

**ASSIST**

**(Fallowfield & Withington Neighbourhood Care Group)**

**Registered Charity Number: 1062675**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**



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## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

<b>Registered Charity Name</b>	ASSIST
<b>Registered Charity Number</b>	1062675
<b>Registered Office</b>	439 Wilmslow Road Withington Manchester M20 4AN
<b>Trustees</b>	Mrs B Aston (Chair) Ms P Cotterill Mrs B Barnett Mrs S Gunawardena (Secretary) Mr B Stevenson Cllr G White Mr D Lamb Mrs J Kirkby Mrs V Wharmby (Treasurer) Ms Meena Shah  Emma Horridge wef 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 Gemma Glennon wef 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
<b>Chair</b>	Ms P Cotterill to 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 Mrs B Aston from 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
<b>Deputy Chair</b>	Ms P Cotterill from 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
<b>Secretary &amp; Deputy Chair</b>	Ms S Gunawardena
<b>Bankers</b>	Co-operative Bank PO Box Skelmersdale WN8 6WT
<b>Independent Examiner</b>	Beyond Profit Ltd G104 Bolton Arena Arena Approach Horwich Bolton BL6 6LB



## Note from our Chair

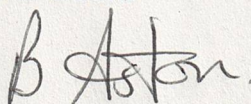
Once again, it has been another good year for Assist. We have kept up with all our activities, grown the membership and increased our volunteer numbers. We have also taken on a new member of staff, Jamila, as an activities and admin worker. She has been a brilliant addition to the team, and along with Amelia our coordinator and Debbie, our cook, they keep Assist going.

For me, as an older person in Withington, Assist is very important for our neighbourhood. I value how it gives people something to look forward to and a feeling of family. For people on their own, who don't have anybody, they have Assist. Sometimes when you are older, you can feel invisible. You have to make a life for yourself to get out of the house and it can be very hard. So that's what we are doing here, we are helping people to get a life together. You can turn up to a group and everyone is there. We make sure we have good volunteers who make people feel welcome. They need to be very open, to really care, and to know just what to say to take people's minds off things if they need that. Then we have our drivers who bring people in if you can't make it yourself, and the staff in the office helping with practical things and forms, it's all so important.

Looking forward to the year ahead, we are excited to welcome our new paid befriender, Mark Thomas, who will visit those living out in the community who are unable to come in to see us at Assist. We will continue to change to suit people's needs, with digital drop in sorting out people's struggles with all the new technology and a new drop-in advice session to help people with forms, benefits, admin that can become so difficult with older age and changes in systems.

I would like to thank our board of trustees who take the responsibility for this charity seriously, attending our meetings and supporting our staff. To the staff and volunteers who make such a difference, and to the older people themselves who come together to make Assist the place it is.

Barbara Aston  
Chair of Board

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'B Aston'.



# **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

### **Governing Document**

ASSIST is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 5th June 1997 under reference 1062675. A revised constitution was produced and adopted at the Annual General Meeting on 20th November 2012.

### **Recruitment and Training of Trustees**

We invite potential trustees to an interview, take up references and conduct a DBS check. Induction takes the form of a visit to the office to see how the organisation works and asking them to complete some reading around the roles and duties of trustees.

Most of our trustees are involved as volunteers in a practical role within the organisation. Trustees are appointed by the Executive Committee at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The members elect from the Executive Committee, a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer who hold office until the next AGM.

This year, we thanked Brenda Barnett for her many years of service to the Assist board and welcomed Emma Horridge and Gemma Glennon to the board.

### **Organisational Management**

The organisation is run by its board of trustees who meet monthly.

The organisation employs a Co-ordinator, an Assistant and a chef. These support around 50 volunteers to run various groups, activities and services.

### **Public Benefit**

In planning and delivering our services and activities the Trustees of Assist confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance by the Charity Commission in delivering the activities undertaken by the Charity.

Assist is required, under its Constitution, to provide services and assistance to those persons in need by reason of poverty, sickness, age or disability.

Assists' activities as described in this report are considered to meet the public benefit requirement as specified in the Charities Act 2011.

### **Risk Management**

The major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the Trustees, have been reviewed and systems are being established to mitigate these risks. We make sure our finances are sufficient to cover our outgoings and apply for grants and encouraging donations as appropriate. We also ensure we have the correct levels of insurance cover and have a risk register that we review regularly at trustee meetings.



## **Reserves**

We have a reserve policy and hold reserves of £50,000. The reserves are in place to cover our statutory obligations, redundancy and contingency should a situation occur where our income is affected, or our costs increase. We will be reviewing our reserves policy this next financial year to ensure they accurately meet the needs of the organisation.

## **Objectives, Aims and Activities**

### **Charitable Objectives**

The Charitable Objectives of Assist are set out in the constitution. Assist is a neighbourhood care group which recruits, trains and supports volunteers to provide simple, practical help to older people in need in Withington and Fallowfield area.

### **Principal Activities**

Our main aims continue to be to reduce social isolation and to help older people remain in their own homes. We offer help with practical jobs, driving and also provide our frailer, more isolated members with volunteer "befrienders" who visit once a week and can offer help with shopping etc, and telephone befrienders who keep in touch by phone.

### **Review of Achievements and Performance for the Year**

As a trustee for Assist, it is always a pleasure to look back and take stock of this organisation's achievements. We take pride in supporting the aging population of Withington through our social and well-being programmes.

We started this financial year with our co-ordinator, Amelia King having returned to her post from maternity leave in January 2023. In July 2023, we said goodbye to Emma Horridge who looked after our volunteers. However, we are pleased to say Emma has stayed on with Assist as a member of the board. In September 2023 we welcomed our new Activities and Admin Assistant, Jamila Naseem, who has settled in well and become a very valued member of the team.

With much thanks to the staff, trustees, and volunteers, our Lunch club, Exercise classes, Coffee afternoon, Positive living group, Film club, Wednesday walks, Tea and Talks, and Digital Drop In have continued to provide a much-needed social interaction and weekly routine for the older members and volunteers who take part.

We have continued to organise both local and further afield trips for our members, which are extremely popular. This year we organised two coach trips to the seaside, returning to an Assist favourite, Llandudno, and also trying somewhere new, Fleetwood. We also organised trips to RHS Bridgewater Gardens and to the renowned Cheetham's School of Music. In addition, we have continued our regular trips to local parks.

Alongside this, we've introduced a range of new activities, designed to meet the social and/or well-being needs of our members. A popular activity has been our



monthly visits to the Simply Cycling charity, who provide cycling opportunities for people of all abilities and ages.

As an organisation, we pride ourselves on the ability to listen and respond to the needs of our members. We became aware that many of our members were struggling to access important day-to-day information, therefore we decided to set up advice forums with representatives from United Utilities, Citizens Advice Bureau, Energy and Finance Advice, Age UK, Scams Awareness, and Carers Manchester who gave confidential advice on benefits, bills, and energy suppliers.

A highlight for many of our members is the Assist Christmas Day Lunch. As an organisation Assist became aware that many of our members were spending Christmas day alone, so for a second year in a row, we have cooked a Christmas Dinner on 25<sup>th</sup> December. It's a really popular event and greatly appreciated by our members. We are also extremely grateful for our volunteers, Trustees, and staff who give up their time to run this event.

In February 2024 we introduced the Boost Programme, a 6-week facilitator-run wellbeing workshop that aimed to build resilience and improve wellbeing.

Alongside social groups, Assist continued to provide volunteer support in the form of driving, odd jobs, gardening, form filling, prescription collection as well as offering befriending and telephone befriending. Our volunteers offer their time, patience, skills, and resources in so many different ways to help the older people in our community feel able to cope with the challenges that growing older can present, and their contribution is invaluable.

## **Operational Performance**

We are pleased to have been able to continue supporting our members and volunteers, and on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, we had 190 members on our books, and 52 volunteers.

## **Financial Review**

Our main source of funding is Manchester City Council. We have continued to apply for grants and seek donations to supplement our main grant to support and develop our activities.

Additional grants and donations have come from Manchester Active, Manchester City council neighbourhood investment fund, Withington Methodist Church (donations collected from their Gospel Choir Concert), Co op community fund, Big Lottery and the Manchester Local Care Organisation (NHS).

Members remain generous, and we are very grateful for their donations.

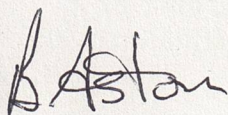
## **Reserves**

The Trustees have determined reserves should be held that enable Assist to continue for 10 months in the event of any funding being cut, or to enable the



Trustees to wind down the organisation and pay redundancy as required. This sum is set at £50,000 and will be reviewed each year. The reserves of the charity at the 31 March 2024 were £100,446. Of this £71,115 were unrestricted.

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and signed on their behalf:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Aston', written in a cursive style.

**Barbara Aston**  
Chair of Board



## **Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements**

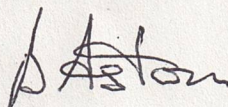
The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity 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 in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures that must be disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the Trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Aston', is written over a faint horizontal line.

**Barbara Aston**  
Chair of Board



## **Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Assist**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Assist (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

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

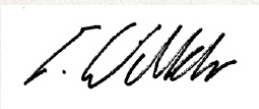
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

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

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records.

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



**Emma Willder, FCMA, CGMA, CG(Affiliated)**

**Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants**

Date:

Beyond Profit Ltd  
G104 Bolton Arena  
Arena Approach  
Horwich  
Bolton  
BL6 6LB



Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024

		31 March 2024			31 March 2023		
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total funds	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total funds
Notes	funds	£	£	£	funds	£	£
<b>Receipts:</b>							
Grant, donations and contributions	2	19,839	28,248	48,087	13,286	49,484	62,770
Local Authority Contract		37,892	-	37,892	36,900	-	36,900
<b>Total</b>		<b>57,731</b>	<b>28,248</b>	<b>85,979</b>	<b>50,186</b>	<b>49,484</b>	<b>99,670</b>
<b>Payments:</b>							
Direct Charitable Expenditure	3	16,830	19,740	36,570	11,557	32,796	44,353
Management and Administration	4	35,314	-	35,314	50,628	1,963	52,591
<b>Total</b>		<b>52,144</b>	<b>19,740</b>	<b>71,884</b>	<b>62,185</b>	<b>34,759</b>	<b>96,944</b>
<b>Net receipts/(payments)</b>		5,587	8,508	14,095	(11,999)	14,725	2,726
<b>Cash funds at 31 March 2023</b>							
Transfers between funds		65,528	20,823	86,351	63,694	19,931	83,625
<b>Cash funds at 31 March 2024</b>	5	<b>71,115</b>	<b>29,331</b>	<b>100,446</b>	<b>65,528</b>	<b>20,823</b>	<b>86,351</b>



# Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 March 2024

	31 March 2024			31 March 2023		
	Restricted		Total	Restricted		Total
	Unrestricted funds	income funds		Unrestricted funds	income funds	
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Cash Funds</b>						
Cash at bank	71,063	29,331	100,394	65,241	20,823	86,064
Cash in hand	52	-	52	287	-	287
	<b>71,115</b>	<b>29,331</b>	<b>100,446</b>	<b>65,528</b>	<b>20,823</b>	<b>86,351</b>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and signed on their behalf:

**Barbara Aston**  
Vice Chair of Board



## Notes to the financial statements

### 1) Receipts and Payment accounts

Receipts and payments accounts are statements that summarise the movement of cash into and out of the organisation during the financial year. In this context "cash" includes cash equivalents, for example, bank accounts where cash can be readily withdrawn to pay for debts as they become due.

### 2) Grants and Donations

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Befriending	-	5,000	5,000	-	15,000	15,000
Book Launch	-	640	640	-	-	-
Coffee Morning	1,424	-	1,424	869	-	869
Day Trips	4,068	-	4,068	2,127	-	2,127
Digital Drop in	45	-	45	89	1,000	1,089
Exercise Club	3,691	2,590	6,281	2,387	3,000	5,387
Film Club	613	725	1,338	459	-	459
French Class	13	-	13	3	864	867
Gardening Services	537	-	537	351	-	351
OPeNS	-	-	-	-	22,750	22,750
Positive Living	211	9,160	9,371	231	3,328	3,559
Snooker	257	-	257	243	-	243
Tea & Talks	331	-	331	248	-	248
Tuesday Club	5,070	3,778	8,848	3,781	100	3,881
Volunteer Driving	-	-	-	139	-	139
Walking Group	-	4,200	4,200	-	442	442
Xmas	1,741	-	1,741	-	-	-
Other donations	1,838	-	1,838	1,238	-	1,238
Other grants	-	2,155	2,155	1,121	3,000	4,121
	<b>19,839</b>	<b>28,248</b>	<b>48,087</b>	<b>13,286</b>	<b>49,484</b>	<b>62,770</b>



### 3) Direct Charitable Expenditure

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Befriending	-	1,063	1,063	-	-	-
Book Launch	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coffee Morning	671	-	671	231	-	231
Day Trips	4,488	-	4,488	1,626	-	1,626
Digital Drop in	-	-	-	184	1,000	1,184
Exercise Club	2,214	2,590	4,804	3,116	1,956	5,072
Film Club	217	725	942	472	-	472
French Class	630	-	630	-	60	60
Gardening Services	20	-	20	17	-	17
OPeNS	-	-	-	-	28,848	28,848
Positive Living	-	9,082	9,082	1,566	832	2,398
Snooker	36	-	36	-	-	-
Tea & Talks	826	-	826	665	-	665
Tuesday Club	6,191	2,323	8,514	3,662	100	3,762
Volunteer Driving	-	-	-	18	-	18
Walking Group	-	3,957	3,957	-	-	-
Xmas	1,537	-	1,537	-	-	-
Other grants	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<b>16,830</b>	<b>19,740</b>	<b>36,570</b>	<b>11,557</b>	<b>32,796</b>	<b>44,353</b>



#### 4) Charity Management and Administration

	2024			2023		
	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Running Costs	8,011	-	8,011	9,805	-	9,805
Staff Costs (not allocated to specific activities)	26,682	-	26,682	39,431	1,963	41,394
Volunteer Costs (not allocated to specific activities)	565	-	565	1,346	-	1,346
Trustee Costs	56	-	56	46	-	46
	<b>35,314</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>35,314</b>	<b>50,628</b>	<b>1,963</b>	<b>52,591</b>



## 5) Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers between funds £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Restricted Funds:					
Burton House Trust (Befriending)	15,000	-	-	-	15,000
Manchester University Foundation Trust	-	5,000	(1,063)	-	3,937
GMMH NHS Foundation Trust (Mental Wellbeing, Exercise class)	1,044	-	(1,044)	-	-
Manchester City Council (Book Launch)	-	640	-	-	640
Manchester Active (Exercise club)	-	2,500	(1,456)	-	1,044
NIF (Exercise club)	-	90	(90)	-	-
NIF (Film club)	-	725	(725)	-	-
Chorlton Good Neighbours (Positive Living)	2,496	9,160	(9,082)	-	2,574
Co-op Fund (Tuesday Club)	-	3,778	(2,323)	-	1,455
Manchester Active (Walking Group)	-	300	(300)	-	-
Manchester City Council (Walking Group)	-	960	(960)	-	-
Charles Heywood (Salary costs)	1,037	-	-	(1,037)	-
NIF (French Class)	804	-	-	-	804
Salford (Walking Group)	240	-	(240)	-	-
GM Walking Fund (Walking Group)	202	-	(202)	-	-
Other	-	5,095	(2,255)	-	2,840
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>20,823</b>	<b>28,248</b>	<b>(19,740)</b>	<b># (1,037)</b>	<b>28,294</b>
Unrestricted funds	65,528	57,731	(52,144)	1,037	72,152
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>86,351</b>	<b>85,979</b>	<b>(71,884)</b>	<b># -</b>	<b>100,446</b>



### Prior Year Comparison

#### Restricted Funds:

Burton House Trust (Befriending)	-	15,000	-	-	15,000
Didsbury Good Neighbours (Digital Drop in)	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
GMMH NHS Foundation Trust (Mental Wellbeing)	-	3,000	(1,956)	-	1,044
Manchester City Council (OPeNs)	11,682	22,750	(28,848)	(5,584)	-
Chorlton Good Neighbours (Positive Living)	-	3,328	(832)	-	2,496
Forever Manchester (Tuesday Club)	-	100	(100)	-	-
Charles Heywood (Salary costs)	-	3,000	(1,963)	-	1,037
NIF (French Class)	-	864	(60)	-	804
Salford (Walking Group)	-	240	-	-	240
GM Walking Fund (Walking Group)	-	202	-	-	202
Manchester City Council (Living Well at Home)	3,749	-	-	(3,749)	-
Other	4,500	-	-	(4,500)	-

#### Total Restricted Funds

	<b>19,931</b>	<b>49,484</b>	<b>(34,759)</b>	<b># (13,833)</b>	<b>20,823</b>
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#### Unrestricted funds

	63,694	50,186	(62,185)	13,833	65,528
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#### Total Funds

	<b>83,625</b>	<b>99,670</b>	<b>(96,944)</b>	<b># -</b>	<b>86,351</b>
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### 6) Related party transactions and Trustees' expenses and remuneration

The Trustees all give freely of their time and expertise without any form of remunerations or other benefit in cash or kinds (2023: £nil)

No Trustees, nor persons related or connected by business to them has received any payments or other benefits from the charity during the year (2023: £nil).

Whilst there is no separate Trustee Indemnity Insurance purchased, Trustees are covered by the Employer Liabilities section of Assists overall insurance.