
Primary Care Networks	-	307,700	(307,700)	-	-
Social Prescribing CBC	112,373	239,326	(226,657)	-	125,042
Social Prescribing BBC	3,886	95,979	(63,724)	-	36,141
GCLP Projects	144,902	333,352	(338,565)	-	139,689
Ridgmont Station	-	17,271	(17,788)	517	-
	473,791	1,772,630	(1,783,137)	57,964	521,248
Total of funds	1,102,547	2,345,953	(2,305,528)	-	1,142,972

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2020 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Fixed Asset Reserve	597,452	-	(48,006)	5,916	555,362
Contingency Fund	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Building and Vehicle Maintenance Fund	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
	772,452	-	(48,006)	5,916	730,362
General funds					
General Fund	71,709	94,264	(215,057)	45,676	(3,408)
Subsidiary Company Fund	(15,175)	199,339	(132,068)	(150,294)	(98,198)
	56,534	293,603	(347,125)	(104,618)	(101,606)
Total Unrestricted funds	828,986	-	(395,131)	(98,702)	628,756
Restricted funds					
Care in Bedford Borough	17,836	56,721	(64,320)	(10,237)	-
Care in Central Bedfordshire	12,436	79,404	(80,167)	9,000	20,673
Green Infrastructure	46,861	117,812	(127,906)	-	36,767
CBC Infrastructure	-	23,000	(28,014)	5,014	-
Greensand Ridge and Claylands RDPE	-	53,917	(83,567)	29,650	-
Warden Abbey Vineyard	-	8,499	(28,218)	19,719	-
Marston Vale CRP	95,070	72,031	(83,158)	-	83,943
Abbey Line CRP	136,449	43,000	(180,132)	683	-
Beds and Herts CRP	5,172	42,274	(26,911)	-	20,535
Rural Transport Partnership	899	-	(750)	-	149
Greensand Country Community Transport	-	99,745	(116,748)	17,003	-

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2020* £
Door to Door	*29,666*	*232,595*	*(170,613)*	*(41,085)*	*50,563*
Wheels in Motion	*1,721*	-	*(20,727)*	*19,006*	-
Mobility Hub	-	*14,300*	*(19,376)*	*5,076*	-
Local Community Coordination	-	*1,985*	*(10,904)*	*8,919*	-
Primary Care Networks	*10,276*	*98,606*	*(129,547)*	*20,665*	-
Social Prescribing CBC	*28,131*	*305,815*	*(221,573)*	-	*112,373*
Social Prescribing BBC	-	*148,327*	*(144,013)*	*(428)*	*3,886*
GCLP Projects	*127,503*	*302,303*	*(284,904)*	-	*144,902*
Ridgmont Station	-	*6,261*	*(21,978)*	*15,717*	-
	512,020	*1,706,595*	*(1,843,526)*	*98,702*	*473,791*
Total of funds	*1,341,006*	*1,706,595*	*(2,238,657)*	-	*1,102,547*

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Designated Funds:

Fixed Asset Reserve
This fund represents the total net book value of the Charity's Tangible Fixed Assets which comprise: Leasehold Land & Buildings, Renovation at Ridgmont Station, Improvements made to the Cardington office, Motor vehicles and Fixtures, fittings & equipment. Transfers to the fund represent the value of assets purchased during the year.

Contingency Reserve
This fund represents the Trustees' calculation of the likely costs that would be incurred in the event of having to wind up the Charity. It comprises staff redundancy payments and commitments on leases.

Building & Vehicles Maintenance Reserve
This fund has been designated to cover any extraordinary repairs and maintenance that may be required to the Cardington office and the Charity's vehicles.

Restricted Funds:

Care in Bedford Borough:
This fund was established in April 2009, following the formation of the two new Unitary Authorities in the county. Funding from the Borough Council (Adult Services) has been received to continue support for the Carers Short Break Bureau; the Good Neighbours Schemes and the Village Agents "Just Ask" initiative. Income and costs associated with the services provided have been charged to the project with £10,000 of unrestricted funding being allocated towards the cost of providing these services.

Care in Central Bedfordshire:
The charity provides care for adults in Central Bedfordshire through the Village Care Scheme. Income and costs associated with the services provided have been charged to the project with £9,000 of unrestricted funding being allocated towards the cost of providing these services.

Green Infrastructure:
This fund comprises several funding streams that are ring fenced for the provision of services and the purchase of capital items and/or payments to contractors in respect of the various environmental sites that are managed by the RCC's Green Infrastructure Team. Costs are charged to the fund as and when the various projects are delivered, in partnership with local authorities.

CBC Infrastructure Grant:
In 2016/17, the charity became the lead body in administering the Central Bedfordshire Council's Voluntary and Community Sector funding. The agreement was initially for a 3-year period to 2019 but has been subsequently been extended. Costs are charged to the fund as and when projects are delivered, in partnership with local authority.

Greensand Ridge and Beds Claylands RDPE:
The charity manages the Local Action Group (LAG) for Greensand Ridge and Beds & Hunts Claylands which were awarded LEADER funding to invest in local projects between 2015 and 2020, but the deadline for completion of the project has subsequently been extended. LEADER is part of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) and all claims for funding and administrative costs are held in restricted funds.

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Warden Abbey Vineyard:
The charity continued to receive grant income and donations to assist with the costs of managing the Warden Abbey Vineyard, to provide opportunities for volunteering. The vineyard management costs have been charged to the restricted fund and a transfer of £18,245 (2020 £19,719) has been made from general funds to support the project.

Marston Vale Community Rail Partnership (MVCRP):
BRCC employs the MVCRP Officer, which is funded primarily through a Service Level Agreement with London Midland Trains, West Midlands Trains Ltd and Milton Keynes Borough Councils. MVCRP seeks to publicise and promote increased usage of the Marston Vale Community Rail Line.

Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership (ALCRP):
BRCC employs the ALCRP Officer, funded primarily through a Service Level Agreement with London Midland Trains and West Midlands Trains Ltd. ALCRP seeks to publicise and promote increased usage of the Abbey Line Community Rail Line.

Beds and Herts CRP (formerly Bedford to St Albans CRP):
BRCC continues to receive funding from Greater Thameslink Railway to employ a community rail officer on the Bedford to St Albans Line.

RTP - Rural Transport Partnership Delegated Funds:
The RTP funds were established in February 2000 to provide grants to small-scale transport projects in rural Bedfordshire. Although continuing financial support from Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils has ceased, grants will continue to be made until the present funds are extinguished.

Greensand Country Community Transport:
The charity receives funding from Central Bedfordshire Council to provide the Greensand Community Transport scheme.

Door to Door:
The charity took over the assets and activities of North Bedfordshire Community Transport on 1 April 2013. The charity continues to receive an annual grant of £80,000 from Bedford Borough Council for the provision of community transport services, together with contracts to operate services for individuals with special needs.

Mobility Hub:
The Mobility Hub at Bedford Bus Station provides Shopmobility scooters for hire and enables people with limited mobility to hire or buy a range of mobility equipment. The charity continues to support the Mobility Hub, supported by a transfer from general fund.

Local Community Co-ordination:
The charity continued to receive funding to help people in Bedford Borough to remain independent and connected within their local community, with services being provided by Local Community Coordinators. The programme supports patients with social, emotional or practical needs by finding non-clinical solutions that will improve their health and wellbeing.

Prinary Care Networks and Social Prescribing:
BRCC has been commissioned by Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council to provide Social Prescribing services to Primary Care Networks and GP surgeries across Bedfordshire. The programme supports patients with social, emotional or practical needs by finding non-clinical solutions that will improve their health and wellbeing.

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Greensand Country Landscape Programme (GCLP):
BRCC was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, on behalf of the Greensand Ridge Landscape Partnership, to establish the Greensand Ridge area of Bedfordshire as a living and working landscape. The project seeks to create a strong, community led partnership and strategic framework to promote the area's interests and secure long-term financial and community investment. The Landscape Partnership scheme started in July 2016 and was expected to run until December 2020 but has subsequently been extended.

Ridgmont Station:
The charity completed the refurbishment of Ridgmont Station in 2014 and continues to receive specific donations for the ongoing development of the facility. The restricted funding, together with unrestricted rental income, is used to cover the maintenance and upkeep of the station building.

21. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
Designated funds	**730,362**	**-**	**(35,653)**	**5,036**	**699,745**
General funds	**(101,606)**	**573,323**	**(486,738)**	**(63,000)**	**(78,021)**
Restricted funds	**473,791**	**1,772,630**	**(1,783,137)**	**57,964**	**521,248**
	1,102,547	**2,345,953**	**(2,305,528)**	**-**	**1,142,972**

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	*Income* £	*Expenditure* £	*Transfers in/out* £	*Balance at 31 March 2020* £
Designated funds	*772,452*	*-*	*(48,006)*	*5,916*	*730,362*
General funds	*56,534*	*293,603*	*(347,125)*	*(104,618)*	*(101,606)*
Restricted funds	*512,020*	*1,706,595*	*(1,843,526)*	*98,702*	*473,791*
	1,341,006	*2,000,198*	*(2,238,657)*	*-*	*1,102,547*

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Restricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	524,745	**524,745**
Current assets	521,248	387,720	**908,968**
Creditors due within one year	-	(290,741)	**(290,741)**
Total	521,248	621,724	**1,142,972**

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Restricted funds 2020 £	*Unrestricted funds 2020 £*	*Total funds 2020 £*
Tangible fixed assets	-	*555,362*	*555,362*
Current assets	*473,791*	*387,449*	*861,240*
Creditors due within one year	-	*(314,055)*	*(314,055)*
Total	*473,791*	*628,756*	*1,102,547*

23. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*
Net income/expenditure for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	**40,425**	*(238,459)*
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	**35,653**	*48,006*
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	**(14,008)**	*(19,823)*
Profit on the sale of fixed assets	**(1,875)**	*(1,000)*
Increase in stocks	**(9,597)**	*(11,366)*
Decrease in debtors	**97,074**	*31,621*
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	**(71,314)**	*113,555*
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**76,358**	*(77,466)*

24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*
Cash in hand	**483,026**	*349,412*
Total cash and cash equivalents	**483,026**	*349,412*

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2020 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2021 £
Cash at bank and in hand	**349,412**	**133,614**	**483,026**
Debt due within 1 year	**-**	**(9,600)**	**(9,600)**
Debt due after 1 year	**-**	**(38,400)**	**(38,400)**
Liquid investments	**108,502**	**1,591**	**110,093**
	457,914	**87,205**	**545,119**

26. Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2021 the Group and the charitable company had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*	**Charity 2021 £**	*Charity 2020 £*
Not later than 1 year	**19,316**	*44,816*	**19,316**	*44,816*
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	**-**	*19,316*	**-**	*19,316*
	19,316	*64,132*	**19,316**	*64,132*

The following lease payments and changes in lease payments have been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities:

	Group 2021 £	*Group 2020 £*	**Charity 2021 £**	*Charity 2020 £*
Operating lease rentals	**26,207**	*46,832*	**26,207**	*46,832*
Changes in lease payments arising from COVID-19 related rent concessions	**20,625**	-	**20,625**	-

27. Related party transactions

The charity's wholly owned subsidiary company, BRCC Trading Services Limited, operates from the Cardington Office and is managed by staff employed by the parent charity. Staff costs and overhead costs totalling £124,076 (2020 £106,053) were recharged to BRCC Trading Services Limited during the year, together with rent £3,601 (2020 £10,500), recharged expenses of £28,653 (2020 £29,646). BRCC Trading Services Limited reported a profit of £27,056 (2020 loss of £53,777) for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The charity advanced loans to the subsidiary company in previous years totalling £50,000 (2020 £50,000) and £20,000 was repaid in 2020/21. Interest of £1,240 (2020 £4,325) has been charged on the loans at a rate of 3.0% above the bank base rate. At the balance sheet date, BRCC Trading Services Limited owed the charity a total of £74,593 (2020 £123,725) in respect of the loans and staff recharges which remained unpaid at the balance sheet date.

The charity also had the following transactions with related parties:
Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council: organisations where some trustees and their close family members are employed, or where trustees serve as local or borough councillors, and Greensand Country Landscape Partnership where Cllr Maudlin is a co-chairman. No one person is considered to be in a position to exercise significant influence over these organisations and consequently no transactions are disclosed in these financial statements.

28. Taxation

Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity is a registered charity and therefore is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income or gains derived from its charitable activities, as they fall within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

29. Members' liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.