
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
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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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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.

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

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.

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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.

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

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 adaptations 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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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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 in 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.

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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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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 Bedfordshire 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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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 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
		<u>1,155,911</u>	<u>1,150,708</u>
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
		<u>1,025,449</u>	<u>1,279,696</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	(259,610)	(297,395)
Net current assets		<u>765,839</u>	<u>982,301</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19	(12,704)	(22,228)
Total net assets		<u><u>1,909,046</u></u>	<u><u>2,110,781</u></u>

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

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

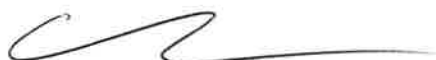
Chair of Trustees

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
		<u>1,156,011</u>	<u>1,150,808</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	16	382,583	704,384
Investments	17	87,976	85,999
Cash at bank and in hand		688,248	608,437
		<u>1,158,807</u>	<u>1,398,820</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	(245,826)	(282,810)
Net current assets		<u>912,981</u>	<u>1,116,010</u>
Total net assets		<u><u>2,068,992</u></u>	<u><u>2,266,818</u></u>

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

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.

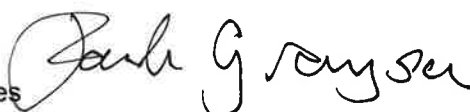
The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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4. Income from charitable activities

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

5. Income from other trading activities

Income from fundraising events

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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Bank interest	8,503	8,503	2,107
<i>Total 2023</i>	<u>2,107</u>	<u>2,107</u>	

7. Expenditure on raising funds

Other trading expenses

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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**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
<i>Total 2023</i>	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
<i>Total 2023</i>	2,176,545	400,477	2,577,022	

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
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 subsistence	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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2024 £	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
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 £	<i>2023 £</i>
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 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Charity 2024 £	<i>Charity 2023 £</i>
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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11. Staff costs (continued)

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

	Group 2024 No.	<i>Group 2023 No.</i>	Charity 2024 No.	<i>Charity 2023 No.</i>
Project staff	80	<i>91</i>	80	<i>91</i>
Administration and governance	3	<i>3</i>	3	<i>3</i>
	83	<i>94</i>	83	<i>94</i>

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	Group 2024 No.	<i>Group 2023 No.</i>	Charity 2024 No.	<i>Charity 2023 No.</i>
Project staff	51	<i>52</i>	52	<i>52</i>
Administration and governance	3	<i>3</i>	3	<i>3</i>
	54	<i>55</i>	55	<i>55</i>

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

	Group 2024 No.	<i>Group 2023 No.</i>
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	1	<i>-</i>

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).

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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							
<i>At 31 March 2024</i>	661,552	436,202	37,035	-	-	21,122	1,155,911
<i>At 31 March 2023</i>	672,417	443,020	28,141	-	4,725	2,405	1,150,708

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**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)

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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15. Stocks

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
Goods for resale	40,320	42,017

16. Debtors

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Charity 2024 £	<i>Charity 2023 £</i>
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 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Charity 2024 £	<i>Charity 2023 £</i>
Bank deposit (over 90 days)	87,976	85,999	87,976	85,999

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

18. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Charity 2024 £	<i>Charity 2023 £</i>
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
	<u>259,610</u>	<u>297,395</u>	<u>245,826</u>	<u>282,810</u>

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

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>	Charity 2024 £	<i>Charity 2023 £</i>
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)
	<u>62,478</u>	<u>138,266</u>	<u>62,478</u>	<u>138,266</u>

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 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
Bank loans	<u>12,704</u>	<u>22,228</u>

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.

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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
	<u>1,325,708</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(37,851)</u>	<u>43,054</u>	<u>1,330,911</u>
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	-
	<u>(172,066)</u>	<u>252,194</u>	<u>(214,752)</u>	<u>(93,704)</u>	<u>(228,328)</u>
Total Unrestricted funds	<u>1,153,642</u>	<u>252,194</u>	<u>(252,603)</u>	<u>(50,650)</u>	<u>1,102,583</u>

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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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

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	<i>Balance at 1 April 2022 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 March 2023 £</i>
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
	<u>678,424</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(71,413)</u>	<u>718,697</u>	<u>1,325,708</u>
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
	<u>(59,475)</u>	<u>1,218,479</u>	<u>(567,835)</u>	<u>(763,235)</u>	<u>(172,066)</u>
Total Unrestricted funds	<u>618,949</u>	<u>1,218,479</u>	<u>(639,248)</u>	<u>(44,538)</u>	<u>1,153,642</u>

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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20. Statement of funds (continued)

	<i>Balance at 1 April 2022 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 March 2023 £</i>
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
	<u>751,681</u>	<u>2,329,743</u>	<u>(2,168,823)</u>	<u>44,538</u>	<u>957,139</u>
Total of funds	<u>1,370,630</u>	<u>3,548,222</u>	<u>(2,808,071)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,110,781</u>

BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY
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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.

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

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.

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.

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

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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
	<u>2,110,781</u>	<u>2,370,069</u>	<u>(2,571,804)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,909,046</u>

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
	<u>1,370,630</u>	<u>3,548,222</u>	<u>(2,808,071)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,110,781</u>

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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

	<i>Restricted funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
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

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

	Group 2024 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
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 £	<i>Group 2023 £</i>
Cash in hand	691,228	619,499
Total cash and cash equivalents	691,228	619,499

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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
	<u>673,670</u>	<u>83,230</u>	<u>756,900</u>

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
	<u>47,840</u>	<u>62,192</u>	<u>47,840</u>	<u>62,192</u>

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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.

