# BuDS Disability Service

England & Wales · Charity number 1102511

## Details

| | |
|---|---|
| **Other names** | BUCKINGHAMSHIRE DISABILITY SERVICE, BUDS |
| **Status** | Registered |
| **Legal form** | Other |
| **Registered** | 2004-03-05 |
| **Register** | View on the Charity Commission register |

## Contact

| | |
|---|---|
| **Address** | BP Collins Llp<br>Sterling House<br>20 Station Road<br>Gerrards Cross<br>Buckinghamshire<br>SL9 8EL |
| **Phone** | 01494211179 |
| **Email** | info@buds.org.uk |
| **Website** | www.buds.org.uk |

## Activities

**Objects:** TO RELIEVE THE NEEDS OF DISABLED PEOPLE, THEIR FAMILIES, AND CARERS, PRINCIPALLY WITHIN THE COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE EXCLUDING MILTON KEYNES ("THE AREA OF BENEFIT") BY ANY CHARITABLE MEANS AND IN PARTICULAR, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, BY; (I) PROVIDING EDUCATION SERVICES, AND (II) PROVIDING ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

**Activities:** BuDS Disability Service is a user-led disability charity operating in Buckinghamshire, the Thames Valley and across England. We are a successful, dynamic and influential charity, focused on supporting disabled people by fixing the biggest issues facing them and providing the support unobtainable elsewhere. We aim to build a world which is Fair4All, including disabled people.

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## Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Disability, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities

## Geography

- **Area of benefit:** PRINCIPALLY WITHIN THE COUNTY OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE EXCLUDING MILTON KEYNES.
- Throughout England

## Finances

| Period end | Income | Expenditure | Assets | Employees |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2025-03-31 | £176,306 | £167,708 | - | - |
| 2024-03-31 | £154,564 | £109,223 | - | - |
| 2023-03-31 | £99,105 | £96,858 | - | - |
| 2022-03-31 | £82,688 | £132,555 | - | - |
| 2021-03-31 | £133,672 | £64,424 | - | - |

## Trustees

| Name | Role | Appointed |
|---|---|---|
| **Andrew Clark** | Chair | |
| Emily Clark | | 2023-03-18 |
| Felicity Amswych | | 2024-01-13 |
| Fiona Prescott | | 2024-05-23 |
| Jason Jervis | | 2025-01-16 |
| Susan Sansom | | 2018-11-24 |

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**BuDS Disability Service**

England & Wales - Charity number 1102511

# Accounts

Fixing the Big Issues for Disabled People in Buckinghamshire
Charity No 1102511
www.buds.org.uk | 01494 211179 | info@buds.org.uk
*Registered Address (no callers): BuDS, c/o B P Collins LLP, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL*

# Trustees' Annual Report for 2024-25

## Chair's Foreword

1. BuDS changed from a county charity, Buckinghamshire Disability Service, to a national charity in September 2025, shortly after the period of this report. We changed our name to 'BuDS Disability Service' and our area of operations legally became England. However, both during the period of this report and currently, we are a leading disability charity operating in Bucks and across England.
2. BuDS is an independent grassroots pan-disability organisation led by disabled people and committed to the social model of disability. Our visionary aim is to abolish disability by building a world which is Fair4All, free of the barriers which disable people. Our work helps build an inclusive world where disabled and non-disabled people have equal status and equal value opportunities to live their lives.
3. BuDS' mission is to remove the barriers which disable people, so that everyone has equality of opportunity and access. Removing these barriers is what BuDS' projects are intended to do in all areas of life. Our Disability Services help disabled people directly, while our Fair4All projects bring about permanent change to the built environment, structures, systems and infrastructure so that disabled people do not face barriers to living independently. Our Reach4Work projects help disabled jobseekers into work and education. All our work is evidence-based, project-led and responds to the real needs of disabled people. The expertise of our professional volunteers mean we can often punch above our weight.
4. BuDS has an active Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) project which publishes free information for disabled people about issues of concern to them, including regular information about the changing risk from Covid. This information is seen by tens of thousands of disabled people every month and makes BuDS one of the best-known, respected and increasingly influential disability charities in the UK.
5. 2024-25 was in general a very positive year for BuDS, although – like many charities - volunteering support fell very sharply. Annual income grew by 12% compared to 2023-24 (from £155k to £173k), and cash funds increased by 11% (from £77k to £85k). Staff hours remained stable, but volunteer hours fell by two thirds, from 18,240 hours in 2023-24 to 6550 hours in 2024-25. The overall pattern was of the continued success of staff-led funded projects but a sharp decline in purely voluntary-led projects, with only a few volunteer-led projects being able to continue through the year.
6. On behalf of the Board, I would like to express our wholehearted thanks to all the Trustees, staff and volunteers who have given so much of their time and talents in 2024-25. I would also like to thank our funders who have shown such confidence in our work.

7. I hope you enjoy reading more about BuDS in this Annual Report.



**Andrew Clark**
**Chair of Trustees**

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# Introduction

9. This is the Annual Report for Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS), charity registration number 1102511, for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, and includes the accounts for that period.
10. As BuDS' income is below £500,000 and it does not have assets worth more than £3.26 million, Trustees are not required to produce a full Annual Report according to the guidelines set out in the Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102).

# What is BuDS?

11. Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) is a leading disability charity operating in and around Bucks and increasingly across England. It is an independent grassroots pan-disability organisation led by disabled people and committed to the social model of disability. Our visionary aim is to abolish disability by building a world which is Fair4All, free of the barriers which disable people. Our many projects help build an inclusive world where disabled and non-disabled people have equal status and equal value opportunities to live their lives.
12. In September 2025, BuDS became BuDS Disability Service, a charity able to operate across England rather than only principally in Buckinghamshire.

## User Led

13. BuDS is committed to being user-led, that is a charity which is primarily led by disabled Trustees, and which seeks, as far as possible, to include disabled people as staff and volunteers. We see being user-led as vital to our authenticity and mission. In practice, we aim to have 75% of Trustees who identify as disabled people and, as a minimum, 51%. In 2024-25, 78% of those holding office as Trustees identified as disabled people; while 75% of those volunteers who provided information and 40% of staff identified as disabled.

## Social Model of Disability

14. BuDS follows and advocates for the social model of disability, which is at the core of our beliefs and work. The social model of disability states that disability is caused by the barriers which society puts in the way of people who have an impairment or medical condition, not by those impairments or conditions. Thus, for example, a wheelchair-user is 'disabled' by the lack of a ramp, not by their lack of mobility, or an autistic person is 'disabled' by a lack of quiet places rather than by their neurodivergence. When we use the phrase 'disabled person', we mean a person with an impairment or medical condition impacted by a barrier which disables them – we are not referring to any physical, sensory or mental health condition they may have.

## A Working Community

15. BuDS historically has been a working community of mainly disabled volunteers, supported by a few staff. This was a sustainable model which gave agency and prominence to disabled volunteers working together to address the issues most important to them. However, two factors have made this model impossible to sustain:
    a. The first is that the rapidly-increasing complexity and reach of many of BuDS' projects has required a rising number of skilled staff to manage and develop them, making a voluntary-led model increasingly impractical.
    b. The other is the difficulty in recruiting and retaining volunteers, which is affecting all charities but disabled-led charities most of all. 2024-25 has seen continuing severe economic pressure and an accelerating cost-of-living crisis, hitting disabled people

hardest. Many of our disabled volunteers have had to give up volunteering in order to work extra hours or to enter employment, and the same pressures prevent many disabled people from starting to volunteer. Many of our former volunteers also have increased caring responsibilities because statutory services such as SEND education, the NHS, and care services continue to decline. In 2024-25, the hours worked by our volunteers dropped by over a third.

16. Faced with a long-term and probably irreversible decline in volunteering, especially by the disabled people most likely to support us, and with our projects demanding expert staff leadership, Trustees have activated plans made in 2024-25 to evolve BuDS' working model.
17. BuDS now organises its work as follows:
    a. **Staff-led projects** are configured to be funded and staff-led. Staff bring essential skills and sustainable leadership. We seek whenever possible to recruit disabled staff, and this helps ensure that our projects remain disabled-led at the working level. Every project also includes a volunteer team which seeks as far as possible to be made up of disabled people. This team offers vital supported volunteering places to those seeking work and to those battling isolation and loneliness.
    b. **Volunteer-led projects** remain volunteer-led, primarily by disabled people themselves, with some support from staff. These projects generally have small or minimal budgets. The aim is to move these projects to a funded, staff-led, basis over time.
    c. A number of projects sadly have had to be made **dormant** until volunteers and/or funding can be secured to revive them.
    d. Our Trustees, staff, volunteers and the many thousands of disabled people who use our services remain part of our **unique wider grassroots community of disabled people**.
18. In 2024-25, we recruited 32 new volunteers to maintain an active volunteer number of 60 over the year. We had a part-time volunteer coordinator responsible for recruitment and induction. Training is available for all volunteers, and many volunteers also have a mentor for 1:1 support. We have a dedicated in-house welfare team, Help for Helpers. Many of our volunteers are job seekers and we support them towards work through our Reach4Work project (details below).
19. Usage data from our IT system (Microsoft Office 365), shows that, over 2024-25, BuDS had an average of 48 active volunteers (previously 30) working on any particular day, from a pool of active volunteers of around 60 individuals (previously 75). This represents a 60% increase in the number of volunteers active on any particular day, although our total number of volunteers shrank by a fifth.
20. However, the time which our volunteers was able to give us shrank significantly over 2024-25. We calculate that our 48 active volunteers worked a total of 6550 hours in 2024-25, an average of roughly 3.1 hours/week per volunteer. (In 2023-23, 30 volunteers worked 18,240 hours, an average of 4.6 hours/week each). This represents the same hours as 4 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £86,000 per annum.

## A Youth Charity

21. BuDS is a significant youth and young people's charity, with over a fifth of active volunteers (21%) aged under 25 in 2024-25 (13% in 2023-24). We have a Trustee aged under 25 who specifically represents disabled young people. Around 70% of BuDS' work benefits young people and several projects specifically support young disabled people and children.

### Independent & Party Politically Neutral

22. BuDS is an independent charity which can speak up for the interests of disabled people without fear or favour, untrammelled by ties arising from contracts, funding or unequal partnerships. Our strategy specifically requires all funding to be examined to ensure that it does not place unacceptable constraints on our independence and freedom to act. Often, BuDS acts as the spokesperson for other organisations that cannot speak out without fear of jeopardising contracts or financial relationships on which their charity depends.
23. As required by charity law, BuDS is scrupulously party-politically neutral. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance, whilst BuDS reserves the right to be critical of public bodies or the Government, we take great care never to express any party-political views or to create in the mind of a reasonable onlooker the idea that the charity is biased in favour of any particular political party.

### A Values-Led Charity

24. In 2021, BuDS adopted strong values to underpin all of our work and the way we behave. These values were reviewed and slightly updated by the 2024 AGM and are now as follows:
    - BuDS is an inclusive & diverse working community of and for all disabled people
    - BuDS is a strong, honest, voice for disabled people
    - BuDS is a proactive charity that lives the social model, removes barriers and finds answers
    - Fair4All is at the heart of all BuDS does
    - BuDS is an empowering, reflective, caring, supportive, kind and safe organisation
    - BuDS has an open culture and is committed to collaborative working

## Charity Objects

25. The objects of BuDS in 2024-25, as set out in the Constitution, were: “To relieve the needs of disabled people, their families, and carers, principally within the County of Buckinghamshire excluding Milton Keynes, by any charitable means and in particular, but not exclusively by (1) providing education services, and (2) providing advisory and support services”.
26. In September 2025, the charity commission approved a change to the name of the charity to ‘BuDS Disability Service’ and changes to the objects of the charity so that the legal area of operation of BuDS became ‘England’, rather than ‘the County of Buckinghamshire excluding Milton Keynes’. The Trustees review the charity objects annually, having regard to the Charity Commission’s public benefit guidance, and remain of the view that the objects of the charity continue to meet the public benefit requirement set out in the Charities Acts 2005 and 2011.

## Public Benefit of the Charity

27. In accordance with the Charities Acts, the BuDS’ trustees can confirm that they are aware of the Charity Commission’s public benefit guidance, have had regard to it when exercising any relevant powers or duties, and have complied with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 by including this statement in this annual report. The Trustees do not feel they have departed from the guidance to any extent.
28. The BuDS Trustees, having had regard to the Charity Commission’s public benefit guidance, can confirm that they have operated BuDS in a way that carries out its charitable purposes for the public benefit. Further details can be found in the following sections of this annual report.

## Behind the Scenes

29. BuDS has a clear strategic planning process as follows:
    a. A formal written Strategy and Strategic Plan document is produced annually by the charity's officers and agreed by the Full Board including non-executive Trustees.
    b. The Strategy and Plan include formal reporting mechanisms by which Trustees can monitor progress and ensure the charity remains true to its core values.
    c. Progress towards achieving the Strategy and Plan is reviewed formally biannually by a full Trustee meeting, which includes non-executive Trustees. The same meeting also reviews formally whether the charity has remained true to its values.
    d. Amendments to the Strategy and Plan are made and agreed by the full Trustee Board as necessary, alongside any actions needed to address departures from core values.

30. The Full Trustee Board met on 5 September and 17 October 2024 to carry out a strategic review and agree a revised strategy. This is explained further in paragraph 42 below.

### Charity Structure, Governance and Management

31. BuDS is an unincorporated association in the form of a membership charity. Members elect the officers and Trustees, and key decisions are taken by a General Meeting. The governing document is a written constitution.
32. The 2023 AGM approved the formation of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which will take over the assets of the unincorporated association in due course.

### Constitution

33. The BuDS constitution was adopted on 11 March 2003 and amended by the Annual General Meeting in 2010, 2012 and 2021 (and in September 2025, after the period of this report). It is available on the website.

### Membership

34. During 2024-25, membership of BuDS was only open to all disabled people living in Buckinghamshire or who have a direct interest in Buckinghamshire. A disabled person for the purposes of membership means being disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 or otherwise having direct personal experience of disability. In practice, BuDS deemed all circa 45,000 disabled people in Buckinghamshire to be de facto members of the charity and seeks through its normal activities to remain in close contact with their views and opinions. The charity does not maintain a formal membership register or have a formal membership process except in relation to Trustees (see below) and for attendees at the AGM. Attendees at the AGM are required to certify that they are eligible for membership before their voting rights are recognised.
35. The 2023 AGM approved a change to the constitution so that all disabled people resident in England would be eligible to be members of BuDS. This change took effect in September 2025, after the period covered by this report.

### Trustees

36. The BuDS constitution provides that there shall be a minimum of four and a maximum of 15 Trustees, co-opted or appointed by the AGM from the membership of the charity. These are the three officers of the charity (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) plus up to twelve others. The constitution requires Trustees to step down after three years in office (although they may be

re-elected), but BuDS' practice since 2009 is to elect or re-elect all Trustees every year. No organisation has the right to nominate a Trustee.

37. As a user-led activist charity, the role of BuDS Trustees in 2024-25 was different from that in many other charities. As a charity, we are by policy strongly Trustee-led. It is inherent in our status as a user-led organisation that the BuDS Trustee Board is the clear leadership and direction setting body for the charity. Accordingly, we expect and require all Trustees to have a strong commitment to our values and objectives, and for Trustees to play an active role in the life of the charity.
38. 2024-25 was a welcome period of relative stability for the Trustee Board. 9 individuals held office as Trustees, 7 of whom were disabled people. 3 individuals joined the Board and 3 left, with the average size of the Trustee Board being 7 people. Trustees met formally five times during the year, with a number of informal meetings, and a busy Trustee discussion group on MS Teams.
39. During 2024-25, two Trustees were related. A Related Trustees policy is in force and can be found on the BuDS website.
40. The Chair, Andrew Clark, was on unscheduled long-term leave of absence from 23 May to 13 August 2024. The Executive Trustees led the charity during this period. Succession planning is in place for the recruitment of a new Chair of Trustees during 2026.
41. In keeping with our user-led principles, from 2022-23 the BuDS Trustee Board was structured to distinguish between executive & non-executive trustees. Executive trustees had an active day-to-day leadership role in the charity, collectively playing the role more traditionally taken by senior staff, whereas non-executive trustees contributed their wisdom primarily when key decisions were being taken.
42. However, during 2024, and particularly during the Chair's long absence, this model proved to be unsustainable due to the increasingly complex nature of BuDS' projects and the high demand placed on executive trustees. Accordingly, on 17 October 2024, Trustees adopted a Moving Forward Plan which shifted BuDS towards a more conventional charity governance model. Under this model, BuDS would rely on skilled senior staff to provide operational management, reporting to Trustees through the Chair in the normal way. Trustees would continue to have an active role in the life of the charity but through more traditional means of policy-making and key decisions, rather than operationally.
43. As a transitional measure, the Chair remained a semi-executive role, but Trustees set a further goal of evolving the Chair to a non-executive role in 2026 as part of the succession planning for that role.
44. Trustees are identified by open advertisement, by canvassing existing volunteers, or direct approaches by the Trustee Board. Development support kindly provided by Lloyds Bank Foundation has significantly widened the pool of prospective candidates. In 2024-25, eight potential new Trustees were identified of which three were appointed and four progressed to a shadow Trustee role.
45. The Trustee selection procedure is as follows:
    a. Membership eligibility is confirmed
    b. Safeguarding, reference and an enhanced DBS check are completed
    c. Individuals are invited to shadow the Trustee Board by attending three Trustee meetings as an observer, and to become involved in BuDS work and projects over that period
    d. The Board then decides whether to second the individual to the Trustee Board until the next AGM

e. At the next AGM, the individual is invited to say whether they wish to have their name put forward for election

## Succession Planning

46. Trustees agreed a Succession Plan in January 2024 which prioritised the recruitment of replacement officers of the Trustee Board. However, in the unexpected absence of the Chair on long-term leave from May to August 2024, progress was not made until 16 January 2025 with the appointment of a new Co-Treasurer. A new Co-Secretary started shadowing the Board on 13 March 2025 and joined on 15 May.
47. A Succession Plan to prepare for the planned stepping-down of BuDS' longstanding Chair, Andrew Clark, is in place for 2026.

## Organisation & Management of the Charity

48. Since 2020, BuDS has been structured according to Agile project management principles, to maximise output, flexibility and responsiveness whilst enabling best practice project, cost and risk management. The basic building unit of the charity is the project team. This is a group of staff and/or volunteers working together around a common theme, goal or idea. The project team is structured and will have members in different defined roles.
49. Projects are grouped together into one of 4 departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work or Housekeeping.
50. During 2024-25, all team members worked from home using Microsoft Teams as a virtual office, including video meetings, messaging, task boards, wikis, forms, etc. Each project has objectives agreed by Trustees and progress is monitored at Trustee meetings through staff reporting. The typical working process is that of the 'sprint' – a sustained team effort to achieve a piece of work or outcome - followed by a reflective pause to evaluate success and plan next steps.
51. BuDS had 22 active project teams in April 2024, of a total of 30. In March 2025, there were 14 active project teams of a total of 35. This reflected the strategic shift to staff-led projects agreed in September 2024.

## Staffing

52. Janneke Elford remained the BuDS Projects Manager, leading the staff team, throughout 2024-25. She left on 31 March 2025 as a consequence of the Moving Forward plan adopted in September 2024. The role of project manager was then divided between two new roles, that of Support Manager and Projects Operation Manager. Simone Curran took up the role of Support Manager on 1 April 2025, and Claire Bishop joined on 8 August 2025 as Project Operations Manager.
53. All staff are on short-notice contracts reflecting the dynamic funding situation typical to small un-endowed charities. During 2024-25, BuDS had an average of eight staff in post (4.4 FTE), compared to eight staff (4.4 FTE) in 2023-24.
54. BuDS aims to be an inclusive employer, and we are proud that 40% of individuals employed during 2024-25 identified as disabled people. Reflecting our ethos and insight into the barriers preventing disabled people from working, we offer all staff flexible working hours alongside remote working from home. We also offer 'disability leave' and shape working patterns and routines around staff needs as disabled people. This policy has been highly successful in motivating and retaining staff, not just those who are disabled.

## Safeguarding & Welfare

55. Safeguarding is exceptionally important to BuDS. All Trustees, staff and volunteers, other than short-term temporary roles, are fully safeguarded including the taking up of references and an enhanced DBS check. There is mandatory safeguarding training, delivered inhouse, for all staff and volunteers. As an online organisation, our IT system has been configured to enhance safeguarding. We are linked to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs and able to make direct referrals to them if needed.
56. The welfare and safety of the BuDS community is also important. Many of our volunteers and staff are potentially vulnerable and our welfare team is available to anyone needing a chat or word of advice. During 2024-25, a significant number of welfare concerns relating to volunteers were resolved.
57. The safeguarding sub-committee of the Trustee Board was stood down at the beginning of 2024 and replaced by a staff-led Safeguarding & Welfare team which throughout 2024-25 included two or three professionally trained (Level 3) safeguarding officers.

## Diversity & Inclusion

58. The Trustees are committed to intersectional diversity across the charity. We aim to be an inclusive community where everyone can find a place and fulfil their wishes without discrimination, and we are proud to have many LGBTQ+ people among our number. A Trustee with lead responsibility for intersectional diversity across the charity was in post in 2024-25. The BuDS Trustee Board is significantly more intersectionally diverse than most charity boards.

# BuDS Work in 2024-25

## Overview

59. 2024-25 was in general a very positive year for the charity, although – like many charities - volunteering support fell very sharply. Annual income grew by 13% compared to 2023-24 (from £155k to £176k), and cash funds increased by 11% (from £77k to £85k). Staff hours remained stable, but volunteer hours fell by two thirds, from 18,240 hours in 2023-24 to 6,550 hours in 2024-25
60. The overall pattern was of the continued success of staff-led funded projects but a sharp decline in purely voluntary-led projects, with only a few volunteer-led projects being able to continue through the year. The number of active projects fell from 22 to 14 over the year.

## BuDS Structure

61. BuDS has four departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work, and Housekeeping. Each department contained several related projects.

## Disability Services

62. The Disability Services group of projects were those directly helping and empowering disabled individuals in Buckinghamshire and beyond.

### Enquiries & Information Service

63. The BuDS Enquiries & Information Service answered questions and supported disabled adults and young people (plus carers and parents) on any disability-related issue or topic, filling gaps that other services could not provide. The Enquiries Service does not duplicate services available elsewhere, such as CAB. Rather, it acts as a safety net, picking up clients, questions and issues which other agencies cannot, or do not have resources, to address. Importantly, it

can offer long-term support with complex issues and work with disabled people who find it hard to access other services. Typical queries include housing, utilities, benefits (PIP, ESA, DLA and Universal Credit), accessibility, disability law, equality, work and employment, education and schools, and Covid. With only a relatively small amount of funding for this project, it is primarily volunteer-led and run.

64. Enquiries & Information received doubled over 2024-25 to over 1000, of which over 500 were successfully completed within the year. This is a considerable tribute to the hard work of numerous volunteers.
65. The Enquiries & Information Service was generously funded in 2024-25 by small grants from the Matrix Causes Fund and The Rothschild Foundation. Securing additional funding to expand the Service remains a high priority.

## BuDDies & MeetUps

66. BuDDies is a fully safeguarded, professionally managed, but sadly now small-scale specialist befriending service for disabled people. It is one of only a few voluntary schemes able to support people with complex mental health conditions and to offer long-term and open-ended befriending support. Set up in 2020 as an emergency response to Covid-19 lockdowns, BuDDies in 2024-25 continued to be a lifeline for lonely or isolated disabled people. BuDS BuDDys (as the befrienders are called) are highly skilled and trained volunteers and the nature of the people supported by BuDDies means that significant welfare, safeguarding and peer-support is needed to keep the service sustainable and safe.
67. Demand for BuDDies befriending support in 2024-25 was once again very significantly greater than the capacity of the service, with frequent referrals from NHS mental health services and community prescribers, and sadly there is a long waiting list. Although BuDDies was able to significantly grow in 2024-25, this growth fell far short or meeting demand.
68. During 2024-25, around 930 hours of befriending support were provided to 12 disabled people by 9 volunteer 'BuDDy' befrienders. This was nearly five times more hours of support than in 2022-24. BuDDies was generously part-funded in 2024-25 by The Rothschild Foundation, Garfield Weston and the Rectory Foundation.
69. MeetUps was a new development of the BuDDies project in 2024-25. With generous funding from Arnold Clark & Heart of Bucks, plans were made for a series of face-to-face social gatherings and meetings in the summer and autumn of 2025 for lonely older people, reducing social isolation and building resilience and connectivity.

## Covid Information, Advice, and Guidance

70. The BuDS Covid IAG project continued in 2024-25 to support disabled and clinically-vulnerable people across England with information, advice and guidance about Covid. BuDS maintained and grew its national (and increasingly international) reputation as a highly respected and reliable source of Covid information used weekly by tens of thousands of people, presenting information in written, video, infographic and easy read formats, with Substack being added from November 2024. We were proud to receive endorsements and praise from respected academics and clinicians.
71. The Covid IAG project published 3 articles and 46 risk assessments on our website and social media, which together generated more than 500,000 views or engagements. Our Covid Substack, launched in November 2024, grew very rapidly by over 200 additional readers per week and was still growing at the end of 2024-25. Our own Covid support community group on Facebook also grew its membership to over 500 individuals.

72. Covid remained a politically controversial topic and, operating within policies agreed by the entire Trustee Board, great care was taken to never express any party-political views and for BuDS to remain scrupulously party-politically neutral.
73. In 2024-25, the Covid IAG project received no external funding and was funded entirely from unrestricted funds. It was almost entirely volunteer-led with limited staff input. BuDS is immensely grateful to its extremely dedicated and skilled volunteers who make this project possible.

## Health & Disability Information, Advice, and Guidance

74. 2024-25 saw the welcome revival of BuDS' very successful and popular Health & Disability IAG. This project provides disabled people with accurate, fact-checked, general information and advice on topical health and disability-related issues, presented in a simple and accessible way. This information is published on the BuDS website and on social media, aiming to support disabled people, and their families and carers, in the online spaces which they most often use. The project routinely corrects popular misconceptions, addresses and disproves misinformation, and helps people see past clickbait and alarmist media headlines, increasingly AI generated. Opposing vaccine misinformation was a strong theme over the year.
75. In 2024-25, this project published 19 web articles and over 250 social media articles covering a very wide range of topics including benefits and social care, employment and the DWP, vaccines and vaccinations, health conditions. medicines, scientific developments and other topical issues. These articles were generally very well received and attracted good readership, although sometimes challenged by antivaxxers and other health misinformation activists.
76. BuDS does not provide medical advice, that is to say personalised health information or advice intended for or tailored for one person, or relating to a specific person's symptoms or medical history. We also do not offer any form of medical diagnosis, where a specific person is advised that they may have any particular medical condition. Where relevant, BuDS includes a disclaimer to that effect on all health information and strongly advises people to consult their own doctor or healthcare professional for personalised health information, advice or diagnosis.
77. In 2024-25, the Health & Disability IAG project received no external funding and was funded entirely from unrestricted funds. It was almost entirely volunteer-led with limited staff input. BuDS is very grateful to its skilled and determined volunteers who make this project possible.

## Assisted Dying Bill Campaign

78. In October 2024, BuDS shared the widespread concerns of disabled people about Kim Leadbeater MP's Bill to legalise a form of assisted dying or assisted suicide. Recognising the high public profile and strongly-held views on this matter, BuDS consulted widely within its own community and through disability networks before Trustees agreed a statement of policy opposing assisted dying/suicide on evidence-led and principled grounds. This policy statement was published and subsequently relied upon as the basis for an information and lobby campaign against Kim Leadbeater's Bill, in collaboration with Disability Rights UK and other disabled-led groups opposing the Bill. BuDS' statements and insights were very well-received by disabled people across England and helped inform the vigorous Parliamentary debate on the Bill. In 2024-25, this project published 7 web articles and over 900 social media contributions.
79. In 2024-25, the Assisted Dying Bill Campaign project received no external funding and was funded entirely from unrestricted funds. It was entirely volunteer-led. BuDS is incredibly grateful to its skilled and determined volunteers who have led this strong and influential campaign on a matter of vital importance to many disabled people.

## Fair4All

80. Fair4All is a BuDS 'brand' for our projects aiming to build an inclusive world which is free of the barriers which disable people: a Fair4All world in which disability is effectively abolished.

## Fair4All Attitudes and Hate Crime

81. This project remains dormant until new funding can be found.

## Fair4All Card Scheme

82. The Fair4All Card is an innovative and discreet secure photocard which provides disabled people with definitive proof of their legal status as a disabled person and lists the 'reasonable adjustments' the holder is legally entitled to expect from shops, services and individuals in the community. A substantial four-year development grant from The National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund was received in August 2023, allowing a major expansion of the scheme to commence. This expansion plan took major steps forward in 2024-25.
83. Key developments in 2024-25 included the successful finalisation of a Microsoft Dynamics web portal allowing people to apply for a Card online, and the design of a new F4A Card website. This essential infrastructure laid a sound foundation for the expansion of the project.
84. The original plan to issue cards with the support of third-party disability organisations was significantly modified in 2024-25, because most disability organisations are now under such pressure that supporting the Card scheme, however much they wish to do so in principle, is no longer practical for them. A new operating model was successfully developed for rollout in 2025.

## Fair4All Education

85. The Fair4All Education project promotes the interests of disabled children and young people (SEND students) in the education system. It is led by disabled young people and by the parents and carers of disabled children.
86. A major research project into educational and work transitions for disabled children and young people in Bucks, with the very generous support of The Rothschild Foundation, was completed in 2024-25, with plans for a live online launch event in July 2025. This research has highlighted the 'devastating and shocking' experiences of SEND children and young people in Bucks within education, and the urgent need for reforms and improvements to SEND education.
87. As a response to this research, BuDS has made plans for the launch of a pilot SEND Transitions Service in a Buckinghamshire school. This pilot is designed to establish the benefits – both educationally and financially – of a dedicated service to support SEND students through key educational transitions and when leaving education for work. This pilot, which will be extended to further schools as part of the ongoing proof-of-concept, is scheduled to start in 2025-26.

## Fair4All Events

88. BuDS is committed to making large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled people, and has Buckinghamshire's only stock of accessible and inclusive children's games and activities. We have a long and highly successful pedigree of working with event organisers to help them create and run truly inclusive events. However, sadly lack of specific funding and volunteers meant that this project was dormant throughout 2024-25. Funding is actively sought to revive it.

### Fair4All Public Spaces

89. BuDS has a long history of successfully supporting councils, developers, property owners and visitor attractions and others to make public spaces more accessible and inclusive for disabled people. We have two consultancy arms within this project, Fair4All Visitor and Fair4All Access & Inclusion Surveys. However, sadly lack of specific funding and volunteers meant that this project was dormant throughout 2024-25. Funding is actively sought to revive it.

### Fair4All Services

90. BuDS has always worked to improve council, NHS and private-sector services for disabled people in Buckinghamshire. Fair4All Services is the only independent disabled-led monitoring and campaigning group in Buckinghamshire. However, it is entirely volunteer-led, and recruiting volunteers with the time and skills to deliver the project goal again proved impossible in 2024-25. With very considerable regret, this project was mothballed, although the intent to revive it is strong.

## Reach4Work

### BucksWorkability

91. The BucksWorkability Partnership, which BuDS supported, brought together the NHS, DWP and 39 CVS disability employment schemes in the public, voluntary and private sectors. However, the project is now mothballed pending national changes to disability employability schemes which may reinvigorate it.

### Reach4Work

92. Since 2010, BuDS has helped its volunteers towards work. Our Reach4Work project, created in 2018, codified and developed that help, creating a professional wrap-around service for our disabled volunteers who want to move into or closer to work. The key elements of Reach4Work are:
    a. BuDS provides a supportive, inclusive and caring community which provides exceptional emotional and peer support to disabled jobseekers. When a disabled jobseeker joins BuDS, they are not merely a client or service-user but a member of the charity, a full participant in our wider ‘working community’.
    b. The volunteer role which job seekers have within a BuDS project is bespoke and structured to provide the experience, skills and networking which the individual jobseeker needs – it is a ‘real unpaid job’ created for the benefit of both the charity and the jobseeker, with highly supportive staff and volunteer support.
    c. Reach4Work provides disabled jobseekers with professional employment support elements such as training, mentoring, interview and CV skills, job placements, etc
    d. Jobseekers are brought into contact with local employers who are already being helped to create inclusive workplaces and opportunities for disabled workers.
93. Unsurprisingly, BuDS is exceptionally successful at moving disabled jobseeker volunteers into or closer to work. Typically, 95% of participants report positive progress towards work and around a third of our disabled job seeker volunteers move into work or vocational training within a year of starting with BuDS.
94. Demand for Reach4Work places is exceptionally high and outstrips our ability to provide places, as it is rightly recognised by both disabled people and professionals as the leading and most successful employability scheme of its kind.
95. Around 55 disabled people were supported by Reach4Work in 2024-25, of which around a third were aged under 25.

### Reach4Work Digital

96. This project is unique to BuDS and helps disabled young people gain key skills and experience to get jobs in the digital sector. The team, of around 4-8 people, employs Agile methodology, which is widely used in the digital sector. The project has built close links with local technology and IT employers. It is run entirely by disabled young people, with some staff support, and has delivered high quality products to industry standards, including phone apps, online databases and websites.

### Reach4Work Work Experience

97. This project provides disabled university and college students with high quality work experience and has been extremely popular and successful in the past. However, lack of funding meant that the project remained dormant in 2024-25.

### Comms, Website and Creative

98. In 2024-25, BuDS maintained four websites and twelve social media channels to communicate with the public, its supporters and disabled people across Buckinghamshire and the UK. These were all maintained and developed by disabled staff and volunteer members of the very busy Communications, Websites and Creative teams.

## Plans for 2025-26

99. BuDS' detailed plans for 2025-26 are set out in its strategy documents, which are available on the website.
100. BuDS has an unparalleled insight into the circumstances of disabled people. It has a proven capacity to use that knowledge to generate and design projects which support disabled people in innovative and effective ways. These projects are attractive to funders. The key issue, therefore, is the need to ensure that BuDS can deliver projects when funding and other resources allow. 2024-25 was a period during which the Trustees evolved the charity's operating model and financial systems to support more robust project delivery. 2025-26 will see a new staffing structure and enhanced focus on staff skills and experience.
101. Trustees took decisive steps in 2024-25 to strengthen the corporate governance of the charity and reform the role of the trustee board to a more sustainable position. With the generous and essential support of the Lloyds Bank Foundation, succession planning, and the replacement of the Chair, will continue into 2025-26.
102. Constitutional evolution begun in 2023 has now moved forward. From September 2025, BuDs became a national charity called BuDS Disability Service, able to work across England. Further work to allow the charity to take the form of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) will occur in 2026.

## Achievements and Performance

### Achievements

103. The following table summarises the difference that each of our projects made to the lives of its beneficiaries:

| **Project** and if unique in Bucks | **Difference to Beneficiaries** |
|---|---|
| Enquiries (unique) | Answered questions and offered advocacy support to disabled people which they could not obtain elsewhere |

| | |
|---|---|
| BuDDies | Befriended and supported lonely and isolated disabled and clinically vulnerable people |
| Covid-19 IAG (unique) | Information, advice, guidance and analysis about Covid-19 for disabled and clinically vulnerable people, including a weekly risk assessment |
| Health & Disability IAG | Information, advice, guidance and analysis about health and disability issues, in a uniquely accessible format. |
| Assisted Dying Bill Campaign | Information and lobby campaign against Kim Leadbeater's Bill, in collaboration with Disability Rights UK and other disabled-led groups opposing the Bill |
| Fair4All Card (unique) | Helped disabled people get the help and support that they are legally entitled to in shops and public places |
| Fair4All Services | Dormant |
| Fair4All Attitudes & Hate Crime (unique) | Dormant |
| Hate Crime Support & Report Service | Dormant |
| Fair4All Education | Dormant |
| SEND Transitions Service (unique) | Researched and analysed SEND and work transitions for disabled children and young people and captured the authentic voice of disabled children and young people. Now moving to deliver a UK-first and unique pilot SEND Transitions Service. |
| Fair4All Events (unique) | Dormant |
| Fair4All Public Spaces | Dormant |
| Fair4All Visitor (unique) | Dormant |
| Fair4All Access & Inclusion Surveys | Dormant |
| Reach4Work – General | Supported disabled BuDS volunteers who are jobseekers towards or into work |
| Reach4Work – Digital (unique) | Trains and develops disabled young people for careers in the digital industry |
| Reach4Work – Work Experience | Dormant |
| BucksWorkability | Dormant |
| Housekeeping Projects | Allowed disabled people to volunteer in vocational roles which helped move them towards work |

## Cost Effectiveness

104. BuDS aims to be a highly cost-effective and efficient charity. Gifts in kind and the value of voluntary and pro bono support in 2024-25 amounted to circa £131,140, or £1.32 for every pound raised by BuDS. The principal ways in which this support was obtained are as follows:

    a. 60 active volunteers worked a total of 6550 hours in 2024-25, an average of roughly 3.1 hours/week per volunteer. This represents the same hours as 4 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £86,000 per annum.
    a. IT and software donations, including 117 Microsoft Office 365 licences, representing a financial contribution in kind of £14,500.
    b. Inhouse design and media production by volunteers saved an estimated £28,000
    c. Pro bono professional legal and accountancy support saved an estimated £2,500

105. BuDS would like to thank all the businesses which have supported us, including Microsoft UK Ltd, CloudyIT Ltd, B P Collins LLP and Seymour Taylor Limited.

## Fundraising Activities

106. BuDS expenditure on fundraising activities in 2024-25, principally the salaries of two part-time grants fundraisers, was £13,440, and income generated as a result of this activity was £172,972. This represents a return of £12.87 on every pound invested in fundraising.

# Financial Review for FY 2024-25

107. Financial year 2024-25 saw a 12% increase in BuDS' income compared to 2023-24, because of successful grant fundraising. Voluntary fundraising in the form of donations was very small, reflecting both the austere economic circumstances and the difficulty of raising funds from our supporter base of primarily disabled people. Expenditure, drawing on both current fundraising and balances carried forward, increased by 51%. However, reserves ended the year 11% higher.

## Reserves Policy

108. The formal Reserves Policy for financial year 2024-25 remained unchanged, i.e. to hold a balance in reserve adequate to cover all legal or employment liabilities and three month's unavoidable (fixed) running costs. This total was calculated at £2000 and held largely in the charity's legacy Cooperative Bank account. This reserves policy will be reviewed annually.

## Charity as a Going Concern

109. Like most charities without a significant standing endowment, BuDS relies on attracting a constant flow of grant and fundraising income to sustain its activities. This exposes the charity to a running risk of future financial deficits which, if unmitigated, could cause the charity to become insolvent or fail as a going concern. Trustees have taken steps to mitigate this risk as follows:
    d. The charity treasurer is a qualified accountant and is charged specifically with warning the Board about any financial risk which may occur.
    e. A qualified grants fundraiser is employed to generate a constant flow of grant applications, and a fundraising team is being developed to boost voluntary giving
    f. A current budget and cash flow is examined at every monthly Trustee meeting and a forward plan is formulated at each Full Trustee meeting. This transparent planning enables all members of the Board to evaluate future risks and to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity
    g. A strategic plan is in place which would allow the charity to contract to a size which would be sustainable long-term *without* major grant funding. All contracts, including employment contracts, can be terminated with short notice if funding was to fall significantly.
    **h.** Employment and service contracts are specifically examined so as to minimise longer-term financial liabilities. The charity had no significant longer-term financial liabilities such as pensions or property leases in 2024-25. There are statutory redundancy liabilities for three employees.

110. As a consequence of the mitigations mentioned above, as of March 2025, Trustees had no concerns about the charity's ability to remain financially viable and a going concern for the foreseeable future.

## Investment Policy

111. BuDS has no investment funds and therefore no investment policy. One will be adopted if needed in the future.

## Principal risks facing the charity

112. The principal risks facing the charity, and the mitigations in place for them, are as follows:

| Risk Type | Mitigation | Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| Structural Risks | BuDS has an appropriate legal form, registered with the Charity Commission and is in good governance, maintaining membership of NCVO and the Fundraising Regulator. Trustee Liability insurance is in place. Approval is in place for the charity to take the form of a CIO and Trustees are moving ahead with this change. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Trustee-related Risks | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to ensure a broad range of appropriate skills, and Trustee training is delivered. Good governance is maintained in the forms of transparent evidence-based decision-making at frequent well-attended meetings. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Conflicts of Interest | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to avoid conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest are transparently managed by Trustees without a conflict, eg relating to the employment of family members of Trustees. A related Trustee policy is in place. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Safeguarding Risks | Safeguarding policies and practices are in place, and safeguarding is actively managed across the charity by a dedicated Trustee sub-committee which includes trained safeguarding personnel. Safeguarding incidents are managed appropriately and links to the MASH hub used as necessary. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Contractual Risks | All significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Staff-related Risks | A qualified HR professional is in post and appropriate staffing policies are in place. Appropriate employment-related insurance is in place and regularly reviewed. The Senior Management Team manages staffing issues. Staffing decisions which might give rise to liability (e.g. disciplinary actions) are managed by HR professional with external lawyers input as needed. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Financial Risks | See above | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Reputational Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all reputational risks, and appropriate editorial processes and policies are in place including designated spokespeople and restrictions on social media use. Defamation and litigation liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Compliance Risks | The charity has few activities which are subject to formal accreditation or compliance regimes, but Senior Management Team actively manages compliance issues, and all significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. Where a new activity raises a compliance risk, this is assessed and mitigated before commencement | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Legal Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all legal risks, and appropriate processes and policies are in place to mitigate a legal liability including formal approval processes and staff training. Public and professional insurance cover is in place for all activities. The charity has a retained legal advisor, a leading local practice. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

113. On 7 June 2024, the Charity Commission contacted the charity about allegations made to them about governance issues, including information policies and conflicts of interest. The charity provided comprehensive information to the Commission, and the Commission subsequently took no further action beyond drawing the attention of the Trustees to its published guidance.

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name: Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS)

Other name the charity uses: BuDS

Registered charity number: 1102511

Charity's principal address: Buckinghamshire Disability Service, c/o B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL

## Advisors

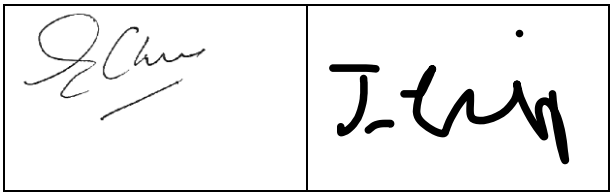
| Type of advisor | Name | Address |
|---|---|---|
| Accountant | Tearle & Carver | Chandos House, School Lane, Buckingham, MK18 1HD |
| Solicitor | B P Collins LLP | B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL |

## Declaration

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:**

**Signature(s)**



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Full name(s)** | Andrew Clark | Jason Jervis |
| **Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)** | Chair of Trustees | Treasurer |
| **Date** | 23/01/2026 | 23/01/2026 |

# Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Buckinghamshire Disability Service BuDS

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Buckinghamshire Disability Service BuDS**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Buckinghamshire Disability Service BuDS (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

**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 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all 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; or

3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Tearle and Carver Limited

Tearle & Carver Limited
Chandos House
School Lane
Buckingham
Buckinghamshire
MK18 1HD

Date: 27 January 2026

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

| Charity Name | No (if any) | CC16a |
|---|---|---|
| BUDS | | |

**Receipts and payments accounts**

| For the period from | 01.04.2024 | To | 31.03.2025 |
|---|---|---|---|

**Section A Receipts and payments**

| | Unrestricted funds to the nearest £ | Restricted funds to the nearest £ | Endowment funds to the nearest £ | Total funds to the nearest £ | Last year to the nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A1 Receipts** | | | | | |
| Grants Unrestricted | 50,304 | - | - | 50,304 | 30,000 |
| Grants Restricted | | | - | - | - |
| Reach4Work -Restricted | | 21,669 | - | 21,669 | 27,982 |
| Fair4All Projects - Restricted | - | 55,900 | - | 55,900 | 88,589 |
| Disability Services - Restricted | - | 28,059 | - | 28,059 | 6,333 |
| Transitions - Restricted | | 14,100 | | | - |
| Donations - Unrestricted | 5,400 | | - | 5,400 | 1,494 |
| Enquires + Earned Income | 750 | | - | 750 | 166 |
| Other | 124 | | - | 124 | |
| *Sub total (Gross income for AR)* | 56,578 | 119,728 | - | 176,306 | 154,564 |
| **A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Sub total* | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Total receipts* | 56,578 | 119,728 | - | 176,306 | 154,564 |
| **A3 Payments** | | | | | |
| Reach4Work | | 28,498 | | 28,498 | 27,281 |
| Fair4All Projects | | 67,769 | | 67,769 | 56,542 |
| Disability Services | | 9,638 | | 9,638 | 2,621 |
| Transitions | | 22,172 | | 22,172 | |
| Governance | 36,918 | - | | 36,918 | 22,274 |
| Digital & Internet | 2,713 | | - | 2,713 | 505 |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | - | - | - | - |
| | - | | - | - | - |
| | | | - | - | - |
| | | | - | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Sub total* | 39,631 | 128,077 | - | 167,708 | 109,223 |
| **A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Sub total* | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Total payments* | 39,631 | 128,077 | - | 167,708 | 109,223 |
| *Net of receipts/(payments)* | 16,947 | - 8,349 | - | 8,598 | 45,341 |
| A5 Transfers between funds | - | - | - | - | - |
| A6 Cash funds last year end | 9,692 | 67,224 | - | 76,916 | 31,575 |
| *Cash funds this year end* | 26,639 | 58,875 | - | 85,514 | 76,916 |

*Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period*

| Categories | Details | | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *B1 Cash funds* | Bank Accounts | CAF | 84,341 | - | - |
| | | Co-Op | 1,148 | - | - |
| | | Paypal | 25 | - | - |
| | Total cash funds | | 85,514 | - | - |

**BuDS Disability Service**

England & Wales - Charity number 1102511

# Accounts

Fixing the Big Issues for Disabled People in Buckinghamshire
Charity No 1102511
www.buds.org.uk | 01494 211179 | info@buds.org.uk
*Registered Address (no callers): BuDS, c/o B P Collins LLP, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL*

# Trustees' Annual Report for 2023-24

## Chair's Foreword

1. Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) is a leading disability charity operating in and around Bucks and increasingly across England. It is an independent pan-disability organisation led by disabled people and committed to the social model of disability. Our visionary aim is to abolish disability by building a world which is Fair4All, free of the barriers which disable people. Our work helps build an inclusive world where disabled and non-disabled people have equal status and equal value opportunities to live their lives.
2. BuDS is evolving from a county charity to a national charity. This process began in 2020. Following approval from members in 2023, we intend to change our name to 'BuDS Disability Service' and to formally re-brand ourselves as a national charity, alongside moving to Charitable Incorporated Organisation status.
3. BuDS' mission is to remove the barriers which disable people, so that everyone has equality of opportunity and access. Removing these barriers is what BuDS' projects are intended to do in all areas of life. Our Disability Services help disabled people directly, while our Fair4All projects bring about permanent change to the built environment, structures, systems and infrastructure so that disabled people do not face barriers to living independently. Our Reach4Work projects help disabled jobseekers into work and education. All our work is evidence-based, project-led and responds to the real needs of disabled people. The expertise of our professional volunteers mean we can often punch above our weight.
4. Because Covid remains a real risk and huge barrier to inclusion for millions of disabled and clinically vulnerable people, BuDS is one of the few UK charities which continues to provide information, guidance and support around Covid issues. We have a deserved national reputation as a highly respected and reliable source of Covid information used by tens of thousands of people.
5. 2023-24 was marked by significant successes but also some serious challenges. Annual income grew by 56% and staff hours grew by 40%, but volunteer hours fell by a third and there was significant turnover of trustees, particularly those with relevant experience and skills. The overall pattern was of the strong growth of funded projects with staff and volunteer support, but purely voluntary-led projects struggled. If maintained, this trend may force major changes to how BuDS operates in future.
6. On behalf of the Board, I would like to express our sincere and wholehearted thanks to the Trustees, staff and volunteers who have given so much of their time and talents in 2023-24. I would also like to thank our funders who have shown such confidence in our work.

7. I hope you enjoy reading more about BuDS in this Annual Report.



**Andrew Clark**
**Chair of Trustees**

# Introduction

9. This is the Annual Report for Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS), charity registration number 1102511, for the financial year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, and includes the accounts for that period.
10. As BuDS' income is below £500,000 and it does not have assets worth more than £3.26 million, Trustees are not required to produce a full Annual Report according to the guidelines set out in the Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102).

# What is BuDS?

11. Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) is a leading disability charity operating in and around Bucks and increasingly across England. It is an independent pan-disability organisation led by disabled people and committed to the social model of disability. Our visionary aim is to abolish disability by building a world which is Fair4All, free of the barriers which disable people. Our many projects help build an inclusive world where disabled and non-disabled people have equal status and equal value opportunities to live their lives.

## User Led

12. BuDS is committed to being user-led, that is a charity which is primarily led by disabled Trustees and which seeks, as far as possible, to include primarily disabled people as staff and volunteers. We see being user-led as vital to our authenticity and mission. In practice, we aim to have 75% of Trustees who identify as disabled people and, as a minimum, 51%. In 2023-24, 77% of those holding office as Trustees identified as disabled people; while 51% of those volunteers who provided information and 25% of staff identified as disabled.

## Social Model of Disability

13. BuDS follows and advocates for the social model of disability, which is at the core of our beliefs and work. The social model of disability states that disability is caused by the barriers which society puts in the way of people who have an impairment or medical condition, not by those impairments or conditions. Thus, for example, a wheelchair-user is 'disabled' by the lack of a ramp, not by their lack of mobility, or an autistic person is 'disabled' by a lack of quiet places rather than by their neurodivergence. When we use the phrase 'disabled person', we mean a person with an impairment or medical condition impacted by a barrier which disables them – we are not referring to any physical, sensory or mental health condition they may have.

## A Voluntary Charity

14. BuDS aims to be an inclusive working community of mainly disabled volunteers organised around the key principle that disabled people themselves should tackle the issues and barriers that they face. Our disabled volunteers are also our members and part of our unique wider grassroots community of disabled people.
15. This model of a working community of mainly disabled volunteers has been significantly more difficult to sustain in 2023-24. Overall active volunteer numbers dropped from 117 in 2022-23 to 76 in 2023-24. The proportion of disabled volunteers also reduced from around three-quarters in 2022-23 to half in 2023-24. This decline in volunteering was in keeping with both local and national trends.
16. These changes are not unexpected. 2023-24 has seen severe economic pressure and an accelerating cost-of-living crisis, affecting disabled people most of all. Many of our disabled volunteers have had to give up volunteering in order to work extra hours or to enter employment,

and the same pressures prevent many disabled people from starting to volunteer. Many of our former volunteers also have increased caring responsibilities because statutory services such as SEND education, the NHS, and care services continue to decline.

17. Trustees recognise that our aim to be an inclusive working community of mainly disabled volunteers may no longer be realistic or sustainable, and this strategic model therefore will be reviewed in 2024-25.
18. In 2023-24, we recruited 21 new volunteers to maintain an active volunteer number of 76 over the year. We have a part-time volunteer coordinator responsible for recruitment and induction. Training is available for all volunteers and many volunteers also have a mentor for 1:1 support. We have a dedicated in-house welfare team, Help for Helpers. Many of our volunteers are job seekers and we support them towards work through our Reach4Work project (details below).
19. Usage data from our IT system (Microsoft Office 365), shows that, over 2023-24, BuDS had an average of 30 active volunteers working on any particular day, from a pool of active volunteers of around 75 individuals. This represents a significant decrease of around a third from 2022-23, when BuDS had an average of 48-50 active volunteers working on any particular day, from a pool of active volunteers of around 120 individuals.
20. We calculate that our 76 active volunteers worked a total of 18,240 hours in 2023-24, an average of roughly 4.6 hours/week per volunteer. (In 2022-23, 117 volunteers worked 40,820 hours, an average of 6.7 hours/week each). This represents the same hours as 8 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £260,000 per annum.

### A Youth Charity

21. BuDS remains a significant youth charity, with 13% of volunteers aged under 25 in 2023-24. We have a Trustee aged under 25 who specifically represents disabled young people. Around 70% of BuDS' work benefits young people.

### Independent & Party Politically Neutral

22. BuDS is an independent charity which can speak up for the interests of disabled people without fear or favour, untrammelled by ties arising from contracts, funding or unequal partnerships. Our strategy specifically requires all funding to be examined to ensure that it does not place unacceptable constraints on our independence and freedom to act. Often, BuDS acts as the spokesperson for other organisations that cannot speak out without fear of jeopardising contracts or financial relationships on which their charity depends.
23. As required by charity law, BuDS is scrupulously party-politically neutral. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance, whilst BuDS reserves the right to be critical of public bodies or the Government, we take great care never to express any party-political views or to create in the mind of a reasonable onlooker the idea that the charity is biased in favour of any particular political party.

### A Values-Led Charity

24. BuDS has adopted strong values which underpin all of our work and the way we behave. These can be found on our website.

## Charity Objects

25. The objects of BuDS, as set out in the Constitution, are: "To relieve the needs of disabled people, their families, and carers, principally within the County of Buckinghamshire excluding

Milton Keynes, by any charitable means and in particular, but not exclusively by (1) providing education services, and (2) providing advisory and support services".

26. The 2023 AGM approved a change to the objects of the charity so that the legal area of operation of BuDS becomes 'England', rather than 'the County of Buckinghamshire excluding Milton Keynes'. As of the time of publication, this change has yet to be formally approved by the Charity Commission.
27. The Trustees review the charity objects annually, having regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, and remain of the view that the objects of the charity continue to meet the public benefit requirement set out in the Charities Acts 2005 and 2011.

## Public Benefit of the Charity

28. In accordance with the Charities Acts, the BuDS' trustees can confirm that they are aware of the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, have had regard to it when exercising any relevant powers or duties, and have complied with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 by including this statement in this annual report. The Trustees do not feel they have departed from the guidance to any extent.
29. The BuDS Trustees, having had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, can confirm that they have operated BuDS in a way that carries out its charitable purposes for the public benefit. Further details can be found in the following sections of this annual report.

## Behind the Scenes

30. BuDS has a clear strategic planning process as follows:
    a. A formal written Strategy and Strategic Plan document is produced annually by the charity's executive trustees and agreed by the Full Board including non-executive Trustees.
    b. The Strategy and Plan include formal reporting mechanisms by which Trustees can monitor progress and ensure the charity remains true to its core values.
    c. Progress towards achieving the Strategy and Plan is reviewed formally biannually by a full Trustee meeting, which includes non-executive Trustees. The same meeting also reviews formally whether the charity has remained true to its values.
    d. Amendments to the Strategy and Plan are made and agreed by the full Trustee Board as necessary, alongside any actions needed to address departures from core values.

31. The Full Trustee Board met on 15 July 2023 and 6 January 2024 to carry out a strategic review and agree a revised strategy. This is explained further in paragraph 95 below.

### Charity Structure, Governance and Management

32. BuDS is an unincorporated association in the form of a membership charity. Members elect the officers and Trustees, and key decisions are taken by a General Meeting. The governing document is a written constitution.
33. The 2023 AGM approved the formation of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which will take over the assets of the unincorporated association in due course.

### Constitution

34. The BuDS constitution was adopted on 11 March 2003 and amended by the Annual General Meeting in 2010, 2012 and 2021. It is available on the website.

## Membership

35. Currently, membership of BuDS is only open to all disabled people living in Buckinghamshire or who have a direct interest in Buckinghamshire. A disabled person for the purposes of membership means being disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 or otherwise having direct personal experience of disability. Until 20 November 2021, carers of disabled people were also entitled to become members of BuDS although in practice none did so.
36. In practice, BuDS deems all circa 45,000 disabled people in Buckinghamshire to be de facto members of the charity and seeks through its normal activities to remain in close contact with their views and opinions. The charity does not maintain a formal membership register or have a formal membership process except in relation to Trustees (see below) and for attendees at the AGM. Attendees at the AGM are required to certify that they are eligible for membership before their voting rights are recognised.
37. The 2023 AGM approved a change to the constitution so that all disabled people resident in England would be eligible to be members of BuDS. At the time of publication, the Charity Commission has not formally approved this change. It is expected that the change of status to that of a CIO will also affect membership of BuDS.

## Trustees

38. The BuDS constitution provides that there shall be a minimum of four and a maximum of 15 Trustees, co-opted or appointed by the AGM from the membership of the charity. These are the three officers of the charity (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) plus up to twelve others. The constitution requires Trustees to step down after three years in office (although they may be re-elected), but BuDS' practice since 2009 is to elect or re-elect Trustees every year. No organisation has the right to nominate a Trustee.
39. As a user-led activist charity, the role of BuDS Trustees in 2023-24 was different from that in many other charities. As a charity, we are by policy strongly Trustee-led. It is inherent in our status as a user-led organisation that the BuDS Trustee Board is the clear leadership and direction setting body for the charity. Accordingly, we expect and require all Trustees to have a strong commitment to our values and objectives, and for Trustees to play an active role in the life of the charity.
40. During 2023-24, 13 individuals held office as Trustees, with the average size of the Trustee Board being 8 people.
41. During 2023-24, two Trustees were related. The quorum for decision-making was increased accordingly and a Related Trustees policy was introduced. This policy can be found on the BuDS website.
42. The BuDS Trustee Board is clearly structured. Trustees have two main roles:
    a. Officers & Executive Trustees – these play an active day-to-day leadership role in the charity as decision-makers and through contributing their skills and experience. During 2023-24, seven individuals held office as officers or executive Trustees (six disabled).
    b. Non-Executive Trustees – these Trustees are chosen for their wider experience and skills, including lived experience as a disabled person. They do not play a day-to-day role in the charity but contribute their wisdom at Full Board meetings at which strategy and progress are reviewed, and as needed when key decisions are being taken. During 2023-24, six individuals held office as non-executive Trustees (four disabled).
43. Reflecting their active role, officers and executive trustees met online at least monthly during 2023-24. Trustees met formally seven times in 2023-24. There were two formal Full Board

meetings with the attendance of non-executive Trustees. There was also a busy virtual Trustee team for discussions between meetings.

44. Trustees are identified by open advertisement, by canvassing existing volunteers, or direct approaches by the Trustee Board. In 2023-2024, eight potential new Trustees were identified of which three were appointed. The selection procedure is as follows:
    a. Membership eligibility is confirmed
    b. Safeguarding, reference and an enhanced DBS check are completed
    c. Individuals are invited to attend three Trustee meetings and to become involved in BuDS work and projects over that period
    d. The Board then decides whether to second the individual to the Trustee Board until the next AGM
    e. At the next AGM, the individual is invited to say whether they wish to have their name put forward for election

## Succession Planning

45. 2023-24 was a demanding year for BuDS and this was reflected in an unusually high number of resignations from the Trustee board. 6 Trustees resigned during the year, including the Treasurer, and it was sadly found necessary to suspend 1 trustee prior to their term of office ending in January 2024. This degree of turnover made succession planning a high priority for the Board.
46. A Succession Plan to prepare for the planned stepping-down of the BuDS' longstanding Chair, Andrew Clark, was in force during 2023. This plan entailed the recruitment of two Vice-Chairs prior to the recruitment of a new Chair, to ensure good continuity and to ensure that key skills and experience were not lost. However, during 2023-24, both the Treasurer and Secretary trustee roles became vacant, and focus switched to filling those roles. A new Succession Plan was agreed in January 2024.

## Organisation & Management of the Charity

47. In 2023-24, BuDS was organised as a working community of volunteers, supported by staff, who collaborate together on projects. Since 2020, BuDS has been structured according to Agile project management principles, to maximise output, flexibility and responsiveness whilst enabling best practice project, cost and risk management. A structure chart can be found on the website
48. The basic building unit of the charity is the project team. This is a group of Trustees and/or volunteers working together around a common theme, goal or idea. The project team is structured and will have members in different defined roles including that of project coordinator. Paid staff may be deployed to support the team, but BuDS does not have enough staff to support all teams.
49. Projects are grouped together into one of 4 departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work or Housekeeping. These departments are explained further below.
50. During 2023-24, all team members worked from home using Microsoft Teams as a virtual office, including video meetings, messaging, task boards, wikis, forms, etc. Each project has objectives agreed by Trustees and progress is monitored at Trustee meetings through the Project Manager or executive Trustee for that project. The typical working process is that of the 'sprint' – a sustained team effort to achieve a piece of work or outcome - followed by a reflective pause to evaluate success and plan next steps.

51. In January 2023, BuDS had 19 active project teams (including 3 sub-projects), and 10 teams dealing with 'housekeeping' or corporate issues such as communications, finances, fundraising, HR, etc. One active project team was closed during the year and a number of projects became dormant.
52. Janneke Elford remained the BuDS Projects Manager throughout 2023-24, responsible for the 19 active project teams in the Disability Services, Fair4All, and Reach4Work departments. Housekeeping teams remained under direct Trustee management throughout 2023-24, but the Project Manager's involvement in housekeeping projects was increased as part of the planned evolution of that role toward that of a Chief Officer.

## Staffing

53. BuDS is an overwhelmingly voluntary charity and, in 2023-24, the role of our paid staff is primarily to support volunteers to achieve their project goals. All staff are on short-notice contracts reflecting the funding currently available to BuDS.
54. During 2023-24, BuDS had an average of eight staff in post (4.4 FTE), compared to eight staff (3 FTE) in 2022-23. This represented a 40% increase in staff time available to the charity.
55. BuDS aims to be an inclusive employer, and we are proud that 25% of individuals employed during 2023-24 identified as disabled people. Reflecting our ethos and insight into the barriers preventing disabled people from working, we offer all staff flexible working hours alongside remote working from home. We also offer 'disability leave' and shape working patterns and routines around staff needs as disabled people. This policy has been highly successful in motivating and retaining staff, not just those who are disabled.

## Safeguarding & Welfare

56. Safeguarding is exceptionally important to BuDS. All Trustees, staff and volunteers, other than short-term temporary roles, are fully safeguarded including the taking up of references and an enhanced DBS check. There is mandatory safeguarding training, delivered inhouse, for all staff and volunteers. As an online organisation, our IT system has been configured to enhance safeguarding. We are linked to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and able to make direct referrals to them if needed.
57. The welfare and safety of the BuDS community is also important. Many of our volunteers and staff are potentially vulnerable and our 'Help for Helpers' welfare team is available to anyone needing a chat or word of advice. During 2023-24, a significant number of welfare concerns relating to volunteers were resolved.
58. Safeguarding and Welfare is managed by a safeguarding sub-committee of the Trustee Board which throughout most of 2023-24 included three professionally trained (Level 3) safeguarding officers.

## Diversity & Inclusion

59. The Trustees are committed to intersectional diversity across the charity. We aim to be an inclusive community where everyone can find a place and fulfil their wishes without discrimination, and we are proud to have many LGBTQ+ people among our number. A Trustee with lead responsibility for intersectional diversity across the charity was in post in 2023-24. The BuDS Trustee Board is significantly more intersectionally diverse than most charity boards.

# BuDS Work in 2023-24

## Overview

60. 2023-24 saw a mixed picture. Annual income grew by 56% compared to 2022-23 (from £99k to £155k) and staff hours grew by 40%, but volunteer hours fell by a third and there was significant turnover of trustees, particularly those with relevant experience and skills. The overall pattern was of the development and growth of funded projects with staff support, but a decline in purely voluntary-led projects. Some volunteer-led projects had to be mothballed primarily through shortage of the volunteers who had previously sustained them, despite high demand.

## BuDS Structure

61. BuDS has four departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work, and Housekeeping. Each department contained a number of related projects which were led by staff or volunteers.

## Disability Services

62. The Disability Services group of projects were those directly helping and empowering disabled individuals in Buckinghamshire and beyond.

### Enquiries Service

63. The BuDS Enquiries Service answered questions and supported disabled adults and young people (plus carers and parents) on any disability-related issue or topic, filling gaps that other services could not provide. The Enquiries Service does not duplicate services available elsewhere, such as CAB. Rather, it acts as a safety net, picking up clients, questions and issues which other agencies cannot, or do not have resources, to address. Importantly, it can offer long-term support with complex issues and work with disabled people who find it hard to access other services. Typical queries include housing, utilities, benefits (PIP, ESA, DLA and Universal Credit), accessibility, disability law, equality, work and employment, education and schools, and Covid.
64. With only a relatively small amount of funding for this project, it is mainly volunteer-led and run. With other enquiries services under immense strain, 515 enquiries were received during the year (10 per week), of which only 11% were closed. Securing additional funding to expand the Enquiries Service is a high priority for 2024-25.
65. The Enquiries Service was generously funded in 2023-24 by small grants from B P Collins LLP (via Heart of Bucks), the Matrix Causes Fund and The Rothschild Foundation.

### BuDDies

66. BuDDies is a fully safeguarded, professionally managed, but sadly now small-scale specialist befriending service for disabled people. It is one of only a few voluntary schemes supporting people with complex mental health conditions and able to offer long-term support to people who need it. Set up in 2020 as an emergency response to Covid-19 lockdowns, BuDDies in 2023-24 continued to be a lifeline for lonely or isolated disabled people. BuDS BuDDys (as the befrienders are called) are highly skilled and trained volunteers and the nature of the people supported by BuDDies means that significant welfare, safeguarding and peer-support is needed to keep the service sustainable and safe.
67. Demand for BuDDies in 2023-24 was once again significantly greater than the capacity of the service, with frequent referrals from NHS mental health services and community prescribers, and there is a long waiting list. Sadly, a number of volunteer befrienders had to leave in 2023-

24, reducing the support that could be offered. Securing additional funding to expand the Enquiries Service is a high priority for 2024-25.

68. During 2023-24, around 208 hours of support were provided to four disabled people by four volunteer 'BuDDy' befrienders. This was a reduction of over half compared to 2022-23.
69. BuDDies was generously part-funded in 2023-24 by The Rothschild Foundation.

## Covid Information, Advice, and Guidance

70. The BuDS Covid IAG project continued in 2023-24 to support disabled and clinically-vulnerable people in Buckinghamshire and nationally with information, advice and guidance about Covid. Covid largely ceased to be an issue for most people in this period, with no precautions taken against the spread of the virus and a general feeling that the world was now 'post-pandemic'. Increasingly, NHS and statistical data about both the virus and its health consequences were deliberately not collected. However, ignoring Covid continued not to be an option for millions of disabled and clinically vulnerable people, for whom infection had serious consequences. The number of people with Covid-related disability or long-term consequences continued to rise and huge waves of acute illness swept the country in autumn 2023 and again in winter 2023-24.
71. Over 2023-24, BuDS maintained its national reputation as a highly respected and reliable source of Covid information used weekly by tens of thousands of people, presenting information in written, video, infographic and easy read formats. Our weekly risk assessments gained international status. We published 6 articles and 33 risk assessments, which together generated well over 200,000 engagements on social media. Our own support community group on Facebook maintained its membership of around 450.
72. Covid remained a politically controversial topic and, operating within policies agreed by the entire Trustee Board, great care was taken to never express any party-political views and for BuDS to remain scrupulously party-politically neutral.
73. In 2023-24, the Covid IAG project was once again funded internally from unrestricted funds.

## Fair4All

74. Fair4All is a BuDS 'brand' for our projects aiming to build an inclusive world which is free of the barriers which disable people: a Fair4All world in which disability is effectively abolished. All of these projects saw a welcome development and expansion in 2023-24.

## Fair4All Attitudes and Hate Crime

75. BuDS continued until December 2023 to operate a disability hate 'Support & Report Service'. This service, developed with Thames Valley Police and the Bucks Safety Partnership, provided victims of disability hate with friendly, knowledgeable support to report crimes and incidents, and to get long-term compassionate and understanding emotional support. It was the referral point for all local disability hate incidents reported through the National Hate Crime Helpline.
76. Sadly, it proved impossible to maintain this important service beyond the end of funding. The project remains dormant until new funding can be found.

## Fair4All Card Scheme

77. The Fair4All Card is an innovative and discreet secure photocard which provides disabled people with definitive proof of their legal status as a disabled person and lists the 'reasonable adjustments' the holder is legally entitled to expect from shops, services and individuals in the community. A substantial four-year development grant from The National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund was received in August 2023, allowing a major expansion of the scheme to commence.

78. By March 2024, new staff had been recruited for the project and a new online portal for disabled people to use to apply for the Fair4All Card, and a new scheme website, were both well on the way to delivery. A new volunteer team had been recruited and were being trained to process card applications. However, the original plan to roll out cards with the support of third-party disability organisations has had to be reconsidered, despite extensive concept testing. All disability organisations are now under such pressure that supporting the Card scheme, however much they wish to do so in principle, is no longer practical for them.

## Fair4All Education

79. The Fair4All Education project promotes the interests of disabled children and young people (SEND students) in the education system. This project has had mixed fortunes in 2023-24.
80. A significant expert working community, including SEND professionals, parents and disabled young people, had been assembled to advocate and establish new projects. Sadly, with the increasing demands of the failing SEND education system on professionals, parents and carers, fewer people found it possible to volunteer their time and this aspect of the project had to become dormant.
81. A major research project into educational and work transitions for disabled children and young people in Bucks has however continued to make excellent progress with the very generous support of The Rothschild Foundation, with a report expected in 2024-25.

## Fair4All Events

82. BuDS is committed to making large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled people, and has Buckinghamshire's only stock of accessible and inclusive children's games and activities.
83. Our highly successful Fair4All Events project continued in the summer of 2023, albeit on a smaller scale, with only one major public event supported, the Towersey Festival in Buckingham in August 2023. Lack of volunteers was the major factor holding back the project: over 35 events could have been supported with more funding and volunteers.
84. In 2023-24, Fair4All Events was generously part-funded by a small grant from The Clare Foundation.

## Fair4All Public Spaces

85. BuDS has a long history of successfully supporting councils, developers and others to make public spaces more accessible and inclusive for disabled people. In 2022-23, we launched two consultancy arms for this project, Fair4All Visitor and Fair4All Access & Inclusion Surveys. Funding for Fair4All Visitor, although highly successful, ended in 2023-24 and the project was mothballed until further funding can be found. Similarly, although four access and inclusion surveys were carried out for three Chiltern Society open green spaces and one for Amersham Museum in 2023, demand for paid access consultancy has proved to be low and the A&I Access Surveys have also been mothballed for the time being.

## Fair4All Services

86. BuDS has always worked to improve council, NHS and private-sector services for disabled people in Buckinghamshire. Fair4All Services is the only independent disabled-led monitoring and campaigning group in Buckinghamshire. However, it is entirely volunteer-led, and recruiting volunteers with the time and skills to deliver the project goal has proven impossible in 2023-24. With very considerable regret, this project was mothballed, although the intent to revive it is strong.

## Reach4Work

### BucksWorkability

87. The BucksWorkability Partnership, which BuDS supported, brought together the NHS, DWP and 39 CVS disability employment schemes in the public, voluntary and private sectors. However, in 2023 the DWP started to build up its own disability employment networks and participation in BucksWorkability fell accordingly. The project is now mothballed pending national changes to disability employability schemes which may reinvigorate it.

### Reach4Work

88. Since 2010, BuDS has helped its volunteers towards work. Our Reach4Work project, created in 2018, codified and developed that help, creating a professional wrap-around service for our disabled volunteers who want to move into or closer to work. The key elements of Reach4Work are:
    a. BuDS provides a supportive, inclusive and caring community which provides exceptional emotional and peer support to disabled jobseekers. When a disabled jobseeker joins BuDS, they are not merely a client or service-user but a member of the charity, a full participant in our wider working community.
    b. The volunteer role which job seekers have within a BuDS project is bespoke and structured to provide the experience, skills and networking which the individual jobseeker needs – it is a 'real unpaid job' created for the benefit of both the charity and the jobseeker, with highly supportive staff and volunteer support.
    c. Reach4Work provides disabled jobseekers with professional employment support elements such as training, mentoring, interview and CV skills, job placements, etc
    d. Jobseekers are brought into contact with local employers who are already being helped to create inclusive workplaces and opportunities for disabled workers.
89. Unsurprisingly, BuDS is exceptionally successful at moving disabled jobseeker volunteers into or closer to work. Typically, 95% of participants report positive progress towards work and around a third of our disabled job seeker volunteers move into work or vocational training within a year of starting with BuDS.
90. Pandemic recovery funding for the Reach4Work project came to an end in April 2023 and, with the loss of paid staff, the number of R4W places was reduced accordingly. However, a further grant was received from the National Lottery in January 2024 and the scheme expanded again. Further funding was received from The Rothschild Foundation.

### Reach4Work Digital

91. This project is unique to BuDS and helps disabled young people gain key skills and experience to get jobs in the digital sector. The team employs Agile methodology, which is widely used in the digital sector. The project has built close links with local technology and IT employers. It is run entirely by disabled young people, with some staff support, and has delivered high quality products to industry standards, including phone apps, online databases and websites.
92. While Reach4Work Digital continued successfully in 2023-24, it was not possible to secure sufficient funding, as we had hoped, to launch a second Digital Team. The Reach4Work Digital project was generously part-funded in 2023-24 by small grants from The Shanly Foundation and The Rothschild Foundation.

### Reach4Work Work Experience

93. This project provides disabled university and college students with high quality work experience and has been extremely popular and successful in the past. However, lack of funding meant that the project remained dormant in 2023-24.

### Comms, Website and Creative

94. In 2023-24, BuDS maintained four websites and twelve social media channels to communicate with the public, its supporters and disabled people across Buckinghamshire and the UK. These were all maintained and developed by disabled staff and volunteer members of the very busy Communications, Websites and Creative teams.

## Plans for 2024-25

95. BuDS' detailed plans for 2024-25 are set out in its strategy agreed in January 2024, available on the website.
96. BuDS has an unparalleled insight into the circumstances of disabled people. It has a proven capacity to use that knowledge to generate and design projects which support disabled people in innovative and effective ways. These projects are attractive to funders. The key issue, therefore, is the need to ensure that BuDS can deliver projects when funding and other resources allow. 2024-25 will therefore see a focus on stronger project delivery and management resources and more robust financial systems appropriate to a fast-growing charity.
97. BuDS has historically relied primarily on volunteers to run its projects and activities for over a decade. The dramatic fall in volunteer numbers in 2023-24 has highlighted the vulnerability of this reliance and Trustees will seek in 2024-25 to address how an alternative model can be created and sustained.
98. Trustees have also identified the need to reform and refresh BuDS governance to reflect its larger size and developing capacity. The resignations from the Trustee Board over 2023-24 have sadly reduced its expertise and resilience, and there is a long-standing need to make an effective succession plan for the departure of the Chair. However, recruiting Trustees with the relevant skills and experience has proven extremely difficult and perhaps impossible while the pool of recruits is limited to disabled people living in Bucks. Recruiting trustees with a professional background to an unincorporated society adds to the difficulty.
99. This situation highlights the critical importance of constitutional evolution, to make BuDS a national charity in the form of a CIO, as a preliminary to restoring the strength of the Trustee Board. Recruiting officers and trustees of the required quality will only be sustainable if recruiting from the whole of England and to a limited liability charity.

## Achievements and Performance

### Achievements

100. The following table summarises the difference that each of our projects made to the lives of its beneficiaries:

| **Project** and if unique in Bucks | **Difference to Beneficiaries** |
|---|---|
| Enquiries (unique) | Answered questions and offered advocacy support to disabled people which they could not obtain elsewhere |

| | |
|---|---|
| BuDDies | Befriended and supported lonely and isolated disabled and clinically vulnerable people |
| Covid-19 (unique) | Information, advice, guidance and analysis about Covid-19 for disabled and clinically vulnerable people, including a weekly risk assessment |
| Fair4All Card (unique) | Helped disabled people get the help and support that they are legally entitled to in shops and public places |
| Fair4All Services | Dormant |
| Fair4All Attitudes & Hate Crime (unique) | Dormant |
| Hate Crime Support & Report Service | Dormant |
| Fair4All Education | Dormant |
| SEND Transitions Service (unique) | Researched and analysed SEND and work transitions for disabled children and young people and captured the authentic voice of disabled children and young people. |
| Fair4All Events (unique) | Helped make large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled and clinically vulnerable people and educated event organisers |
| Fair4All Public Spaces | Dormant |
| Fair4All Visitor (unique) | Dormant |
| Fair4All Access & Inclusion Surveys | Offered a unique holistic access and inclusion survey to businesses and organisations to help them be more accessible and inclusive for disabled people |
| Reach4Work – General | Supported disabled BuDS volunteers who are jobseekers towards or into work |
| Reach4Work – Digital (unique) | Trains and develops disabled young people for careers in the digital industry |
| Reach4Work – Work Experience | Dormant |
| BucksWorkability | Dormant |
| Housekeeping Projects | Allowed disabled people to volunteer in vocational roles which helped move them towards work |

## Cost Effectiveness

101. BuDS aims to be a highly cost-effective and efficient charity. Gifts in kind and the value of voluntary and pro bono support in 2023-24 amounted to circa £291,000, or £1.88 for every pound raised by BuDS. The principal ways in which this support was obtained are as follows:

    a. 76 active volunteers worked a total of 18,240 hours in 2023-24, an average of roughly 4.6 hours/week per volunteer. This represents the same hours as 8 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £260,000 per annum.
    b. IT and software donations, including 143 Microsoft Office 365 licences, representing a financial contribution in kind of £10,000.
    c. Inhouse design and media production by volunteers saved an estimated £18,000
    d. Pro bono professional legal and accountancy support saved an estimated £3,000

102. BuDS would like to thank all the businesses which have supported us, including Microsoft UK Ltd, CloudyIT Ltd, B P Collins LLP and Seymour Taylor Limited.

## Fundraising Activities

103. BuDS expenditure on fundraising activities in 2023-24, principally the salaries of two part-time grants fundraisers, was £11,969, and income generated as a result of this activity was £152,904. This represents a return of £12.77 on every pound invested in fundraising.

# Financial Review for FY 2023-24

104. Financial year 2023-24 saw a 56% increase in BuDS' income compared to 2022-23, because of successful grant fundraising. An important development was the award by the Lloyds Foundation of an unrestricted core cost grant of £75,000 over 3 years as part of their support for disability user-led organisations. Voluntary fundraising in the form of donations was very small, reflecting both the austere economic circumstances and the difficulty of raising funds from our supporter base of primarily disabled people.

## Reserves Policy

105. The formal Reserves Policy for financial year 2023-24 remained unchanged, i.e. to hold a balance in reserve adequate to cover all legal or employment liabilities and three month's unavoidable (fixed) running costs. This total was calculated at £2000 and held largely in the charity's legacy Cooperative Bank account. This reserves policy will be reviewed annually.

## Charity as a Going Concern

106. Like most charities without a significant standing endowment, BuDS relies on attracting a constant flow of grant and fundraising income to sustain its activities. This exposes the charity to a running risk of future financial deficits which, if unmitigated, could cause the charity to become insolvent or fail as a going concern. Trustees have taken steps to mitigate this risk as follows:
    a. The charity treasurer is a qualified accountant and is charged specifically with warning the Board about any financial risk which may occur.
    b. A qualified grants fundraiser is employed to generate a constant flow of grant applications, and a fundraising team is being developed to boost voluntary giving
    c. A current budget and cash flow is examined at every monthly Trustee meeting and a forward plan is formulated at each Full Trustee meeting. This transparent planning enables all members of the Board to evaluate future risks and to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity
    d. A strategic plan is in place which would allow the charity to contract to a size which would be sustainable long-term *without* major grant funding. All contracts, including employment contracts, can be terminated with short notice if funding was to fall significantly.
    **e.** Employment and service contracts are specifically examined so as to minimise longer-term financial liabilities. The charity had no significant longer-term financial liabilities such as pensions or property leases in 2023-24. There is a small redundancy liability for one employee.

107. As a consequence of the mitigations mentioned above, as of April 2024, Trustees had no concerns about the charity's ability to remain financially viable and a going concern for the foreseeable future.

## Principal sources of funds

108. In 2021/22, BuDS' principal sources of funding in order of size were as below. This information is from BuDS' management accounts and is not a complete account of all income received. Smaller grants (below £3000) were also received.

| Source | Type | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| The Rothschild Foundation | Restricted grant for Education (3 year) and other projects with FCR element. | £28,667 |
| The Clare Foundation | Restricted grant for Events (3 year) | £3300 |
| Matrix Causes Fund | Restricted grant for Enquiries (3 year) | £3000 |
| National Lottery | Restricted grant for Reach4Work (1 year) with FCR element | £19,982 |
| National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund | Restricted grant for Fair4All Card (3 years) with FCR element. | £71,000 |
| Lloyds Foundation | Unrestricted core costs | £25,000 |

## Investment Policy

109. BuDS has no investment funds and therefore no investment policy. One will be adopted if needed in the future.

## Principal risks facing the charity

110. The principal risks facing the charity, and the mitigations in place for them, are as follows:

| Risk Type | Mitigation | Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| Structural Risks | BuDS has an appropriate legal form, registered with the Charity Commission and is in good governance, maintaining membership of NCVO and the Fundraising Regulator. Trustee Liability insurance is in place. Approval is in place for the charity to take the form of a CIO and Trustees are moving ahead with this change in 2024-25. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Trustee-related Risks | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to ensure a broad range of appropriate skills, and Trustee training is delivered. Good governance is maintained in the forms of transparent evidence-based decision-making at frequent well-attended meetings. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Conflicts of Interest | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to avoid conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest are transparently managed by Trustees without a conflict, eg relating to the employment of family members of Trustees. A related Trustee policy is in place. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Safeguarding Risks | Safeguarding policies and practices are in place, and safeguarding is actively managed across the charity by a dedicated Trustee sub-committee which includes trained safeguarding personnel. Safeguarding incidents are managed appropriately and links to the MASH hub used as necessary. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Contractual Risks | All significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Staff-related Risks | A qualified HR professional is in post and appropriate staffing policies are in place. Appropriate employment-related insurance is in place and regularly reviewed. The Senior Management Team manages staffing issues. Staffing decisions which might give rise to liability (e.g. disciplinary actions) are managed by HR professional with external lawyers input as needed. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Financial Risks | See above | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Reputational Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all reputational risks, and appropriate editorial processes and policies are in place including designated spokespeople and restrictions on social media use. Defamation and litigation liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Compliance Risks | The charity has few activities which are subject to formal accreditation or compliance regimes, but Senior Management Team actively manages compliance issues, and all significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. Where a new activity raises a compliance risk, this is assessed and mitigated before commencement | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Legal Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all legal risks, and appropriate processes and policies are in place to mitigate a legal liability including formal approval processes and staff training. Public and professional insurance cover is in place for all activities. The charity has a retained legal advisor, a leading local practice. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name: Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS)

Other name the charity uses: BuDS

Registered charity number: 1102511

Charity's principal address: Buckinghamshire Disability Service, c/o B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL

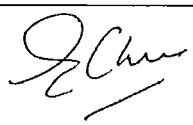
## Advisors

| Type of advisor | Name | Address |
|---|---|---|
| Accountant | Tearle & Carver | Chandos House, School Lane, Buckingham, MK18 1HD |
| Solicitor | B P Collins LLP | B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL |

## Declaration

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Signature(s)** |  |  |
| **Full name(s)** | Andrew Clark | Sue Sansom |
| **Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)** | Chair of Trustees | Executive Trustee |
| **Date** | 20/01/2025 | 20/01/2025 |

# Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Buckinghamshire Disability Service BuDS

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Buckinghamshire Disability Service BuDS**
I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Buckinghamshire Disability Service BuDS (the Trust) 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 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all 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; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

*Tearle and Carver Limited*

Tearle & Carver Limited
Chandos House
School Lane
Buckingham
Buckinghamshire
MK18 1HD

Date: 29 January 2025

CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

| Charity Name | No (if any) |
|---|---|
| BUDS | |

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

| For the period from | 01.04.2023 | To | 31.03.2024 |
|---|---|---|---|

## Section A Receipts and payments

| | Unrestricted funds to the nearest £ | Restricted funds to the nearest £ | Endowment funds to the nearest £ | Total funds to the nearest £ | Last year to the nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A1 Receipts** | | | | | |
| Grants Unrestricted | 30,000 | - | - | 30,000 | - |
| Grants Restricted | | | - | - | - |
| Reach4Work -Restricted | | 27,982 | - | 27,982 | 8,000 |
| Fair4All Projects - Restricted | - | 88,589 | - | 88,589 | 56,508 |
| Disability Services - Restricted | - | 6,333 | - | 6,333 | 3,333 |
| Donations - Unrestricted | 1,494 | | - | 1,494 | 28,213 |
| Enquires + Earned Income | 166 | | - | 166 | 3,000 |
| Other | | | - | - | - |
| *Sub total (Gross income for AR)* | 31,660 | 122,904 | - | 154,564 | 99,054 |
| **A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Sub total* | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Total receipts* | 31,660 | 122,904 | - | 154,564 | 99,054 |
| **A3 Payments** | | | | | |
| Reach4Work | | 27,281 | | 27,281 | 9,172 |
| Fair4All Projects | | 56,542 | | 56,542 | 35,690 |
| Disability Services | | 2,621 | | 2,621 | 17,622 |
| Governance | 22,274 | - | | 22,274 | 33,708 |
| Digital & Internet | 505 | | - | 505 | 666 |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | - | - | - | - |
| | - | | - | - | - |
| | | | - | - | - |
| | | | - | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Sub total* | 22,779 | 86,444 | - | 109,223 | 96,858 |
| **A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Sub total* | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Total payments* | 22,779 | 86,444 | - | 109,223 | 96,858 |
| *Net of receipts/(payments)* | 8,881 | 36,460 | - | 45,341 | 2,195 |
| A5 Transfers between funds | - | - | - | - | - |
| A6 Cash funds last year end | 811 | 30,764 | - | 31,575 | 29,328 |
| *Cash funds this year end* | 9,692 | 67,224 | - | 76,916 | 31,523 |

*Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period*

| Categories | Details | | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *B1 Cash funds* | Bank Accounts | CAF | 75,846 | - | - |
| | | Co-Op | 1,070 | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | Total cash funds | | 76,916 | - | - |
| | (agree balances with receipts and pa | | Agreement Error | Agreement Error | OK |

| | Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B2 Other monetary assets** | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |

| | Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B3 Investment assets** | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| **B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use** | Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| ***B5 Liabilities*** | Details | Fund to which liability relates | Amount due (optional) | When due (optional) |
| | | | - | |
| | | | - | |
| **Other Liabilities** | Nest/HMRC | | -4321 | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees** | Signature | Andrew Clark<br>Print Name | Susan Sansom | 20/01/2025<br>Date of approval |

**BuDS Disability Service**

England & Wales - Charity number 1102511

# Accounts

Fixing the Big Issues for Disabled People in Buckinghamshire
Charity No 1102511
www.buds.org.uk | 01494 211179 | info@buds.org.uk
*Registered Address (no callers): BuDS, c/o B P Collins LLP, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL*

# Trustees' Annual Report for 2022-23

## Chair's Introduction

1. Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) is the county's leading disability charity and its only independent pan-disability organisation. Our visionary aim is to *abolish disability* by building a world which is *Fair4All*, free of the barriers which disable people. We are led by disabled people and committed to the social model of disability.

2. Uniquely, BuDS is a working community of over 100 volunteers who work together, supported by staff, to achieve our goals. Our 19 projects, many of which are unique to the county, empower thousands of disabled adults, young people and children across Buckinghamshire and permanently remove the barriers facing disabled people so that they can live and work independently.

3. BuDS is a highly diverse and inclusive charity both in terms of disability and intersectionality, and diversity and inclusion are core values. BuDS is also a significant youth charity in and around Buckinghamshire, with around 25 disabled young people (18-25) as volunteers in 2022-23 and a strong project focus on children and young people.

4. We tackle the issues which most affect disabled people in and around Buckinghamshire by whatever means necessary. Our Disability Services help disabled people directly, while our Fair4All projects bring about permanent change to the built environment, structures, systems and infrastructure so that disabled people do not face barriers to living independently. Our Reach4Work projects help disabled jobseekers into work and education. All our work is evidence-based, project-led and responds to the real needs of disabled people. The expertise of our professional volunteers mean we can often punch above our weight.

5. Because Covid-19 remains a real risk and huge barrier to inclusion for millions of disabled and clinically vulnerable people, BuDS is one of the few UK charities which continues to provide information, guidance and support around Covid issues. We have a deserved national reputation as a highly respected and reliable source of Covid-19 information used by tens of thousands of people.

6. 2022-23 saw a welcome return to growth after the financial shock of 2021-22, with the abrupt ending of Covid-related contingency funding on which we had previously depended. All our projects saw growth and development, funding increased, and we maintained our large number of loyal volunteers who make BuDS such a unique and rewarding community. Exciting times lie ahead, with several projects in a development phase.

7. Huge thanks are due to our Trustees, staff and volunteers who have given so much of their time and talents, and to our funders who have shown such confidence in our work.

8. I hope you enjoy reading more about the unique working community that is BuDS in this Annual Report.



**Andrew Clark**
**Chair of Trustees**

## Introduction

9. This is the Annual Report for Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS), charity registration number 1102511, for the financial year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, and includes the audited accounts for that period.

10. As BuDS' income is below £500,000 and it does not have assets worth more than £3.26 million, Trustees are not required to produce a full Annual Report according to the guidelines set out in the Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102).

## What is BuDS?

11. BuDS is Buckinghamshire's leading disability charity and the county's only independent pan-disability organisation. Our visionary aim is to abolish disability by building a world which is Fair4All, free of the barriers which disable people. To achieve this, we have built a working community of over 100 local volunteers who work together, supported by staff, to achieve our goals. Our 19 projects both support and empower disabled individuals and work to permanently remove the barriers facing disabled people.

### User Led

12. BuDS is committed to being user-led, that is a charity which is led primarily by disabled Trustees and which seeks, as far as possible, to include disabled people as staff and volunteers. We see being user-led as vital to our authenticity and mission. In practice, we aim to have 75% of Trustees who identify as disabled people and, as a minimum, 51%. In 2022-23, 75% of those holding office as Trustees identified as disabled people; while 46% of those volunteers who provided information and 75% of staff identified as disabled.

### Social Model of Disability

13. BuDS follows and advocates for the social model of disability, which is at the core of our beliefs and work. The social model of disability states that disability is caused by the barriers which society puts in the way of people who have an impairment or medical condition, not by those impairments or conditions. Thus, for example, a wheelchair-user is 'disabled' by the lack of a ramp, not by their lack of mobility, or an autistic person is 'disabled' by a lack of quiet places rather than by their neurodivergence. When we use the phrase 'disabled person', we mean a person with an impairment or medical condition impacted by a barrier which disables them – we are not referring to any physical, sensory or mental health condition they may have.

### A Voluntary Charity

14. BuDS aims to be an inclusive working community of mainly disabled volunteers organised around the key principle that disabled people themselves should tackle the issues and barriers that they face. Our disabled volunteers are also our members and part of our unique grassroots community of disabled people. We remain a large working community of nearly 120 volunteers, equivalent to a charity with 19 full-time employees.

15. In 2022-23, some key trends in volunteering have become apparent:
    a. BuDS has broadly maintained our number of active volunteers and significantly increased the average number of voluntary hours worked per volunteer, bucking national and local trends, which show a marked decline in volunteering.

b. However, the number of volunteers able to be active on any particular day has fallen sharply, reflecting the much higher pressure on our volunteers of the cost-of-living crisis and increased caring responsibilities as SEND education, the NHS, and care services continue to decline.
c. The proportion of disabled BuDS volunteers who identify as disabled has also fallen. This is not surprising: 2022-23 has seen unprecedented economic pressure and an accelerating cost-of-living crisis, affecting disabled people most of all. Many of our disabled volunteers have had to give up volunteering in order to work extra hours or to enter employment, and the same pressures prevent many disabled people from starting to volunteer.
d. The number of 'inactive' BuDs volunteers - who were taking a break from volunteering but who hoped to return later – has also fallen sharply, and so we have decided to exclude these inactive individuals from our volunteer statistics.

16. Around three quarters of BuDS volunteers in 2021-22 identified as disabled (Equality Act definition) but that proportion has fallen to around half in 2022-23. Our disabled volunteers remain an extremely diverse community, with every significant impairment group represented. This gives us continued unparalleled insight into the lives of disabled people. We still include a wide age range, with over a fifth of our volunteers in 2022-23 being young people under 25. Our volunteers are also at diverse points on their life journey: we still include people who are starting out in their adult life, working people, parents, retirees, professionals, jobseekers, and people who are looking to acquire more skills or experience.

17. In 2022-23, we recruited 64 new volunteers and maintained our overall active volunteer number at 117 over the year. This was a very small (2.5%) decrease on 2022-23, when our overall active volunteer number was 120 people. We are proud to have been able to maintain the size of our active volunteer team in defiance of national and local trends. This is due in large part to our excellent and active volunteer support. We have a part-time volunteer coordinator responsible for recruitment and induction, and every project includes either a member of staff or volunteer whose specific role is to support volunteers in their volunteering. Training is available in every team and many volunteers also have a mentor for 1:1 support. We have a dedicated in-house welfare team, Help for Helpers. Many of our volunteers are job seekers and we support them towards work through our Reach4Work project (details below).

18. Usage data from our IT system (Microsoft Office 365), shows that, over 2022-23, BuDS had an average of 25-35 active volunteers working on any particular day, from a pool of active volunteers of around 117 individuals. This represents a significant decrease of around a third from 2021-22, when BuDS had an average of 48-50 active volunteers working on any particular day, from a pool of active volunteers of around 120 individuals.

19. We calculate that our 117 volunteers worked a total of 40,820 hours in 2022-23, an average of roughly 6.7 hours/week per volunteer. In 2021-22, 120 volunteers worked 48,100 hours, an average of 5.1 hours/week each. The total number of voluntary hours worked has increased by a third. It appears that volunteers are working longer hours per week but on fewer occasions in the week, perhaps reflecting their busy and pressured lifestyles.

20. Collectively, BuDS volunteers in 2022-23 worked the same hours as 19 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £511,000 per annum.

### A Youth Charity

21. BuDS remains a significant youth charity in and around Buckinghamshire, with around 25 disabled young people (18-25) as volunteers in 2022-23. We are one of the few charities to have had a Trustee aged under 21. 12% of our staff are young adults under 25. Of BuDS' 16 projects, 12 have young people as a significant focus, and 6 of those projects offer unique benefits for local young people not offered by any other organisation. Around 70% of BUDS' work benefits young people.

### Independent & Party Politically Neutral

22. BuDS is an independent charity which can speak up for the interests of disabled people without fear or favour, untrammelled by ties arising from contracts, funding or unequal partnerships. Our strategy specifically requires all funding to be examined to ensure that it does not place unacceptable constraints on our independence and freedom to act. Often, BuDS acts as the spokesperson for other organisations that cannot speak out without fear of jeopardising contracts or financial relationships on which their charity depends.

23. As required by charity law, BuDS is scrupulously party-politically neutral. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance, whilst BuDS reserves the right to be critical of public bodies or the Government, we take great care never to express any party-political views or to create in the mind of a reasonable onlooker the idea that the charity is biased in favour of any particular political party.

## Charity Objects

24. The objects of BuDS, as set out in the Constitution, are: "To relieve the needs of disabled people, their families, and carers, principally within the County of Buckinghamshire excluding Milton Keynes, by any charitable means and in particular, but not exclusively by (1) providing education services, and (2) providing advisory and support services".

25. The Trustees review the charity objects annually, having regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, and remain of the view that the objects of the charity continue to meet the public benefit requirement set out in the Charities Acts 2005 and 2011.

26. The 2023 AGM will be asked to approve significant changes to the objects of the charity which, if approved by the Charity Commission, will take effect in 2023-24. These changes are explained below.

## Public Benefit of the Charity

27. In accordance with the Charities Acts, the BuDS' trustees can confirm that they are aware of the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, have had regard to it when exercising any relevant powers or duties, and have complied with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 by including this statement in this annual report. The Trustees do not feel they have departed from the guidance to any extent.

28. The BuDS Trustees, having had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, can confirm that they have operated BuDS in a way that carries out its charitable purposes for the public benefit. Further details can be found in the following sections of this annual report.

## BuDS Strategy & Strategic Planning

29. BuDS has a clear strategic planning process as follows:
    - A formal written Strategy and Strategic Plan document is produced annually by the charity's executive trustees and agreed by the Full Board including non-executive Trustees.
    - The Strategy and Plan include formal reporting mechanisms by which Trustees can monitor progress and ensure the charity remains true to its core values.
    - Progress towards achieving the Strategy and Plan is reviewed formally biannually by a full Trustee meeting, which includes non-executive Trustees. The same meeting also reviews formally whether the charity has remained true to its values.
    - Amendments to the Strategy and Plan are made and agreed by the full Trustee Board as necessary, alongside any actions needed to address departures from core values.

30. The Full Trustee Board met on 23 April 2022 to agree a revised strategy for the period 2022-2024. This was reviewed without change at Trustee meetings in 2023. A significantly revised Strategy for 2024-2026 was subsequently agreed on 6 January 2024. The Strategy for 2022-24 and the current strategy for 2024-26 can be found on our website at https://buds.org.uk/buds-annual-report-2022-23/. Further information on our strategic goals for 2022-23 can be found below.

## Charity Structure, Governance and Management

31. BuDS is an unincorporated association in the form of a membership charity. Members elect the officers and Trustees, and key decisions are taken by a General Meeting. The governing document is a written constitution. The current constitution can be seen at https://buds.org.uk/buds-annual-report-2022-23/.

32. The 2023 AGM will be asked to approve significant changes to the charity constitution which, if approved by the Charity Commission, will take effect in 2023-24. These changes are explained below.

### Constitution

33. The BuDS constitution was adopted on 11 March 2003 and amended by the Annual General Meeting in 2010, 2012 and 2021.

34. The Annual General Meeting in 2012 agreed that the Trustee Board could take steps to change the legal form of the charity to a charitable company and made constitutional amendments to that effect. Trustees agreed in April 2022 to start this process and significant preliminary steps forward have been taken, including drafting the new Articles of Association. The move to a charitable company is expected to be complete within 2 years, subject to Companies House and Charity Commission approvals.

### Membership

35. Constitutionally, membership of BuDS is open to all disabled people living in Buckinghamshire or who have a direct interest in Buckinghamshire (e.g. by working in the county). A disabled person for the purposes of membership means being disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 or otherwise having direct personal experience of disability. Until 20 November 2021, carers of disabled people were also entitled to become members of BuDS although in practice none did so.

36. In practice, BuDS deems all circa 40,000 disabled people in Buckinghamshire to be de facto members of the charity and seeks through its normal activities to remain in close contact with their views and opinions. The charity does not maintain a formal membership register or have a formal membership process except in relation to Trustees (see below) and for attendees at the AGM. Attendees at the AGM are required to certify that they are eligible for membership before their voting rights are recognised.

37. The 2023 AGM will be asked to approve significant changes to the membership clauses of charity constitution which, if approved by the Charity Commission, will take effect in 2023-24. These changes are explained below.

## Trustees

38. The BuDS constitution provides that there shall be a minimum of four and a maximum of 15 Trustees, co-opted or appointed by the AGM from the membership of the charity. These are the three officers of the charity (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) plus up to twelve others. The constitution requires Trustees to step down after three years in office (although they may be re-elected), but BuDS' practice is to elect or re-elect Trustees every year. No organisation has the right to nominate a Trustee.

39. During 2022-23, 13 individuals have held office as Trustees, with the average size of the Trustee Board being 10 people. A full list of all Trustees can be found at https://buds.org.uk/buds-annual-report-2022-23/.

40. During periods of 2022-23, two pairs of Trustees were related. The quorum for decision-making accordingly was increased from 3 to 5 to prevent any conflict of interest and a conflict-of-interest policy was introduced to increase transparency. This policy can be found on the BuDS website at: https://buds.org.uk/buds-annual-report-2022-23/.

41. As a user-led activist charity, the role of BuDS Trustees is different from that in many other charities. As a charity, we are by policy strongly Trustee-led. It is inherent in our status as a user-led organisation that the BuDS Trustee Board is the clear leadership and direction setting body for the charity. Accordingly, we expect and require all Trustees to have a strong commitment to our values and objectives, and for Trustees to play an active role in the life of the charity.

42. The BuDS Trustee Board is clearly structured. Trustees have two main roles:
    - **Officers & Executive Trustees** – these play an active day-to-day leadership role in the charity as decision-makers and through contributing their skills and experience. During 2022-23, six individuals held office as officers or executive Trustees (five disabled).
    - **Non-Executive Trustees** – these Trustees are chosen for their wider experience and skills, including lived experience as a disabled person. They do not play a day-to-day role in the charity but contribute their wisdom at Full Board meetings at which strategy and progress are reviewed, and as needed when key decisions are being taken. During 2022-23, seven individuals held office as non-executive Trustees (four disabled).

43. Reflecting their active role, Executive and Lead Trustees met online at least monthly during 2022-2023. Trustees met formally eight times in 2022-2023. There was one formal Full Board

meetings with the attendance of non-executive Trustees. There was also a busy virtual Trustee team for discussions between meetings.

44. Trustees are identified by open advertisement, by canvassing existing volunteers, or direct approaches by the Trustee Board. In 2022-2023, nine potential new Trustees were identified of which four were appointed. The selection procedure is as follows:
    i. Membership eligibility is confirmed
    ii. Safeguarding, reference and an enhanced DBS check are completed
    iii. Individuals are invited to attend three Trustee meetings and to become involved in BuDS work and projects over that period
    iv. The Board then decides whether to second the individual to the Trustee Board until the next AGM
    v. At the next AGM, the individual is invited to say whether they wish to have their name put forward for election

45. Two Trustees resigned, in January 2023.

46. In January 2023, a Succession Plan was agreed to prepare for the planned stepping-down of the BuDS' longstanding Chair, Andrew Clark. The plan envisaged the recruitment of a new Chair and two Vice-Chairs, to ensure good continuity and to ensure that key skills and experience were not lost. These posts were advertised from January 2023 but, as of March 2023, no applications had been received. [Applications received after March 2023 will be covered in the 2023/24 Annual Report]

## Organisation & Management of the Charity

47. BuDS is organised as a working community of volunteers, supported by staff, who collaborate together on projects. Since 2020, BuDS has been structured according to Agile project management principles, to maximise output, flexibility and responsiveness whilst enabling best practice project, cost and risk management. A structure chart, representing the position in December 2023, can be found at https://buds.org.uk/buds-annual-report-2022-23/.

48. The basic building unit of the charity is the project team. This is a group of Trustees and/or volunteers working together around a common theme, goal or idea. The project team is structured and will have members in different defined roles including that of project coordinator. Paid staff may be deployed to support the team, but BuDS does not have enough staff to support all teams.

49. Projects are grouped together into one of 4 departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work or Housekeeping. These departments are explained further below.

50. During 2022-2023, all team members worked from home using Microsoft Teams as a virtual office, including video meetings, messaging, task boards, wikis, forms, etc. Each project has objectives agreed by Trustees and progress is monitored at Trustee meetings through the Project Manager or executive Trustee for that project. The typical working process is that of the 'sprint' – a sustained team effort to achieve a piece of work or outcome, followed by a reflective pause to evaluate success and plan next steps.

51. During 2022-23, BuDS had 19 active project teams (including 3 sub-projects), and 10 teams dealing with 'housekeeping' or corporate issues such as communications, finances, fundraising, HR, etc.

52. Janneke Elford remained the BuDS Projects Manager throughout 2022-23, responsible for the 19 active project teams in the Disability Services, Fair4All, and Reach4Work departments. Housekeeping teams remained under direct Trustee management throughout 2022-23. The ambition remains to appoint paid managers for each group of projects or department as those projects expand.

## Staffing

53. BuDS is an overwhelmingly voluntary charity, and the role of our paid staff is primarily to support volunteers to achieve their project goals, and to preserve continuity in projects. All staff are on short-notice contracts reflecting the funding currently available to BuDS.

54. During 2022-23, BuDS had an average of eight staff in post (three FTE). Although raw staff numbers compared to 2021-22 fell by only one, the full-time equivalent fell from six to just over three, a reduction of 50%. This change reflected the ending of Covid-19 contingency funding and the delay until it was replaced by other funding sources.

55. BuDS aims to be an inclusive employer (see https://buds.org.uk/buds-annual-report-2022-23/ for full staff diversity statistics) and we are proud that 75% of individuals employed during 2022-23 identified as disabled people. Reflecting our ethos and insight into the barriers preventing disabled people from working, we offer all staff flexible working hours and the opportunity to work from home. We also offer 'disability leave' and shape working patterns and routines around staff needs as disabled people. This policy has been highly successful in motivating and retaining staff, not just those who are disabled.

## Safeguarding & Welfare

56. Safeguarding is exceptionally important to BuDS. All Trustees, staff and volunteers, other than short-term temporary roles, are fully safeguarded including the taking up of references and an enhanced DBS check. There is mandatory safeguarding training, delivered inhouse, for all staff and volunteers. As an online organisation, our IT system has been configured to enhance safeguarding. We are linked to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and able to make direct referrals to them if needed.

57. The welfare and safety of the BuDS community is also important. Many of our volunteers and staff are potentially vulnerable and our 'Help for Helpers' welfare team is available to anyone needing a chat or word of advice. During 2022-23, a significant number of welfare concerns relating to volunteers were resolved.

58. Safeguarding and Welfare is managed by a safeguarding sub-committee of the Trustee Board which throughout most of 2022-23 included three professionally trained (Level 3) safeguarding officers.

## Diversity & Inclusion

59. The Trustees are committed to intersectional diversity across the charity. We aim to be an inclusive community where everyone can find a place and fulfil their wishes without

discrimination, and we are proud to have many LGBTQ+ people among our number. In 2022-23, we appointed a Trustee with lead responsibility for intersectional diversity across the charity.

60. The BuDS Trustee Board is significantly more intersectionally diverse than most in Buckinghamshire, but we recognise that more needs to be done to maintain and develop the Board's diversity. Full board diversity statistics can be found at https://buds.org.uk/buds-annual-report-2022-23/

## BuDS Work in 2022-23

### Overview

61. 2022-23 saw a welcome return to growth after the financial shock of 2021-22, with the abrupt ending of Covid-related contingency funding on which we had previously depended. All our projects saw growth and development, funding increased, and we maintained our large number of loyal volunteers who make BuDS such a unique and rewarding community. Exciting times lie ahead, with several projects in a development phase.

### BuDS Structure

62. BuDS has four departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work, and Housekeeping. Each department contained a number of related projects which were led by staff or volunteers.

### Disability Services

63. The Disability Services group of projects were those directly helping and empowering disabled individuals in Buckinghamshire and beyond.

### Enquiries Service

64. The BuDS Enquiries Service answered questions and supported disabled adults and young people (plus carers and parents) on any disability-related issue or topic, filling gaps that other services could not provide. Work behind the scenes in 2021-22 to put in place the systems and procedures needed to run a professional enquiries service has enabled the Enquiries Service to greatly expand in 2022-23. With an influx of new volunteers, many with a professional background, the Enquiries project in 2022-23 was able to support an average of 15 people every week, many on a long-term basis.

65. The Enquiries Service does not duplicate services available elsewhere, such as CAB. Rather, it acts as a safety net, picking up clients, questions and issues which other agencies cannot, or do not have resources, to address. Importantly, it can offer long-term support with complex issues and work with disabled people who find it hard to access other services. Typical queries include housing, utilities, benefits (PIP, ESA, DLA and Universal Credit), accessibility, disability law, equality, work and employment, education and schools, and Covid-19.

66. An exciting development in 2022-23 was the opportunity, thanks to funding received, to offer professional training, leading to qualifications for our Enquiry volunteers, to assist them into work. Several volunteers benefited from this opportunity, and we hope to continue it into 2023-24.

67. The Enquiries Service was generously funded in 2022-23 by small grants from B P Collins LLP (via Heart of Bucks), the Matrix Causes Fund and The Rothschild Foundation.

## BuDDies

68. BuDDies is a fully safeguarded, professionally managed, small-scale specialist befriending service for disabled people. It is one of only a few voluntary schemes supporting people with complex mental health conditions and able to offer long-term support to people who need it. Set up in 2020 as an emergency response to Covid-19 lockdowns, BuDDies in 2022-23 continued to be a lifeline for lonely or isolated disabled people. BuDS BuDDys (as the befrienders are called) are highly skilled and trained volunteers and the nature of the people supported by BuDDies means that significant welfare, safeguarding and peer-support is needed to keep the service sustainable and safe.
69. Demand for BuDDies is significantly greater than the capacity of the service, with frequent referrals from NHS mental health services and community prescribers, and there is a long waiting list. Expansion is not possible without additional funding, which is being sought. During 2022-23, around 550 hours of support were provided to ten disabled people by seven volunteer 'BuDDy' befrienders, one of whom was inducted during the year.

70. BuDDies was generously part-funded in 2022-23 by small grants from Virgin Money/O2, The Rectory Foundation (via Heart of Bucks) and The Rothschild Foundation.

## Covid-19 Information, Advice, and Guidance

71. The BuDS Covid-19 project continued in 2022-23 to support disabled and clinically-vulnerable people in Buckinghamshire and nationally with information, advice and guidance about Covid-19 and Long Covid. Political and Government attitudes to the Covid pandemic significantly changed in 2022-23, with the impact of the virus minimised and the population encouraged to ignore the risks and live as they had prior to the virus' emergence in 2020. UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and Heath & Safety Executive (HSE) stopped publishing and collecting vital data showing the continuing impact of the virus on health and society. The NHS ceased to use infection control measures, such as mask-wearing in patient-facing areas, which had previously been mandatory.

72. Ignoring Covid was not an option for millions of disabled and clinically vulnerable people, and hundreds of thousands of people were incapacitated by the longer-term impact of Covid disease. Supporting these people with reliable information and guidance required a significant effort from this volunteer-led project. Over the year, we maintained our national reputation as a highly respected and reliable source of Covid-19 information used by tens of thousands of people, presenting information in written, video, infographic and easy read formats.

73. The Covid-19 project continued to be led by Trustees according to policies agreed by the entire Trustee Board. While BuDS information and updates regularly were critical of the Government or of individual Government officials or office-holders, great care was taken to never express any party-political views and for BuDS to remain scrupulously party-politically neutral.

74. The following statistics for the Covid-19 project illustrate the huge scale of the information and support provided:
    i. Published 46 articles on 7 separate topics. When posted on social media, each reached a minimum of a thousand people on average. Topics covered included Covid community risk levels, vaccines, testing, new variants, Government policy, and how to keep yourself safer.
    ii. 34 Covid weekly risk assessments published – on average, 3000 read each assessment.
    iii. Received over 300,000 engagements on the 46 main articles across all social media sites.

iv. Information was shared on Facebook (including 16 local community and 8 disability Facebook groups), and on Twitter/X, Mastodon, Bluesky, Instagram, and Threads.

75. BuDS' own Covid-19 Facebook support group has just over 450 members, a small decrease from 470 in 2021-22.

76. In 2022-23, the Covid-19 IAG project was funded internally and represented a significant net use of scarce general unrestricted funds. Grant or other funding will be needed to significantly expand the project.

## Fair4All

77. Fair4All is a BuDS 'brand' for our projects aiming to build an inclusive world which is free of the barriers which disable people: a Fair4All world in which disability is effectively abolished. All of these projects saw a welcome development and expansion in 2022-23.

## Fair4All Attitudes and Hate Crime

78. Building on our long-standing work opposing disability hate and changing attitudes to disability, BuDS was delighted in 2022-23 to be able to set up a new formal Disability Hate 'Support & Report Service' as a sub-project. The Support & Report Service, developed with Thames Valley Police and the Bucks Safety Partnership, was launched on 20 July 2022 and provides victims of disability hate with friendly, knowledgeable support to report crimes and incidents, and to get long-term compassionate and understanding emotional support. A team of trained volunteers is available to support victims and there is police liaison in place to help victims navigate the criminal justice system. The BuDS Disability Hate Support & Report Service is the referral point for all local disability hate incidents reported through the National Hate Crime Helpline.

79. Alongside this practical help, the Fair4All Attitudes & Hate Crime project has an education team of volunteers who work to strike at the roots of hate crime by opposing the ignorance and prejudice that leads people to attack and abuse disabled people. With politicians shamefully fanning the fires of hatred by calling disabled people lazy, work-shy and a burden on taxpayers, this is increasingly vital work.

80. The Attitudes & Hate Crime project was generously part-funded in 2022-23 by a small grant from the Heart of Bucks General Fund.

## Fair4All Card Scheme

81. The Fair4All Card is an innovative photocard which provides disabled people with definitive proof of their legal status as a disabled person and lists the 'reasonable adjustments' the holder is entitled to expect from shops, services and individuals in the community.

82. Established in the lockdowns of 2020-21, 2022-23 was a year of continuing live trials and pilot projects for the Fair4All Card scheme to establish proof of concept and scalability. This work culminated in the award in June 2023 of a substantial four-year development grant from The National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund. The stage is now set for a major development and expansion of the Fair4All Card scheme across England in 2023-24.

## Fair4All Education

83. Established in 2021-22 in direct response to appeals from disabled children, young people and their families, the Fair4All Education project promotes the interests of disabled children and

young people in the education system. This project significantly grew in 2022-23.

84. An expert working community, including SEND professionals, parents and disabled young people, was assembled, and this identified and began work on a range of issues. A checklist and questionnaire for SEND parents to use when viewing schools was published in October 2022. Plans were also laid for an ambitious SEND school database containing the information most often sought by SEND pupils and parents, to make comparisons easier and save schools' time.

85. In August 2022, a three-year grant of £86,000 was secured to fund a major research project into educational and work transitions for disabled children and young people in Bucks. This SEND Transitions Service, with one FTE member of staff, is made up of workstreams from a number of BuDS projects, principally Fair4All Education and Reach4Work. It has three parts:
    i. Research & Reporting: collecting information about Buckinghamshire services (both public and voluntary) supporting disabled children & young people through educational transitions to assess their adequacy, scope and fitness for purpose. This includes publishing analysis and commentary, scheduled for early 2024.
    ii. Polling & Feedback: collecting the authentic views of disabled children and young people, and their parents and carers, about educational transitions and services to support them through transitions. Using this feedback to inform plans and publishing it in anonymised form for use by other interested parties. This work is ongoing, with multiple surveys and polling active.
    iii. Driving Improvement: identifying areas for development and improvement in relation to SEND transitions including new services.

86. The SEND Transitions Service is very generously funded by The Rothschild Foundation.

### Fair4All Events

87. BuDS is committed to making large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled people, and has Buckinghamshire's only stock of accessible and inclusive children's games and activities.

88. Our highly successful Fair4All Events project was successfully revived in 2022, with two major public events (Whizzfizzfest in Aylesbury and the Towersey Festival in Buckingham) supported. Alongside assisting the event organisers to make their events more inclusive and accessible, around 40 BuDS volunteers gave direct support to disabled attendees, including staffing our innovative breakout and relaxed space for guests who need to escape from the noise and bustle of the event. We also explored and recorded ways for people to attend events in a much more Covid-safe way. This experience will be carried forward to 2023 events.

89. In 2022-23, Fair4All Events was generously part-funded by small grants from The Clare Foundation, Leeds Building Society and Tesco plc.

### Fair4All Public Spaces

90. BuDS has a long history of successfully supporting councils, developers and others to make public spaces more accessible and inclusive for disabled people. Alongside continuing involvement in major public realm projects like Aylesbury Garden Town, this project in 2022-23 significantly developed with the launch of two sub-projects, Fair4All Visitor and Fair4All Access &

Inclusion Surveys.

91. Fair4All Visitor was a new project in 2022-23 in collaboration with and funded by Buckinghamshire Business First. Led by leading national accessibility expert, Mik Scarlet, the project offered free-to-user advice, guidance, and specialist input to over 40 local visitor attractions and destinations, ranging from small B&Bs to major tourist attractions like Waddesdon Manor. This proved highly successful, with a number of venues also joining the Fair4All Card scheme. As part of the work, BuDDy Tours (an informal quality control check by a mixed group of disabled people and access specialists) were made to three destinations.

92. Fair4All Access & Inclusion Surveys were spun out from the Fair4All Visitor project in 2022-23. These are a comprehensive, holistic, assessment of how accessible and inclusive a business, site or service is for all disabled people. These assessments are offered on a chargeable basis to businesses and free-of-charge to organisations which cannot afford a fee. In 2022-23, four surveys were carried out for three Chiltern Society open green spaces and one for Amersham Museum.

### Fair4All Services

93. BuDS has always worked to improve council, NHS and private-sector services for disabled people in Buckinghamshire. Fair4All Services is the only independent disabled-led monitoring and campaigning group in Buckinghamshire. However, recruiting volunteers and accessing funding for this vital work proved difficult in 2022-23 and only limited project work was possible.
94. A sub-project focusing on the needs of Learning Disabled and Neurodivergent People, the LDND project, was launched in 2022-23 and has successfully started to build a working community of disabled people and professionals.
95. In 2022-23, Fair4All Services was funded internally and represented a significant net use of scarce general unrestricted funds. Grant or other funding will be needed to significantly expand the project.

### Reach4Work

### BucksWorkability

96. The BucksWorkability Partnership brings together local disability employment schemes in the public, voluntary and private sectors. In 2022-23, the partnership grew from 30 to 39 members and was represented at several trade shows and career fairs. The project website continued to develop and expand, providing much useful information for disabled jobseekers. However, despite planning and discussion, it was not possible to secure enough resources to launch any collaborative projects or joint working to increase the employment opportunities for local disabled people.

### Reach4Work

97. Since 2010, BuDS has helped its volunteers towards work. Our Reach4Work project, created in 2018, codified and developed that help, creating a professional wrap-around service for our disabled volunteers who want to move into or closer to work.

98. The key elements of Reach4Work are:
    - BuDS is a supportive, inclusive and caring community which provides exceptional emotional and peer support to disabled jobseekers. When a disabled jobseeker joins BuDS, they are

not merely a client or service-user but a member of the charity, a full participant in our wider working community.

- The volunteer role which job seekers have within a BuDS project is bespoke and structured to provide the experience, skills and networking which the individual jobseeker needs – it is a 'real unpaid job' created for the benefit of both the charity and the jobseeker, with highly supportive staff and volunteer support.
- Reach4Work provides disabled jobseekers with professional employment support elements such as training, mentoring, interview and CV skills, job placements, etc
- Jobseekers are brought into contact with local employers who are already being helped to create inclusive workplaces and opportunities for disabled workers.

99. Unsurprisingly, BuDS is exceptionally successful at moving disabled jobseeker volunteers into or closer to work. Typically, 95% of participants report positive progress towards work and around a third of our disabled job seeker volunteers move into work or vocational training within a year of starting with BuDS.
100. With the ending of pandemic contingency support in early 2022, funding for the Reach4Work project came to an end in 2022-23 and Reach4Work paid staff support reduced accordingly, although good levels of support continued to be provided by other BuDS staff and volunteers. 23 disabled jobseekers were supported by Reach4Work in 2022-23, down from 35 in 2021-22.

101. The Reach4Work project was generously part-funded in 2022-23 by small grants from The Shanly Foundation and The Rothschild Foundation.

## Reach4Work Digital

102. This project is unique to BuDS and helps disabled young people gain key skills and experience to get jobs in the digital sector. The team employs Agile methodology, which is widely used in the digital sector. The project has built close links with local technology and IT employers. It is run entirely by disabled young people, with some staff support, and has delivered high quality products to industry standards, including phone apps, online databases, and websites, including creating the BucksWorkability website, and working on a development version of the Reach4Work website.

103. While Reach4Work Digital continued successfully in 2022-23, it was not possible to secure sufficient funding, as we had hoped, to launch a second Digital Team. The Reach4Work Digital project was generously part-funded in 2022-23 by small grants from The Shanly Foundation and The Rothschild Foundation.

## Reach4Work Work Experience

104. This project provides disabled students with high quality work experience. In 2022-23, funding changes meant it was not possible to run so large a project as in 2021-22. However, in collaboration with leading law firm B P Collins LLP, four law undergraduate law students produced high quality work which was published on our website. All participating students gave great feedback.

### Comms, Website and Creative

105. In 2022-23, BuDS maintained four websites and eleven social media channels to communicate with the public, its supporters and disabled people across Buckinghamshire and the UK. These were all maintained and developed by disabled staff and volunteer members of the very busy Communications, Websites and Creative teams.

106. BuDS has a long-standing policy of protecting the identity of its volunteers and staff. This policy is in place for a number of reasons, sadly including DWP surveillance and the unacceptable number of abusive and threatening messages received. During 2022-23, anti-vaccine and Covid minimisation groups and individuals were responsible for most abusive and threatening messages. Where possible, follow-up action was taken, but it is rarely possible to identify the individuals concerned.

107. Social media activity is posted on behalf of the charity by several people on an unattributable basis. The charity Chair, Andrew Clark, remained the charity's only authorised attributable media spokesperson during 2022-23.

## Plans for 2023-24

108. BuDS' plans for 2023-24 are set out in its strategy originally agreed in April 2023 and reiterated throughout the year, as follows:

### Governance And Housekeeping Functions:

a. **Restore the effectiveness of the Trustee Board** by recruiting a replacement Chair and Treasurer; two Vice-Chairs; and three Executive Trustees with appropriate lead responsibilities.
b. **Make significant progress towards changing BuDS' legal form** from an unincorporated membership association to a charitable company limited by guarantee.
c. **Complete the change from Excel to SAGE** for all accounts and bookkeeping.
d. Continue to **build and develop our grants & fundraising team**, especially with volunteers, to enable us to take advantage of all the grants and voluntary funds available to us.

### Projects

a. **Develop the role of Project Manager** toward that of a Chief Operations Manager on an appropriate salary. Secure funding to allow the appointment of **two part-time project managers** to improve coordination and delivery of projects and services.
b. **Maintain all current projects and services, and secure funding** for them so that each has the staff support needed to make them sustainable. No additional projects or sub-projects will be started without specific Trustee approval.
c. **Continue to recruit volunteers for services and projects** so that each project is adequately staffed to deliver its goals and objectives.

## Achievements and Performance

### Achievements

109. The following table summarises the difference that each of our projects made to the lives of its beneficiaries:

| **Project** (and if unique in Bucks) | **Difference to Beneficiaries** |
|---|---|
| Enquiries (unique) | Answered questions and offered advocacy support to disabled people which they could not obtain elsewhere |
| BuDDies | Befriended and supported lonely and isolated disabled and clinically vulnerable people |
| Covid-19 (unique) | Information, advice, guidance and analysis about Covid-19 for disabled and clinically vulnerable people, including a weekly risk assessment |
| Fair4All Card (unique) | Helped disabled people get the help and support that they are legally entitled to in shops and public places |
| Fair4All Services | Improved local council and NHS services for disabled people through advocacy and campaigning |
| Fair4All Attitudes & Hate Crime (unique) | Represented the interests of disabled people to Thames Valley Police and the Crown Prosecution Service and campaigned to oppose disability hate and ignorance |
| Hate Crime Support & Report Service | Supports victims of disability hate crime and helps them report crimes and incidents to the police |
| Fair4All Education | Supported disabled children and young people by addressing deficiencies and problems in SEND education |
| SEND Transitions Service (unique) | Researched and analysed SEND and work transitions for disabled children and young people and captured the authentic voice of disabled children and young people. |
| Fair4All Events (unique) | Helped make large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled and clinically vulnerable people and educated event organisers |
| Fair4All Public Spaces | Worked with councils and developers to make public spaces, including urban regeneration schemes like Aylesbury Garden Town, more inclusive and accessible for disabled people |
| Fair4All Visitor (unique) | Supported visitor attractions and destinations to be more inclusive and accessible for disabled people |
| Fair4All Access & Inclusion Surveys | Offered a unique holistic access and inclusion survey to businesses and organisations to help them be more accessible and inclusive for disabled people |
| Reach4Work – General | Supported disabled BuDS volunteers who are jobseekers towards or into work |
| Reach4Work – Digital (unique) | Trains and develops disabled young people for careers in the digital industry |
| Reach4Work – Work Experience | Offers disabled children and young people meaningful and inspiring work experience opportunities |
| BucksWorkability | Works with employers to foster more inclusive workplaces |
| Housekeeping Projects | Allowed disabled people to volunteer in vocational roles which helped move them towards work |

### Cost Effectiveness

110. BuDS aims to be a highly cost-effective and efficient charity. Gifts in kind and the value of voluntary and pro bono support in 2022-23 amounted to circa £551,000, or £5.56 for every pound raised by BuDS. The principal ways in which this support was obtained are as follows:
    i. 117 volunteers worked a total of 40,820 hours, equivalent to 19 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £511,000.
    ii. IT and software donations, including 124 Microsoft Office 365 licences, representing a financial contribution in kind of £14,000.
    iii. Inhouse design and media production by volunteers saved an estimated £22,000
    iv. Pro bono professional legal and accountancy support saved an estimated £4,000

111. BuDS would like to thank all the businesses which have supported us, including Microsoft UK Ltd, CloudyIT Ltd, B P Collins LLP, and Seymour Taylor Limited.

### Fundraising Activities

112. BuDS expenditure on fundraising activities in 2022-23, principally the salary of a part-time grants fundraiser, was £11,060.43, and income generated as a result of this activity was £96,105. This represents a return of £8.69 on every pound invested.

## Financial Review for FY 2022/23

113. Financial year 2022/2023 saw a 20% increase in BuDS' income compared to 2021-22, mostly because of successful grant fundraising, but also including a small amount of earned income.

### Reserves Policy

114. The formal Reserves Policy for financial year 2022-23 remained unchanged from 2020-21, i.e. to hold a balance in reserve adequate to cover all legal or employment liabilities and three month's unavoidable (fixed) running costs. This total was calculated at £1800 and held largely in the charity's legacy Cooperative Bank account. This reserves policy will be reviewed annually.

### Charity as a Going Concern

115. Like most charities without a significant standing endowment, BuDS relies on attracting a constant flow of grant and fundraising income to sustain its activities. This exposes the charity to a running risk of future financial deficits which, if unmitigated, could cause the charity to become insolvent or fail as a going concern. Trustees have taken steps to mitigate this risk as follows:
    i. The charity treasurer is a qualified accountant and is charged specifically with warning the Board about any financial risk which may occur.
    ii. A qualified grants fundraiser is employed to generate a constant flow of grant applications, and a fundraising team is being developed to boost voluntary giving
    iii. A current budget and cash flow is examined at every monthly Trustee meeting and a forward plan is formulated at each Full Trustee meeting. This transparent planning enables all members of the Board to evaluate future risks and to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity
    iv. A strategic plan is in place which would allow the charity to contract to a size which would be sustainable long-term *without* major grant funding. All contracts, including employment contracts, can be terminated with short notice if funding was to fall significantly.
    v. Employment and service contracts are specifically examined so as to minimise longer-term financial liabilities. The charity had no significant longer-term financial liabilities such as pensions or property leases in 2022-23. There is a small redundancy liability for

one employee

116. As a consequence of the mitigations mentioned above, as of April 2022, Trustees had no concerns about the charity's ability to remain financially viable and a going concern for the foreseeable future.

## Principal sources of funds

117. In 2021/22, BuDS' principal sources of funding in order of size were as below. This information is from BuDS' management accounts and is not a complete account of all income received. A number of smaller grants (below £3000) were also received.

| Source | Type | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| The Rothschild Foundation | Restricted grant for Education (3 year) | £28,667 |
| Buckinghamshire Business First | Restricted grant for Visitor | £15,000 |
| Heart of Bucks General Fund | Restricted grant for Hate Crime | £13,870 |
| Shanly Foundation | Restricted grant for Reach4Work | £5000 |
| Rectory Foundation | Restricted grant for BuDDies | £5000 |
| B P Collins LLP | Restricted grant for Enquiries | £3500 |
| The Clare Foundation | Restricted grant for Events (3 year) | £3300 |
| Matrix Causes Fund | Restricted grant for Enquiries (3 year) | £3000 |

## Investment Policy

118. BuDS has no investment funds and therefore no investment policy. One will be adopted if needed in the future.

## Principal risks facing the charity

119. The principal risks facing the charity, and the mitigations in place for them, are as follows:

| Risk Type | Mitigation | Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| Structural Risks | BuDS has an appropriate legal form, registered with the Charity Commission and is in good governance, maintaining membership of NCVO and the Fundraising Regulator. Trustee Liability insurance is in place. Approval is in place for the charity to take the form of a charitable limited company and Trustees are moving ahead with this change in 2023-24. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Trustee-related Risks | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to ensure a broad range of appropriate skills, and Trustee training is delivered. Good governance is maintained in the forms of transparent evidence-based decision-making at frequent well-attended meetings. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Conflicts of Interest | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to avoid conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest are transparently managed by Trustees without a conflict, eg relating to the employment of family members of Trustees. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Safeguarding Risks | Safeguarding policies and practices are in place, and safeguarding is actively managed across the charity by a dedicated Trustee sub-committee which includes trained safeguarding personnel. Safeguarding incidents are managed appropriately and links to the MASH hub used | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | as necessary. | |
| Contractual Risks | The Senior Management Team actively manages all current contracts, and all significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Staff-related Risks | A qualified HR professional is in post and appropriate staffing policies are in place. Appropriate employment-related insurance is in place and regularly reviewed. The Senior Management Team manages staffing issues. Staffing decisions which might give rise to liability (e.g. disciplinary actions) are managed by HR professional with external lawyers input as needed. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Financial Risks | See above | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Reputational Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all reputational risks, and appropriate editorial processes and policies are in place including designated spokespeople and restrictions on social media use. Defamation and litigation liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Compliance Risks | The charity has few activities which are subject to formal accreditation or compliance regimes, but Senior Management Team actively manages compliance issues, and all significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. Where a new activity raises a compliance risk, this is assessed and mitigated before commencement | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Legal Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all legal risks, and appropriate processes and policies are in place to mitigate a legal liability including formal approval processes and staff training. Public and professional insurance cover is in place for all activities. The charity has a retained legal advisor, a leading local practice. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name: Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS)

Other name the charity uses: BuDS

Registered charity number: 1102511

Charity's principal address: Buckinghamshire Disability Service, c/o B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL

## Advisors

| Type of advisor | Name | Address |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Accountant** | Tearle & Carver | Chandos House, School Lane, Buckingham, MK18 1HD |
| **Solicitor** | B P Collins | B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL |

## Declarations

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Signature(s)** |  |  |
| **Full name(s)** | Andrew Clark | Roberta Silva |
| **Position (e.g. Secretary, Chair, etc)** | Chair of Trustees | Trustee |
| **Date** | 28/01/2024 | 28/01/2024 |

CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

| Charity Name | No (if any) |
|---|---|
| Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BUDS) | 1102511 |

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

| For the period from | 1.04.2022 | To | 31.03.2023 |
|---|---|---|---|

**Section A Receipts and payments**

| | Unrestricted funds to the nearest £ | Restricted funds to the nearest £ | Endowment funds to the nearest £ | Total funds to the nearest £ | Last year to the nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A1 Receipts** | | | | | |
| Grants Unrestricted | | - | - | - | 16,500 |
| Grants Restricted | | | - | - | 55,105 |
| Reach4Work -Restricted | | 8,000 | - | 8,000 | 7,583 |
| Fair4All Projects - Restricted | - | 56,508 | - | 56,508 | - |
| Disability Services - Restricted | - | 3,333 | - | 3,333 | - |
| Donations - Unrestricted | 28,264 | | - | 28,264 | - |
| Enquires + Earned Income | 3,000 | | - | 3,000 | 400 |
| Other | | | - | - | 3,100 |
| ***Sub total** (Gross income for AR)* | 31,264 | 67,841 | - | 99,105 | 82,688 |
| **A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Sub total*** | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Total receipts*** | 31,264 | 67,841 | - | 99,105 | 82,688 |
| **A3 Payments** | | | | | |
| Reach4Work | | 9,172 | | 9,172 | 40,915 |
| Fair4All Projects | | 35,690 | | 35,690 | 27,038 |
| Disability Services | | 17,622 | | 17,622 | 33,781 |
| Governance | 33,708 | - | | 33,708 | 29,290 |
| Digital & Internet | 666 | | - | 666 | 1,531 |
| | | | | - | |
| | | - | - | - | |
| | - | | - | - | - |
| | | | - | - | - |
| | | | - | - | - |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Sub total*** | 34,375 | 62,484 | - | 96,858 | 132,555 |
| **A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| ***Sub total*** | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Total payments*** | 34,375 | 62,484 | - | 96,858 | 132,555 |
| ***Net of receipts/(payments)*** | - 3,111 | 5,358 | - | 2,247 | - 49,867 |
| **A5 Transfers between funds** | - | - | - | - | - |
| **A6 Cash funds last year end** | 3,922 | 25,406 | - | 29,328 | 79,195 |
| ***Cash funds this year end*** | 811 | 30,764 | - | 31,575 | 29,328 |

***Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period***

| Categories | Details | | Unrestricted fund | Restricted funds | Endowment funds |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | to nearest £ | to nearest £ | to nearest £ |
| ***B1 Cash funds*** | Bank Accounts | | 811 | 30764 | - |
| | | | - | - | - |
| | | | - | - | - |
| | Total cash funds | | 811 | 30,764 | - |

**BuDS Disability Service**

England & Wales - Charity number 1102511

# Accounts

Fixing the Big Issues for Disabled People in Buckinghamshire
Charity No 1102511
www.buds.org.uk | 01494 211179 | info@buds.org.uk
*Registered Address (no callers): BuDS, c/o B P Collins LLP, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL*

# Trustees' Annual Report for 2021-22

## Chair's Introduction

1. Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) is the county's leading disability charity and its only independent pan-disability organisation. Our visionary aim is to *abolish disability* by building a world which is *Fair4All*, free of the barriers which disable people. We are led by disabled people and committed to the social model of disability.

2. Uniquely, BuDS is a working community of over 180 volunteers, mostly local disabled people, who work together, supported by staff, to achieve our goals. Our 16 projects, many of which are unique to the county, empower thousands of disabled adults, young people and children across Buckinghamshire and permanently remove the barriers facing disabled people so that they can live and work independently.

3. BuDS is a highly diverse and inclusive charity both in terms of disability and intersectionality, and diversity and inclusion is a core value. BuDS is also one of the largest youth charities in Buckinghamshire, with 74 disabled young people (18-25) as staff or volunteers in 2021-22 and a strong project focus on children and young people.

4. We tackle the issues which most affect disabled people in Buckinghamshire by whatever means necessary. Our Disability Services help disabled people directly, while our Fair4All projects bring about permanent change to the built environment, structures, systems and infrastructure so that disabled people do not face barriers to living independently. Our Reach4Work projects help disabled jobseekers into work and education. All our work is evidence-based, project-led and responds to the real needs of disabled people. The expertise of our professional volunteers mean we can often punch above our weight.

5. The Covid-19 pandemic spurred BuDS in 2020-21 into rapid growth to meet the surging needs of disabled people. While BuDS will continue to be there for disabled people as long as the Covid pandemic lasts, we have successfully revived and grown our non-Covid activity in 2021-22 and now have a balanced portfolio of projects addressing all the key issues for disabled people in Bucks.

6. 2021-22 was a financially challenging year for BuDS. We successfully transited from easily-available emergency pandemic funding to more traditional sources such as restricted-use grants, but experienced a 38% drop in income over the year. This led to some reductions in paid staff but, unlike many other charities, our projects always have the option of moving to a slower-

paced, volunteer-only, basis; and so none of our work had to be stopped. We are proud of the resilience, flexibility and good management which enabled us to keep our project output and volunteer numbers high in such a financially challenging year.

7. Huge thanks are due to our Trustees, staff and volunteers who have given so much of their time and talents, and to our funders who have shown such confidence in our work.

8. I hope you enjoy reading more about the unique working community that is BuDS in this Annual Report.



**Andrew Clark**
**Chair of Trustees**

# Introduction

9. This is the Annual Report for Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS), charity registration number 1102511.

10. To comply with Charity Commission reporting requirements, BuDS has switched from calendar reporting to reporting on a financial year basis. This report therefore covers the financial year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and includes the independently-inspected accounts for that period.

11. This report replaces the narrative section of the Annual Report for calendar year 2021 published on 31 January 2022. However, the independently-inspected accounts for financial year 2020-21 included as part of the 2021 Report remain valid.

12. As BuDS income is below £500,000 and it does not have assets worth more than £3.26 million, Trustees are not required to produce a full Annual Report according to the guidelines set out in the Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102).

# What is BuDS?

13. BuDS is Buckinghamshire's leading disability charity and the county's only independent pan-disability organisation. Our visionary aim is to abolish disability by building a world which is Fair4All, free of the barriers which disable people. To achieve this, we have built a working community of over 180 local disabled volunteers who work together, supported by staff, to achieve our goals. Our 16 projects both support and empower disabled individuals and work to permanently remove the barriers facing disabled people.

## User Led

14. BuDS is committed to being user-led, that is a charity which is led by disabled Trustees and which seeks as far as possible to include disabled people as staff and volunteers. We see being user-led as vital to our authenticity and mission. In practice, we aim to have 75% of Trustees who identify as disabled people and, as a minimum, 51%. In 2021-22, 75% of those holding office as Trustees identified as disabled people; while 71% of those volunteers who provided information and 62% of staff identified as disabled.

## Social Model of Disability

15. BuDS follows and advocates for the social model of disability, which is at the core of our beliefs and work. The social model of disability states that disability is caused by the barriers which society puts in the way of people who have an impairment or medical condition, not by those impairments or conditions. Thus, for example, a wheelchair-user is 'disabled' by the lack of a ramp, not by their lack of mobility, or an autistic person is 'disabled' by a lack of quiet places rather than by their neurodivergence. When we use the phrase 'disabled person', we mean a person with an impairment or medical condition impacted by a barrier which disables them – we are not referring to any physical, sensory or mental health condition they may have.

## A Voluntary Charity

16. BuDS is primarily a voluntary charity, made up of over 180 volunteers, mostly local disabled people, who work together to remove the barriers which disable them. BuDS aims to be an inclusive working community organised around the key principle that disabled people themselves should tackle the issues and barriers which they face.

17. Our volunteers are not simply people who help BuDS' work, as they are in other charities. Because they are also overwhelmingly local disabled people, our volunteers are also our members and part of our unique working community of disabled people. BuDS in a very real sense *is* its people.

18. Our volunteers are extremely diverse, with every significant impairment group represented. This gives us unparalleled insight into the lives of disabled people. We include a wide age range, with around 65% of new volunteers in 2021-22 being young people under 25. Our volunteers are also at diverse points on their life journey: we include people who are starting out in their adult life, working people, parents, retirees, professionals, jobseekers, and people who are looking to acquire more skills or experience.

19. BuDS actively supports its volunteers. We have a part-time volunteer coordinator responsible for recruitment and induction, and every project includes either a member of staff or volunteer whose specific role is to support volunteers in their volunteering. Training is available in every team and many volunteers also have a mentor for 1:1 support. We have a dedicated in-house welfare team, Help for Helpers. Many of our volunteers are job seekers and we support them towards work through our Reach4Work project (details below). Sadly, we have once again lacked resources to launch our BuDS Include project, which aims to develop BuDS as a social community as well as a working one.

20. Using usage data from our IT system (Microsoft Office 365), we calculate that, over 2021-22, BuDS had an average of 48-50 active volunteers working on any particular day, from a pool of active volunteers of around 120 individuals. A further 60 volunteers were temporarily inactive owing to changed personal circumstances or health but had not left the charity. These volunteers worked a total of 48,100 hours in 2021-22. This roughly translates to an average of 267 annual hours per volunteer, or 5.1 hours per week per volunteer. This was a very significant increase from 2020-21.

21. Collectively, volunteers worked the same hours as 28 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £753,000 per annum.

## A Youth Charity

22. BuDS is one of the largest youth charities in Buckinghamshire, with over 70 disabled young people (18-25) as volunteers over 2021. We are one of the few charities to have a Trustee aged under 21. 16% of our staff are young adults under 25. Of BuDS' 16 projects, 12 have young people as a significant focus and 6 of those projects offer unique benefits for local young people not offered by any other organisation. Around 70% of BuDS' work benefits young people. In 2022-23, we want to further develop the concept of BuDS as a leading Buckinghamshire youth charity.

## Independent & Party Politically Neutral

23. BuDS is an independent charity which can speak up for the interests of disabled people without fear or favour, untrammelled by ties arising from contracts, funding or unequal partnerships. Our strategy specifically requires all funding to be examined to ensure that it does not place unacceptable constraints on our independence and freedom to act. Often, BuDS acts as the

spokesperson for other organisations that cannot speak out without fear of jeopardising contracts or financial relationships on which their charity depends.

24. As required by charity law, BuDS is scrupulously party-politically neutral. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance, whilst BuDS reserves the right to be critical of public bodies or the Government, we take great care never to express any party-political views or to create in the mind of a reasonable onlooker the idea that the charity is biased in favour of any particular political party.

## Charity Objects

25. The objects of BuDS, as set out in the Constitution, are: "To relieve the needs of disabled people, their families, and carers, principally within the County of Buckinghamshire excluding Milton Keynes, by any charitable means and in particular, but not exclusively by (1) providing education services, and (2) providing advisory and support services".

26. The Trustees review the charity objects annually, having regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, and remain of the view that the objects of the charity continue to meet the public benefit requirement set out in the Charities Acts 2005 and 2011.

## Public Benefit of the Charity

27. In accordance with the Charities Acts 2005 and 2011, the BuDS' trustees can confirm that they are aware of the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, have had regard to it when exercising any relevant powers or duties, and have complied with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 by including this statement in this annual report. The Trustees do not feel they have departed from the guidance to any extent.

28. The BuDS Trustees, having had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, can confirm that they have operated BuDS in a way that carries out its charitable purposes for the public benefit. Further details can be found in the following sections of this annual report.

## BuDS Strategy & Strategic Planning

29. BuDS has a clear strategic planning process as follows:
    - A formal written Strategy and Strategic Plan document is produced annually by the charity's executive trustees and agreed by the Full Board including non-executive Trustees.
    - The Strategy and Plan include formal reporting mechanisms by which Trustees can monitor progress and ensure the charity remains true to its core values.
    - Progress towards achieving the Strategy and Plan is reviewed formally biannually by a full Trustee meeting, which includes non-executive Trustees. The same meeting also reviews formally whether the charity has remained true to its values.
    - Amendments to the Strategy and Plan are made and agreed by the full Trustee Board as necessary, alongside any actions needed to address departures from core values.

30. During 2021-22, the Full Trustee Board met on 17 April & 16 October 2021 to review the BuDS strategy. The Strategy was endorsed without significant change on both occasions and can be

found on our website at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/. Further information on our strategic goals for 2022-23 can be found below.

## Charity Structure, Governance and Management

31. BuDS is an unincorporated association in the form of a membership charity. Members elect the officers and Trustees, and key decisions are taken by a General Meeting. The governing document is a written constitution. The current constitution can be seen at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/.

### Constitutional Changes

32. The BuDS constitution was adopted on 11 March 2003 and amended by the Annual General Meeting in 2010, 2012 and 2021.

33. The Annual General Meeting in 2012 agreed that the Trustee Board could take steps to change the legal form of the charity to a charitable company and made constitutional amendments to that effect. This would be a significant governance development requiring significant administrative and Trustee time, and Trustees did not feel in 2021-22 that this change was sufficiently vital to take the necessary resources from front-line project work. The matter will be reviewed again in 2022-23.

### Membership

34. Constitutionally, membership of BuDS is open to all disabled people living in Buckinghamshire or who have a direct interest in Buckinghamshire (e.g. by working in the county). A disabled person for the purposes of membership means being disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 or otherwise having direct personal experience of disability. Until 20 November 2021, carers of disabled people were also entitled to become members of BuDS although in practice none did so.

35. In practice, BuDS deems all circa 40,000 disabled people in Buckinghamshire to be de facto members of the charity and seeks through its normal activities to remain in close contact with their views and opinions. The charity does not maintain a formal membership register or have a formal membership process except in relation to Trustees (see below) and for attendees at the AGM. Attendees at the AGM are required to certify that they are eligible for membership before their voting rights are recognised.

### Trustees

36. The BuDS constitution provides that there shall be a minimum of four and a maximum of 12 (increased to 15 in November 2021) Trustees, appointed by the AGM from the membership of the charity. These are the three officers of the charity (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) appointed by the AGM plus up to nine others (changed to 12 in November 2021) elected by the Annual General Meeting. The constitution requires Trustees to step down after three years in office (although they may be re-elected), but BuDS' practice is to elect or re-elect Trustees every year. No organisation has the right to nominate a Trustee.

37. During 2021-22, 12 individuals have held office as Trustees, with the average size of the Trustee Board being 9 people. A full list of all Trustees can be found at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/. Two members of the Trustee Board are related, and appropriate measures are in place to manage any conflict of interest.

38. As a user-led activist charity, the role of BuDS Trustees is different from that in many other charities. As a charity, we are by policy strongly Trustee-led. It is inherent in our status as a user-led organisation that the BuDS Trustee Board is the clear leadership and direction setting body for the charity. Accordingly, we expect and require all Trustees to have a strong commitment to our values and objectives, and for Trustees to play an active role in the life of the charity.

39. The BuDS Trustee Board is clearly structured. Trustees have 2 main roles (the role of Lead Trustee fell into disuse in 2021 and has been abolished):
    - **Officers & Executive Trustees** – these play an active day-to-day leadership role in the charity as decision-makers and through contributing their skills and experience. During 2021-22, six individuals held office as officers or executive Trustees (five disabled).
    - **Non-Executive Trustees** – these Trustees are chosen for their wider experience and skills, including lived experience as a disabled person. They do not play a day-to-day role in the charity but contribute their wisdom at Full Board meetings at which strategy and progress is reviewed, and as needed when key decisions are being taken. During 2021-22, six individuals held office as officers or executive Trustees (five disabled).

40. Reflecting their active role, Executive and Lead Trustees met online mostly twice a month during 2021-2022, the additional monthly meeting being an informal one. Trustees met 24 times in 2021-2022. Formal Full Board meetings with the attendance of non-executive Trustees were held twice. There was also a busy virtual Trustee team for discussions between meetings.

41. Trustees are identified by open advertisement, by canvassing existing volunteers, or direct approaches by the Trustee Board. In 2021-2022, eight potential new Trustees were identified of which five were appointed. The selection procedure is as follows:
    i. Membership eligibility is confirmed
    ii. Safeguarding, reference and an enhanced DBS check are completed
    iii. Individuals are invited to attend three Trustee meetings and to become involved in BuDS work and projects over that period
    iv. The Board then decides whether to second the individual to the Trustee Board until the next AGM
    v. At the next AGM, the individual is invited to say whether they wish to have their name put forward for election

42. One Trustee resigned, in November 2021.

## Organisation & Management of the Charity

43. BuDS is organised as a working community of volunteers, supported by staff, who collaborate together on projects. Since 2020, BuDS has been structured according to Agile project management principles, to maximise output, flexibility and responsiveness whilst enabling best practice project, cost and risk management. A structure chart, representing the position in March 2022, can be found at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/.

44. The basic building unit of the charity is the project team. This is a group of Trustees and/or volunteers working together around a common theme, goal or idea. The project team is structured and will have members in different defined roles including that of project

coordinator. Paid staff may be deployed to support the team but BuDS does not have enough staff to support all teams.

45. Projects are grouped together into one of 4 departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work or Housekeeping. These departments are explained further below.

46. During 2021-2022, all team members worked from home using Microsoft Teams as a virtual office, including video meetings, messaging, task boards, wikis, forms, etc. Each project has objectives agreed by Trustees and progress is monitored at Trustee meetings through the lead or executive Trustee for that project. The typical working process is that of the 'sprint' – a sustained team effort to achieve a piece of work or outcome, followed by a reflective pause to evaluate success and plan next steps.

47. During 2021-22, BuDS had sixteen active project teams, and ten teams dealing with 'housekeeping' or corporate issues such as communications, finances, fundraising, HR, etc.

48. Janneke Elford remained the BuDS Projects Manager throughout 2021-22, responsible for the 16 active project teams in the Disability Services, Fair4All, and Reach4Work departments. Housekeeping teams remained under direct Trustee management throughout 2021-22. The ambition is to appoint paid managers for each group of projects or department as those projects expand.

## Staffing

49. BuDS is an overwhelmingly voluntary charity, and the role of our paid staff is primarily to support volunteers to achieve their project goals. All staff are on short-term contracts reflecting the funding currently available to BuDS. Other than specialists, such as a grants fundraiser and HR/volunteering officers, staff are deployed flexibly across a range of active projects to support volunteers and help advance the project. During 2021-22, BuDS had an average of 9 staff in post (six FTE).

50. BuDS aims to be an inclusive employer (see https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/ for full staff diversity statistics) and we are proud that 14 of the 19 individuals employed during 2021-22 (71%) identified as disabled people. Reflecting our ethos and insight into the barriers preventing disabled people from working, we offer all staff flexible working hours and the opportunity to work from home. We also offer 'disability leave' and shape working patterns and routines around staff needs as disabled people. This policy has been highly successful in motivating and retaining staff, not just those who are disabled.

## Safeguarding & Welfare

51. Safeguarding is exceptionally important to BuDS and has a higher profile than in many charities. All Trustees, staff and volunteers, other than short-term temporary roles, are fully safeguarded including the taking up of references and an enhanced DBS check. There is mandatory safeguarding training, delivered inhouse, for all staff and volunteers. As an online organisation, our IT system has been configured to enhance safeguarding. We are linked to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and able to make direct referrals to them if needed.

52. The welfare and safety of the BuDS community is also important. Many of our volunteers and staff are potentially vulnerable and our 'Help for Helpers' welfare team is available to anyone

needing a chat or word of advice. During 2021-22, a number of welfare concerns relating to volunteers were resolved.

53. Safeguarding and Welfare is managed by a safeguarding sub-committee of the Trustee Board which throughout 2021-22 included 3 professionally trained safeguarding officers.

### Diversity & Inclusion

54. The Trustees are committed to intersectional diversity across the charity. We aim to be an inclusive community where everyone can find a place and fulfil their wishes without discrimination, and we are proud to have many LGBTQ+ people among our number. During 2022-23, we aim to collect more volunteer intersectional diversity data.

55. The BuDS Trustee Board is significantly more intersectionally diverse than most in Buckinghamshire, but we recognise that more needs to be done to maintain and develop the Board's diversity. Full board diversity statistics can be found at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/

## BuDS Work in 2021-22

### Overview

56. 2021-22 was a year of continuing transformation for BuDS. After extraordinary pandemic-related growth in 2020-21, the challenge for 2021-22 was to hold onto as much of that growth as possible and, while continuing to support disabled people during the ongoing pandemic, also revive our non-Covid projects. To a large extent, this has been achieved. While income has significantly decreased with the end of pandemic funding, and staff numbers have fallen accordingly, BuDS has maintained its volunteer numbers and all projects have remained active. New projects have been added and new funding secured which is allowing continuing development. We are proud of the resilience, flexibility and good management which enabled us to keep our project output and volunteer numbers high in a financially challenging year.

### BuDS' New Structure

57. To take account of the charity's expansion and development, a new internal structure was adopted by the Trustees in 2021-22. This divided the charity's projects into four departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work, and Housekeeping. Each department contained a number of related projects which were led by volunteers with the support of staff.

### Disability Services

58. The Disability Services group of projects were those directly helping and empowering disabled individuals in Buckinghamshire and beyond.

#### Benefits Information, Advice, and Guidance

59. The Benefits IAG project provided information, advice and guidance to disabled people in Buckinghamshire and beyond about disability benefits, e.g. PIP, ESA, DLA and Universal Credit. The project was the only free source of specialist information, such as Upper Tribunal decisions, in Buckinghamshire. In early 2022, the project resumed one-to-one advice and guidance, and plans were laid for a specific children and young people's disability benefits advice service.

## BuDDies

60. Set up in 2020 as an emergency response to Covid-19 lockdowns to support isolated and lonely disabled people in Buckinghamshire, in 2021-22, it was opened up to any lonely or isolated disabled person in Buckinghamshire. The BuDDies project was the only fully safeguarded, professionally managed befriending service in Buckinghamshire, and one of the few voluntary schemes supporting people with complex mental health conditions.

## Covid-19 Information, Advice, and Guidance

61. This project supported disabled people in Buckinghamshire and nationally with information advice and guidance about Covid-19 and Long Covid. This was the biggest and busiest BuDS project in 2021-22, supported by grants from the National Lottery, Heart of Bucks Foundation and others. Over the year, we maintained our reputation as a highly respected and reliable source of Covid-19 information used by tens of thousands of people, presenting information in written, video, infographic and easy read formats.

62. The Covid-19 project was led by Trustees according to policies agreed by the entire Trustee Board. While BuDS information and updates regularly were critical of the Government or of individual Government officials or office-holders, great care was taken to never express any party-political views and for BuDS to remain scrupulously party-politically neutral.

63. The following statistics for the Covid-19 project illustrate the huge scale of this project:
    - Published 190 articles on 17 separate topics. When posted on social media, each reached a minimum of a thousand people on average.
    - Topics covered included shielding, lockdowns, vaccines, testing, mask wearing, schools and children, new variants and how to keep yourself safer.
    - 90 Covid weekly risk assessments published – on average, 3000 read each assessment.
    - Received over 5000 reactions on social media, some posts generating over 400 reactions.
    - Received over 100,000 engagements across the 190 main posts
    - Information was shared into 23 local community groups across Buckinghamshire
    - BuDS' own Covid-19 Facebook group grew to nearly 470 members.
    - BuDS was one of the first charities to sound the alarm about Long Covid

## Enquiries

64. This project answered questions and supported disabled adults and young people (plus carers and parents) on any disability-related issue or topic, filling gaps that other services could not provide. Demand for this service diminished in 2020, but the project was relaunched during Summer 2021. Work behind the scenes was completed, including putting in place systems and procedures needed to run a professional enquiries service such as secure software, telephone system and safeguarding. This made the project a highly professional, fully safeguarded project which, over 2021, was handling an ever-increasing number of enquiries with a high satisfaction rate from users. In 2022, the service was able to expand further with new volunteers coming forward.

## Fair4All

65. BuDS' Fair4All projects aim to build an inclusive world which is free of barriers which disable people: a Fair4All world in which disability is effectively abolished.

## Fair4All Attitudes and Hate Crime

66. Hostility and hatred towards disabled people have long been constants in today's society, but the pandemic saw increased hostility towards disabled people, whose lives were increasingly seen as disposable, or the acceptable cost of everyone else getting back to normal. BuDS has worked to oppose that hostility at every opportunity, and has supported around 30 victims of hate crime each year. BuDS was the only disability organisation represented on official Buckinghamshire police liaison groups, including the Chief Constable's Independent Advisory Group, Community Safety Partnerships and a Crown Prosecution Service working party.

67. In a new development for 2022, in partnership with Buckinghamshire Council and Thames Valley Police, BuDS is creating a county-wide hub for disability hate crimes and incidents, meaning disabled people who are victims of hate crime will be able to come directly to BuDS for support, including support to take the matter to the police.

## Fair4All Card Scheme

68. BuDS aims to support disabled people to get the help they need and are legally entitled to in the community. The Fair4All Card Scheme evolved from the "Letters of Authority Scheme", which was set up at the start of the first lockdown in March 2020. It is now fully up and running and rapidly expanding, with supermarkets such as Waitrose and the Co-Op signing up as Card Partners. A new Partners+ scheme is due to be trialled in 2022 which offers the prospect of thousands more disabled people being able to access Fair4All Cards.

## Fair4All Education

69. The Fair4All Education project promotes the interests of disabled children and young people in the education system. Traditionally, BuDS had not had a SEND project, leaving this work to the many other charities and organisations that supported disabled children and parents. However, Fair4All Education was established in late 2021, following calls for a fully independent, disabled people-led approach, that could respond to the challenges being faced by the system.

70. An expert project team, including SEND professionals, parents and disabled young people, is being built, with a strong focus on safeguarding. Although in its infancy, the project team, combined with the skill and passion of many volunteers, has already made an impact, building influence with schools, academy trusts and the council, and creating a working community to identify the most pressing needs within SEND education.

## Fair4All Events

71. BuDS is committed to making large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled people, and has Buckinghamshire's only stock of accessible and inclusive children's games and activities. However, our highly successful Fair4All Events project has been dormant since the end of 2019, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

72. BuDS has issued regular advice on how to keep safe, especially if clinically vulnerable, in the changing requirements set out by the Government, and this included advising people not to attend indoor events, and outdoor events where social distancing couldn't be maintained, throughout 2021. Covid will continue to present challenges for the foreseeable future, and in 2022 BuDS plans to produce guidance for event organisers on how to stage Covid-safer events, to enable disabled and clinically vulnerable people to attend. If possible, BuDS will itself attend some events to trial how this can be done in a more Covid-safe way.

### Fair4All Public Spaces

73. Despite the pandemic, BuDS has continued its work to make Buckinghamshire's public spaces more accessible and inclusive for disabled people, contributing to a range of public space projects in 2021. These included the design of the GardenWay around Aylesbury, the refurbishment of Market Square and Kingsbury in Aylesbury, the town centre in High Wycombe, three new housing estates, various road and rail crossings, flood defences in south Buckinghamshire, two heritage properties and a church.

### Fair4All Services

74. BuDS has always worked to improve council, NHS and private-sector services for disabled people in Buckinghamshire. F4A Services is the only independent disabled-led monitoring and campaigning group in Buckinghamshire. A skeleton service was maintained through the worst of the pandemic, and Fair4All Services was relaunched in late 2021, re-establishing important links with service providers. Looking to the future, in 2022 significant changes are expected for services that disabled people rely on, including social care, transport and education, and this project will seek to influence and safeguard the interests of disabled people as decisions are made. From March 2022, responding to needs expressed by disabled people themselves, there will be a new sub-project focussing on services for learning disabled and neurodivergent people.

## Reach4Work

### BucksWorkability

75. The BucksWorkability Partnership was originally formed in 2016 by BuDS, TalkBack, the NHS community head injuries service and the DWP disability employment service. Led by BuDS volunteers, the partnership was fully relaunched in 2018 and started to expand to include new disability employment schemes in the public, voluntary and private sectors. In 2019, the BucksWorkability website was relaunched with a new service-finder tool for disabled jobseekers. This website was designed and coded by the BuDS Reach4Work Digital Team, made up of disabled jobseekers.

76. In 2021-22, despite the pandemic, the partnership has grown and diversified, reaching 39 members. The aim remains to bring together disability employment schemes and statutory services to work together to increase the employment opportunities for disabled people in Buckinghamshire.

77. BuDS recognises that unemployment and changes to job patterns arising from the pandemic are a particular threat to disabled employees. Amongst plans for 2022-23 is further outreach to employers, particularly those who traditionally have not taken on disabled employees.

## Reach4Work

78. Since 2010, BuDS has helped its volunteers towards work. Our Reach4Work project, created in 2018, has codified and developed that help, creating a professional wrap-around service for our disabled volunteers who want to move into or closer to work. Reach4Work is the only Buckinghamshire disability employment scheme which remained fully open and expanded during the pandemic.

79. The key elements of Reach4Work are:
    - BuDS is a supportive, inclusive and caring community which provides exceptional emotional and peer support to disabled jobseekers. When a disabled jobseeker joins

BuDS, they are not merely a client or service-user but a member of the charity, a full participant in our wider working community.

- The volunteer role which job seekers have within a BuDS project is bespoke and structured to provide the experience, skills and networking which the individual jobseeker needs – it is a 'real unpaid job' created for the benefit of both the charity and the jobseeker, with highly supportive staff and volunteer support.
- Reach4Work provides disabled jobseekers with professional employment support elements such as training, mentoring, interview and CV skills, job placements, etc
- Through the work of the BucksWorkability project, jobseekers are brought into contact with local employers who are already being helped to create inclusive workplaces and opportunities for disabled workers.

80. Unsurprisingly, BuDS is exceptionally successful at moving disabled jobseeker volunteers into or closer to work, with 95% reporting positive progress and, even during the pandemic, around a third of our disabled job seeker volunteers moved into work or vocational training within a year of starting with BuDS.

81. During 2021, BuDS received funding from Children in Need and the Youth Work Foundation for its work to support disabled school leavers and young people towards work. This enabled us to support an additional 30 disabled young people, all of whom made good progress and some of whom entered employment despite the constraints of the pandemic. We also supported virtual school career fairs, as well as working with employers interested in employing young disabled people. Working with disabled young jobseekers will continue to be a priority in 2022-23, especially building more relationships with local schools, colleges, youth charities and Pupil Referral Units, and developing a specific service for disabled school leavers.

## Reach4Work Digital

82. This project is unique to BuDS and offers disabled young people gain key skills and experience to get jobs in the digital sector. The team employs Agile methodology, which is widely used in the digital sector. The project has built close links with local technology and IT employers. It is run entirely by disabled young people, with some staff support, and has delivered high quality products to industry standards, including phone apps, online databases and websites, including creating the BucksWorkability website, as well as working on the development version of the Reach4Work website.

83. BuDS is working to launch another digital team in 2022-23 in order to meet demand for support. The project also aims to diversify into other areas such the digital creative sector, including gaming.

## Reach4Work Work Experience

84. This project, new for 2021-22, provides disabled students with high quality work experience. As a first venture, it offered a unique work experience for disabled law students in summer 2021, offering them the chance to work on a range of issues relating to disability and the law. The project was very successful with over 100 applicants, 30 of whom were selected. The students produced high quality work across a range of fields including benefit, mental health and SEND law, which will be published in 2022. All participating students gave great feedback, and BuDS is delighted that four of them subsequently stayed as long-term volunteers. Another law summer work experience project will be held in 2022.

85. The project also offered virtual work experience opportunities for disabled students from Buckinghamshire SEND schools and colleges. Take up was low owing to Covid pressure inside schools, but the project was generally successful and will be repeated in 2022.

### Comms, Website and Creative:

86. In 2022, BuDS had no less than four websites and eleven social media channels to communicate with the public, its supporters and disabled people across Buckinghamshire. These were all created, maintained and developed by disabled staff and volunteer members of the very busy Communications, Websites and Creative teams. To help BuDS maintain a consistent look across these multiple accounts, an editorial policy and brand guide were introduced.

87. During 2021, the BuDS main website was relaunched with new functionality and better accessibility, and a Fair4All website was created and launched. BuDS' social media following on all platforms grew strongly during 2021. One of our videos even achieved viral status, with over 85,000 views on Twitter.

88. In 2022-23, BuDS will seek funding to appoint a Communications Officer who can support our ever-growing volunteer team.

## Plans for 2022-23

89. BuDS' theme for 2022-23 is: **Bigger, Bolder, Better**. By this, we mean that we will secure the volunteers and funding not only to maintain the services and projects we already have, but also to innovate, develop and expand. This theme is expressed in the following specific strategic objectives:
    a. Secure longer-term strategic grants to fully fund the core functions of the charity and its essential staff and infrastructure over a 5-year period. This includes the charity housekeeping functions, fundraising and senior manager post.
    b. Secure project funding to ensure that BuDS can properly support volunteers in project teams and fund the operational costs of projects.
    c. When it is safe to do so, develop an office and project base to support a hybrid working model where staff and volunteers have choice about where they wish to work.
    d. Continue Covid-related projects which are still of high value to disabled people.
    e. Maintain existing Fair4All projects and develop dormant or evolving Fair4All projects. Appoint a paid Fair4All Project Manager when needed.
    f. Maintain existing Disability Services and evolve new or additional services as opportunity arises. Appoint a paid Disability Services Manager when needed.
    g. Continue to develop and expand Reach4Work. Appoint a paid Reach4Work manager when needed.
    h. Continue to develop housekeeping functions and build up volunteer teams in these areas. Appoint a paid Charity Manager when needed.
    i. Build BuDS as a social community through starting to develop the BuDS Include function.
    j. Maintain and increase the size, skills and commitment of the Trustee Board including planning a successful transition to a new Chair.

90. The key strategic unknown for 2022 is Covid-19. It is impossible to predict how the pandemic will develop and how BuDS will need to act to continue to support disabled and clinically vulnerable

people. Within the broad strategic framework above, decisions on Covid-19 projects will need to be made on a reactive basis.

# Achievements and Performance

## Achievements

91. The following table summarises the difference that each of our projects made to the lives of its beneficiaries:

| Project | Difference to Beneficiaries |
|---|---|
| Enquiries (unique) | Answered questions and offered advocacy support to disabled people which they could not obtain elsewhere |
| BuDDies | Befriended and supported lonely and isolated disabled and clinically vulnerable people |
| Covid-19 (unique) | Information, advice, guidance and analysis about the pandemic for disabled and clinically vulnerable people, including a weekly risk assessment |
| Benefits (unique) | Provided otherwise-unavailable free specialist information about disability benefits to disabled people |
| Fair4All Card (unique) | Helped disabled people get the help and support that they are legally entitled to in shops and public places |
| Fair4All Services | Improved local council and NHS services for disabled people through advocacy and campaigning |
| Fair4All Attitudes & Hate Crime (unique) | Represented the interests of disabled people to Thames Valley Police and the Crown Prosecution Service |
| Fair4All Education | Supported disabled children and young people by addressing deficiencies and problems in SEND education |
| Fair4All Events (unique) | Helped make large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled and clinically vulnerable people and educated event organisers |
| Fair4All Public Spaces | Worked with councils and developers to make public spaces, including urban regeneration schemes like Aylesbury Garden Town, more inclusive and accessible for disabled people |
| Reach4Work – General | Supported disabled BuDS volunteers who are jobseekers towards or into work |
| Reach4Work – Digital (unique) | Trains and develops disabled young people for careers in the digital industry |
| Reach4Work – Work Experience | Offers disabled children and young people meaningful and inspiring work experience opportunities |
| BucksWorkability | Works with employers to foster more inclusive workplaces |
| Housekeeping Projects | Allowed disabled people to volunteer in vocational roles which helped move them towards work |

## Cost Effectiveness

92. BuDS aims to be a highly cost-effective and efficient charity. Gifts in kind and the value of voluntary and pro bono support in 2021 amounted to circa £360,000, or £2.47 for every pound raised by BuDS. The principle ways in which this support was obtained are as follows:

    - 180 active volunteers worked a total of 48,100 hours, equivalent to 28 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £753,000.

- IT and software donations, including 183 Microsoft Office 365 licences, representing a financial contribution in kind of £38,000.
- Inhouse design and media production by volunteers saved an estimated £18,000
- Pro bono professional legal and accountancy support saved an estimated £4,000

93. BuDS would like to thank all the businesses which have supported us, including Microsoft UK Ltd, CloudyIT Ltd, B P Collins LLP, Seymour Taylor Ltd and Tearle and Carver Ltd.

### Fundraising Activities

94. BuDS expenditure on fundraising activities in 2021-22, principally the salary of a part-time grants fundraiser, was £8,521, and income generated as a result of this activity was £79,188. This represents a return of £9.29 on every pound invested.

## Financial Review for FY 2021/22

95. Financial year 2021/2022 saw a 38% decrease in BuDS' income as pandemic contingency funding came to an end, moving from an income of £133,672 in 2020-21 to £82,688 in 2021-22. This drop resulted in compensatory savings including a reduction in the number of paid staff from 13 in April 2021 to 10 in March 2022. However, a significant balance of funding (£78,373) was carried forward from 2020-21, and much of this was designated for spending in 2021-22, so the impact of the income drop was not so marked as it might seem.

### Reserves Policy

96. The formal Reserves Policy for financial year 2021-22 remained unchanged from 2020-21, i.e. to hold a balance in reserve adequate to cover all legal or employment liabilities and three month's running costs based on the pre-pandemic totals. This total was calculated at £1200 and held largely in the charity's legacy Cooperative Bank account.

97. From June 2021 to March 2022, an operational reserve of £10,000 (drawn from uncommitted funds) was held in addition to the former £1200 formal reserve, to protect the future sustainability of the charity in the event of a cessation of major grant funding.

### Charity as a Going Concern

98. Like most charities without a significant standing endowment, BuDS relies on attracting a constant flow of grant and fundraising income to sustain its activities. This exposes the charity to a running risk of future financial deficits which, if unmitigated, could cause the charity to become insolvent or fail as a going concern. Trustees have taken steps to mitigate this risk as follows:
    - The charity treasurer is a qualified accountant and is charged specifically with warning the Board about any financial risk which may occur.
    - A qualified grants fundraiser is employed to generate a constant flow of grant applications, and a fundraising team is being developed to boost voluntary giving
    - A current budget and cash flow is examined at every monthly Trustee meeting and a forward plan is formulated at each Full Trustee meeting. This transparent planning enables all members of the Board to evaluate future risks and to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity
    - A strategic plan is in place which would allow the charity to contract to a size which would be sustainable long-term *without* major grant funding – this was the status quo

before the 2020 expansion. All contracts, including employment contracts, can be terminated with short notice if funding was to fall significantly.

- Employment and service contracts are specifically examined so as to minimise longer-term financial liabilities. The charity had no significant longer-term financial liabilities such as pensions or property leases in 2021-22. There is a small redundancy liability for one employee.
- From June 2021 to March 2022, in addition to a small statutory reserve, the charity had a policy of maintaining a working balance of uncommitted funds of £10,000 to protect the future sustainability of the charity in the event of a cessation of major grant funding.

99. As a consequence of the mitigations mentioned above, as of April 2022, Trustees had no concerns about the charity's ability to remain financially viable and a going concern for the foreseeable future.

## Principal sources of funds

100. In 2021/22, BuDS' principal sources of funding in order of size were as follows. This information is from BuDS' management accounts and is not a complete account of all income received. A number of smaller grants (below £5000) were also received.

| Source | Type | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| Children in Need/Youth Futures Fund | Restricted grant for Reach4Work | £20,605 |
| The National Lottery Awards for All | Unrestricted grant | £10,000 |
| Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust | Restricted grant for BuDDies | £10,000 |
| Childwick Trust | Unrestricted grant | £9500 |
| Thomas Wall Trust | Restricted grant for Reach4Work | £5000 |
| Shanly Foundation | Restricted grant for Reach4Work | £5000 |
| Rectory Foundation | Restricted grant for BuDDies | £5000 |

## Investment Policy

101. BuDS has no investment funds and therefore no investment policy. One will be adopted if needed in the future.

## Principal risks facing the charity

102. The principal risks facing the charity, and the mitigations in place for them, are as follows:

| Risk Type | Mitigation | Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| Structural Risks | BuDS has an appropriate legal form, registered with the Charity Commission and is in good governance, maintaining membership of NCVO and the Fundraising Regulator. Trustee Liability insurance is in place. Approval is in place for the charity to take the form of a charitable limited company and Trustees are moving ahead with this change in 2022-23. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Trustee-related Risks | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to ensure a broad range of appropriate skills, and Trustee training is delivered. Good governance is maintained in the forms of transparent evidence-based decision-making at frequent well-attended meetings. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Conflicts of | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively | All significant risks |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Interest | managed to avoid conflicts of interest and only two Trustees of 10 are related. Conflicts of interest are transparently managed by Trustees without a conflict, eg relating to the employment of family members of Trustees. | are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Safeguarding Risks | Safeguarding policies and practices are in place, and safeguarding is actively managed across the charity by a dedicated Trustee sub-committee which includes trained safeguarding personnel. Safeguarding incidents are managed appropriately and links to the MASH hub used as necessary. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Contractual Risks | The Senior Management Team actively manages all current contracts, and all significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Staff-related Risks | A qualified HR professional is in post and appropriate staffing policies are in place. Appropriate employment-related insurance is in place and regularly reviewed. A Staffing Committee of the Trustee Board meets as needed. Staffing decisions which might give rise to liability (e.g. disciplinary actions) are managed by HR professional with external lawyers input as needed. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Financial Risks | See above | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Reputational Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all reputational risks, and appropriate editorial processes and policies are in place including designated spokespeople and restrictions on social media use. Defamation and litigation liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Compliance Risks | The charity has few activities which are subject to formal accreditation or compliance regimes, but Senior Management Team actively manages compliance issues, and all significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. Where a new activity raises a compliance risk, this is assessed and mitigated before commencement | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Legal Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all legal risks, and appropriate processes and policies are in place to mitigate a legal liability including formal approval processes and staff training. Public and professional insurance cover is in place for all activities. The charity has a retained legal advisor, a leading local practice. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name: Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS)

Other name the charity uses: BuDS

Registered charity number: 1102511

Charity's principal address: Buckinghamshire Disability Service, c/o B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL

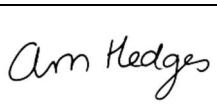
## Advisors

| Type of advisor | Name | Address |
|---|---|---|
| **Accountant** | Tearle and Carver Ltd | Chandos House, School Lane, Buckingham, MK18 1HD |
| **Solicitor** | B P Collins | B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL |

## Declarations

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Signature(s)** |  |  |
| **Full name(s)** | Andrew Clark | Ann Hedges |
| **Position** | Chair of Trustees | Executive Trustee |
| **Date** | 28/01/2022 | 28/01/2022 |

# Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Buckinghamshire Disability Service BuDS

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Buckinghamshire Disability Service BuDS (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

## 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 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all 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; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Tearle and Carver Limited

Tearle & Carver Limited
Chandos House
School Lane
Buckingham
Buckinghamshire
MK18 1HD

Date: 31 January 2023

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

| Charity Name | No (if any) | CC16a |
|---|---|---|
| Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) | 1102511 | |

**Receipts and payments accounts**

| For the period from | 01.04.2021 | To | 31.03.2022 |
|---|---|---|---|

## Section A Receipts and payments

| | Unrestricted funds to the nearest £ | Restricted funds to the nearest £ | Endowment funds to the nearest £ | Total funds to the nearest £ | Last year to the nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A1 Receipts** | | | | | |
| Grants Unrestricted | 16,500 | - | - | 16,500 | 89,176 |
| Grants Restricted | | 55,105 | - | 55,105 | 9,436 |
| Reach4Work -Restricted | | 7,583 | - | 7,583 | 32,152 |
| Fair4All Projects - Restricted | | | - | - | - |
| Disability Services - Restricted | - | | - | - | - |
| Other | 3,100 | | - | 3,100 | 2,908 |
| Digital & Internet | | | - | - | - |
| Earned Income | 400 | | - | 400 | - |
| ***Sub total****(Gross income for AR)* | 20,000 | 62,688 | - | 82,688 | 133,672 |
| **A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Sub total*** | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Total receipts*** | 20,000 | 62,688 | - | 82,688 | 133,672 |
| **A3 Payments** | | | | | |
| Reach4Work | | 40,915 | | 40,915 | 18,201 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fair4All Projects | | | 27,038 | | 27,038 | 6,347 |
| Disability Services | | | 33,781 | | 33,781 | 21,459 |
| Governance | | 29,290 | | | 29,290 | 11,756 |
| Digital & Internet | | 1,531 | | - | 1,531 | 6,426 |
| Other | | | - | | - | 235 |
| | | | | - | - | - |
| | | - | | - | - | - |
| | | | | - | - | - |
| | | | | - | - | - |
| | | | | | - | |
| | | | | | - | |
| | | | | | - | |
| | | | | | - | |
| | | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Sub total*** | | 30,821 | 101,734 | - | 132,555 | 64,424 |
| **A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)** | | | | | | |
| | | - | - | - | - | |
| | | - | - | - | - | |
| ***Sub total*** | | - | - | - | - | - |
| ***Total payments*** | | 30,821 | 101,734 | - | 132,555 | 64,424 |
| ***Net of receipts/(payments)*** | | -10,821 | -39,046 | - | -49,867 | 69,248 |
| **A5 Transfers between funds** | | -46,705 | 46,705 | - | - | - |
| **A6 Cash funds last year end** | | 61,448 | 17,747 | - | 79,195 | 9,947 |
| ***Cash funds this year end*** | | 3,922 | 25,406 | - | 29,328 | 79,195 |

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

| Categories | Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B1 Cash funds** | Bank | 3,922 | 25,406 | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | ***Total cash funds*** (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s)) | 3,922 | 25,406 | - |
| | | OK | OK | OK |

| | Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B2 Other monetary assets** | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |

| | Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B3 Investment assets** | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |

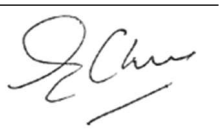
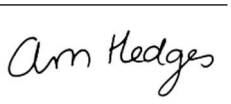
**B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use**

| Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |

**B5 Liabilities**

| Details | Fund to which liability relates | Amount due (optional) | When due (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

| | Signature | Print Name | Date of approval |
|---|---|---|---|
| |  | ANDREW CLARK | 28/01/2023 |
| |  | ANN HEDGES | 28/01/2023 |

**BuDS Disability Service**

England & Wales - Charity number 1102511

# Accounts

Fixing the Big Issues for Disabled People in Buckinghamshire
Charity No 1102511
www.buds.org.uk | 01494 211179 | info@buds.org.uk
*Registered Address (no callers): BuDS, c/o B P Collins LLP, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL*

# Trustees' Annual Report for 2021

## Chair's Introduction

1. Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS) is the county's leading disability charity and its only independent pan-disability organisation. Our visionary aim is to *abolish disability* by building a world which is *Fair4All*, free of the barriers which disable people. We are led by disabled people and committed to the social model of disability.

2. Uniquely, BuDS is a working community of over 180 volunteers, mostly local disabled people, who work together, supported by staff, to achieve our goals. Our 16 projects, many of which are unique to the county, empower thousands of disabled adults, young people and children across Buckinghamshire and permanently remove the barriers facing disabled people so that they can live and work independently.

3. BuDS is a highly diverse and inclusive charity both in terms of disability and intersectionality, and diversity and inclusion is a core value. BuDS is also one of the largest youth charities in Buckinghamshire, with 74 disabled young people (18-25) as staff or volunteers in 2021 and a strong project focus on children and young people.

4. We tackle the issues which most affect disabled people in Buckinghamshire by whatever means necessary. Our Disability Services help disabled people directly, while our Fair4All projects bring about permanent change to the built environment, structures, systems and infrastructure so that disabled people do not face barriers to living independently. Our Reach4Work projects help disabled jobseekers into work and education. All our work is evidence-based, project-led and responds to the real needs of disabled people. The expertise of our professional volunteers mean we can often punch above our weight.

5. The Covid-19 pandemic spurred BuDS into rapid growth to meet the surging needs of disabled people, who were most affected by the virus and the precautions put in place to contain it. Our Covid-19 information, advice and guidance have national recognition and our team of high-quality volunteers enable us to communicate about the pandemic far better than most organisations. While BuDS will continue to be there for disabled people as long as the pandemic lasts, we also moved at pace in 2021 to revive and develop our longstanding non-Covid projects.

6. 2021 was a challenging but exceptionally rewarding year for BuDS – amid the confusion, gloom and continuing catastrophe of the pandemic, we were proud and honoured to do so much to help and support tens of thousands of disabled people, their families and carers. Huge thanks

are due to our Trustees, staff and volunteers who have given so much of their time and talents, and to our funders who stepped in to allow us to rise to the challenges of an exceptional year.

7. I hope you enjoy reading more about the unique working community that is BuDS in this Annual Report.



**Andrew Clark**
**Chair of Trustees**

# Introduction

8. This is the Annual Report for Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS), charity registration number 1102511. The narrative of this report covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2021, but the financial report covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

9. Prior to financial year 2020/21, BuDS had an income below £25,000 and accordingly produced a simple annual report for members in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. The annual report for 2020 was presented to and agreed by BuDS' members at the AGM held on 21 November 2020 and written copies of the presentation are available on request. From financial year 2020/21, BuDS income has exceeded £25,000 and Trustees are accordingly producing and publishing this more formal annual report, which will be sent to the Charity Commission and published as required by UK charity law.

10. As BuDS income is below £500,000 and it does not have assets worth more than £3.26 million, Trustees are not required to produce a full Annual Report according to the guidelines set out in the Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102).

# What is BuDS?

11. BuDS is Buckinghamshire's leading disability charity and the county's only independent pan-disability organisation. Our visionary aim is to abolish disability by building a world which is Fair4All, free of the barriers which disable people. To achieve this, we have built a working community of over 180 local disabled volunteers who work together, supported by staff, to achieve our goals. Our 16 projects both support and empower disabled individuals and work to permanently remove the barriers facing disabled people.

## User Led

12. BuDS is committed to being user-led, that is a charity which is led by disabled Trustees and which seeks as far as possible to include disabled people as staff and volunteers. We see being user-led as vital to our authenticity and mission. In practice, we aim to have 75% of Trustees who identify as disabled people and, as a minimum, 51%. In 2021, 86% of those holding office as Trustees identified as disabled people; while 86% of those volunteers who provided information and 71% of staff identified as disabled.

## Social Model of Disability

13. BuDS follows and advocates for the social model of disability, which is at the core of our beliefs and work. The social model of disability states that disability is caused by the barriers which society puts in the way of people who have an impairment or medical condition, not by those impairments or conditions. Thus, for example, a wheelchair-user is 'disabled' by the lack of a ramp, not by their lack of mobility, or an autistic person is 'disabled' by a lack of quiet places rather than by their neurodiversity. When we use the phrase 'disabled person', we mean a person with an impairment or medical condition impacted by a barrier which disables them – we are not referring to any physical, sensory or mental health condition they may have.

## A Voluntary Charity

14. BuDS is primarily a voluntary charity, made up of over 180 volunteers, mostly local disabled people, who work together to remove the barriers which disable them. BuDS aims to be an inclusive working community organised around the key principle that disabled people themselves should tackle the issues and barriers which they face.

15. Our volunteers are not simply people who help BuDS' work, as they are in other charities. Because they are also overwhelmingly local disabled people, our volunteers are also our members and part of our unique working community of disabled people. BuDS in a very real sense *is* its people.

16. Our volunteers are extremely diverse, with every significant impairment group represented. This gives us unparalleled insight into the lives of disabled people. We include a wide age range, with around 40% of volunteers being young people under 25. Our volunteers are also at diverse points on their life journey: we include people who are starting out in their adult life, working people, parents, retirees, professionals, jobseekers, and people who are looking to acquire more skills or experience.

17. BuDS actively supports its volunteers. We have a part-time volunteer coordinator responsible for recruitment and induction, and every project includes either a member of staff or volunteer whose specific role is to support volunteers in their volunteering. Training is available in every team and many volunteers also have a mentor for 1:1 support. We have a dedicated in-house welfare team, Help for Helpers. Many of our volunteers are job seekers and we support them towards work through our Reach4Work project (details below). Our BuDS Include project, due to launch in 2022, will focus on making BuDS more of a social community as well as a working one.

18. Using usage data from our IT system (Microsoft Office 365), we calculate that, over 2021, BuDS had an average of 45-50 active volunteers working on any particular day, from a pool of volunteers of around 150 individuals. A further 30 volunteers were inactive owing to changed personal circumstances or health but had not left the charity. These 150 active volunteers worked a total of 30,493 hours in 2021. This roughly translates to an average of 200 annual hours per volunteer, or 3.9 hours per week per volunteer. This was a significant increase from 2020.

19. Collectively, volunteers worked the same hours as 16 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £310,000.

## A Youth Charity

20. BuDS is one of the largest youth charities in Buckinghamshire, with over 70 disabled young people (18-25) as volunteers over 2021. We are one of the few charities to have a Trustee aged under 21 and some of our staff are young adults under 25. Of BuDS' 16 projects, 12 have young people as a significant focus and 6 of those projects offer unique benefits for local young people not offered by any other organisation. Around 70% of BuDS' work benefits young people. In 2022, we want to further develop the concept of BuDS as a leading Buckinghamshire youth charity.

## Independent & Party Politically Neutral

21. BuDS is an independent charity which can speak up for the interests of disabled people without fear or favour, untrammelled by ties arising from contracts, funding or unequal partnerships. Our strategy specifically requires all funding to be examined to ensure that it does not place unacceptable constraints on our independence and freedom to act. Often, BuDS acts as the spokesperson for other organisations that cannot speak out without fear of jeopardising contracts or financial relationships on which their charity depends.

22. As required by charity law, BuDS is scrupulously party-politically neutral. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance, whilst BuDS reserves the right to be critical of public bodies or the

Government, we take great care never to express any party-political views or to create in the mind of a reasonable onlooker the idea that the charity is biased in favour of any particular political party.

## Charity Objects

23. The objects of BuDS, as set out in the Constitution, are: "To relieve the needs of disabled people, their families, and carers, principally within the County of Buckinghamshire excluding Milton Keynes, by any charitable means and in particular, but not exclusively by (1) providing education services, and (2) providing advisory and support services".

24. The Trustees review the charity objects annually, having regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, and remain of the view that the objects of the charity continue to meet the public benefit requirement set out in the Charities Acts 2005 and 2011.

## Public Benefit of the Charity

25. In accordance with the Charities Acts 2005 and 2011, the BuDS' trustees can confirm that they are aware of the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, have had regard to it when exercising any relevant powers or duties, and have complied with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 by including this statement in this annual report. The Trustees do not feel they have departed from the guidance to any extent.

26. The BuDS Trustees, having had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, can confirm that they have operated BuDS in a way that carries out its charitable purposes for the public benefit. Further details can be found in the following sections of this annual report.

## BuDS Strategy & Strategic Planning

27. BuDS has a clear strategic planning process as follows:
    - A formal written Strategy and Strategic Plan document is produced annually by the charity's executive trustees and agreed by the Full Board including non-executive Trustees.
    - The Strategy and Plan include formal reporting mechanisms by which Trustees can monitor progress and ensure the charity remains true to its core values.
    - Progress towards achieving the Strategy and Plan is reviewed formally biannually by a full Trustee meeting, which includes non-executive Trustees. The same meeting also reviews formally whether the charity has remained true to its values.
    - Amendments to the Strategy and Plan are made and agreed by the full Trustee Board as necessary, alongside any actions needed to address departures from core values.

28. The Full Trustee Board met to review the BuDS strategy on 17 April and 16 October 2021. The Strategy was significantly updated after the October meeting with effect from 1 December 2021. Both documents can be found on our website at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/. Further information on our strategic goals for 2022 can be found below.

## Charity Structure, Governance and Management

29. BuDS is an unincorporated association in the form of a membership charity. Members elect the officers and Trustees, and key decisions are taken by a General Meeting. The governing

document is a written constitution. The current constitution can be seen at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/.

## Constitutional Changes

30. The BuDS constitution was adopted on 11 March 2003 and amended by the Annual General Meeting in 2010 and 2012. The Annual General Meeting on 20 November 2021 agreed further changes to the constitution which are pending approval by the Charity Commission.

31. The Annual General Meeting in 2012 agreed that the Trustee Board could take steps to change the legal form of the charity to a charitable company and made constitutional amendments to that effect. However, the Trustees resolved not to give effect to this change until it became necessary. The recent significant increase in the size, scope and risk of the charity's activities suggests the change in legal form has now become necessary and the matter will be considered by the Full Board meeting in February 2022.

## Membership

32. Constitutionally, membership of BuDS is open to all disabled people living in Buckinghamshire or who have a direct interest in Buckinghamshire (e.g. by working in the county). A disabled person for the purposes of membership means being disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 or otherwise having direct personal experience of disability. Until 20 November 2021, carers of disabled people were also entitled to become members of BuDS although in practice none did so.

33. In practice, BuDS deems all circa 40,000 disabled people in Buckinghamshire to be de facto members of the charity and seeks through its normal activities to remain in close contact with their views and opinions. The charity does not maintain a formal membership register or have a formal membership process except in relation to Trustees (see below) and for attendees at the AGM. Attendees at the AGM are required to certify that they are eligible for membership before their voting rights are recognised.

## Trustees

34. The BuDS constitution provides that there shall be a minimum of four and a maximum of 12 (increased to 15 in November 2021) Trustees, appointed by the AGM from the membership of the charity. These are the three officers of the charity (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) appointed by the AGM plus up to nine others (changed to 12 in November 2021) elected by the Annual General Meeting. The constitution requires Trustees to step down after three years in office (although they may be re-elected), but BuDS' practice is to elect or re-elect Trustees every year. No organisation has the right to nominate a Trustee.

35. During 2021, 14 individuals have held office as Trustees, with the average size of the Trustee Board being 10 people. A full list of all Trustees can be found at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/ . Two members of the Trustee Board are related, and appropriate measures are in place to manage any conflict of interest.

36. As a user-led activist charity, the role of BuDS Trustees is different from that in many other charities. As a charity, we are by policy strongly Trustee-led. It is inherent in our status as a user-led organisation that the BuDS Trustee Board is the clear leadership and direction setting body for the charity. Accordingly, we expect and require all Trustees to have a strong commitment to our values and objectives, and for Trustees to play an active role in the life of the charity.

37. The BuDS Trustee Board is clearly structured. Trustees have 3 main roles:
    - **Officers/Executive Trustees** – these play an active day-to-day leadership role in the charity as decision-makers and through contributing their skills and experience. During 2021, five individuals held office as officers or executive Trustees (four disabled).
    - **Lead Trustees** – these Trustees lead a particular project or projects within BuDS for which they are especially qualified or experienced, giving leadership to project volunteers and staff and acting as that project's sponsor to the Trustee board. During 2021, two individuals (both disabled) held office as lead Trustees.
    - **Non-Executive Trustees** – these Trustees are chosen for their wider experience and skills, including lived experience as a disabled person. They do not play a day-to-day role in the charity but contribute their wisdom at Full Board meetings at which strategy and progress is reviewed, and as needed when key decisions are being taken. During 2021, seven individuals held office as officers or executive Trustees (six disabled).

38. Reflecting their active role, Executive and Lead Trustees met online mostly twice a month during 2021, the additional monthly meeting being an informal one. Trustees met 20 times in 2021. Formal Full Board meetings with the attendance of non-executive Trustees were held twice. There was also a busy virtual Trustee team for discussions between meetings.

39. Trustees are identified by open advertisement, by canvassing existing volunteers, or direct approaches by the Trustee Board. In 2021, eight potential Trustees were identified of which six were appointed. The selection procedure is as follows:
    i. Membership eligibility is confirmed
    ii. Safeguarding, reference and an enhanced DBS check are completed
    iii. Individuals are invited to attend three Trustee meetings and to become involved in BuDS work and projects over that period
    iv. The Board then decides whether to second the individual to the Trustee Board until the next AGM
    v. At the next AGM, the individual is invited to say whether they wish to have their name put forward for election

## Organisation & Management of the Charity

40. BuDS is organised as a working community of volunteers, supported by staff, who collaborate together on projects. Since 2020, BuDS has been structured according to Agile project management principles, to maximise output, flexibility and responsiveness whilst enabling best practice project, cost and risk management. A structure chart, representing the position in December 2021, can be found at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/.

41. The basic building unit of the charity is the project team. This is a group of Trustees and/or volunteers working together around a common theme, goal or idea. The project team is structured and will have members in different defined roles including that of project coordinator. Paid staff may be deployed to support the team but BuDS does not have enough staff to support all teams.

42. Projects are grouped together into one of 4 departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work or Housekeeping. These departments are explained further below.

43. During 2021, all team members worked from home using Microsoft Teams as a virtual office, including video meetings, messaging, task boards, wikis, forms, etc. Each project has objectives

agreed by Trustees and progress is monitored at Trustee meetings through the lead or executive Trustee for that project. The typical working process is that of the 'sprint' – a sustained team effort to achieve a piece of work or outcome, followed by a reflective pause to evaluate success and plan next steps.

44. During 2021, BuDS had 16 active project teams, six dormant project teams, and eight teams dealing with 'housekeeping' issues such as communications, finances, fundraising, HR, etc.

45. Prior to November 2020, the Trustee Board managed all active project teams directly. As the charity grew this proved unworkable, and from November 2020 Janneke Elford was appointed as the charity's Projects Manager, responsible for the 16 active project teams in the Disability Services, Fair4All, and Reach4Work departments. Housekeeping teams remained under direct Trustee management throughout 2021. The ambition is to appoint paid managers for each group of projects or department as those projects expand.

## Staffing

46. BuDS is an overwhelmingly voluntary charity, and the role of our paid staff is primarily to support volunteers to achieve their project goals, not to be assisted by volunteers. All staff are on short-term contracts reflecting the funding currently available to BuDS. Other than specialists, such as a grants fundraiser and HR/volunteering officers, staff are deployed flexibly across a range of active projects to support volunteers and help advance the project. During 2021, BuDS had an average of 10 staff in post (six FTE).

47. BuDS aims to be an inclusive employer (see https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/ for full staff diversity statistics) and we are proud that 12 of the 17 individuals employed during 2021 (71%) identified as disabled people. Reflecting our ethos and insight into the barriers preventing disabled people from working, we offer all staff flexible working hours and the opportunity to work from home (even after the pandemic has finished). We also offer 'disability leave' and shape working patterns and routines around staff needs as disabled people. This policy has been highly successful in motivating and retaining staff, not just those who are disabled.

## Safeguarding & Welfare

48. Safeguarding is exceptionally important to BuDS and has a higher profile than in many charities. All Trustees, staff and volunteers, other than short-term temporary roles, are fully safeguarded including the taking up of references and an enhanced DBS check. There is mandatory safeguarding training, delivered inhouse, for all staff and volunteers. As an online organisation, our IT system has been configured to enhance safeguarding. We are linked to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and able to make direct referrals to them if needed.

49. The welfare and safety of the BuDS community is also important. Many of our volunteers and staff are potentially vulnerable and our 'Help for Helpers' welfare team is available to anyone needing a chat or word of advice. During 2021, a number of welfare concerns relating to volunteers were resolved.

50. Safeguarding and Welfare is managed by a safeguarding sub-committee of the Trustee Board which includes 3 professionally trained safeguarding officers.

### Diversity & Inclusion

51. The Trustees are committed to intersectional diversity across the charity. We aim to be an inclusive community where everyone can find a place and fulfil their wishes without discrimination, and we are proud to have several LGBTQ+ people among our number. During 2022, we aim to collect more intersectional diversity data.

52. The BuDS Trustee Board is significantly more intersectionally diverse than most in Buckinghamshire, but we recognise that more needs to be done to maintain and develop the Board's diversity. Full board diversity statistics can be found at https://buds.org.uk/2021-buds-annual-report/

## BuDS Work in 2021

### Overview

53. 2021 was a year of transformation for BuDS. The charity entered the pandemic in 2020 as a small charity with 25 regular volunteers, two part-time staff and a budget of £25,000. By the end of 2020 it had over 100 volunteers, five part-time staff and had been awarded over £100,000 in grants. 2021 saw BuDS grow to a charity with over 180 volunteers, 10 part-time staff, 16 major projects and an income over £146,000.

54. The Covid-19 pandemic remained a major theme in BuDS' work throughout 2021. However, other projects were deliberately revived, tackling the long-standing issues affecting disabled people in Buckinghamshire.

### BuDS' New Structure

55. To take account of the charity's expansion and development, a new internal structure was adopted by the Trustees in 2021. This divided the charity's projects into four departments: Disability Services, Fair4All, Reach4Work, and Housekeeping. Each department contained a number of related projects which were led by volunteers with the support of staff.

### Disability Services

56. The Disability Services group of projects were those directly helping and empowering disabled individuals in Buckinghamshire and beyond.

### Benefits Information, Advice, and Guidance

57. The Benefits IAG project provided information, advice and guidance to disabled people in Buckinghamshire and beyond about disability benefits, e.g. PIP, ESA, DLA and Universal Credit. The project was the only free source of specialist information, such as Upper Tribunal decisions in Buckinghamshire.

58. Plans for 2022 include reviving one-to-one advice and guidance, as well as developing a specific children and young people's disability benefits advice service.

### BuDDies

59. The project was set up as an emergency response to Covid-19 lockdowns to support isolated and lonely disabled people in Buckinghamshire. In 2021, it was opened up to any lonely or isolated disabled person in Buckinghamshire. The BuDDies project was the only fully safeguarded,

professionally managed befriending service in Buckinghamshire, and one of the few voluntary schemes supporting people with complex mental health conditions.

### Covid-19 Information, Advice, and Guidance

60. This project supported disabled people in Buckinghamshire and nationally with information advice and guidance about Covid-19 and Long Covid. This was the biggest and busiest BuDS project in 2021, supported by grants from the National Lottery, Heart of Bucks Foundation and others. Over the year, we maintained our reputation as a highly respected and reliable source of Covid-19 information used by tens of thousands of people, presenting information in written, video, infographic and easy read formats.

61. The Covid-19 project was led by Trustees according to policies agreed by the entire Trustee Board. While BuDS information and updates regularly were critical of the Government or of individual Government officials or office-holders, great care was taken to never express any party-political views and for BuDS to remain scrupulously party-politically neutral.

62. The following statistics for the Covid-19 project illustrate the huge scale of this project:
    - Published 170 articles on 15 separate topics. When posted on social media, each reached a minimum of a thousand people on average.
    - Topics covered included shielding, lockdowns, vaccines, testing, mask wearing, schools and children, new variants and how to keep yourself safer.
    - 76 consecutive Covid weekly risk assessments published – on average, 3500 read each assessment.
    - Received 4781 reactions on social media, some posts generating over 400 reactions.
    - Received over 100,000 engagements across the 170 main posts
    - Information was shared into 23 local community groups across Buckinghamshire
    - BuDS' own Covid-19 Facebook group grew to nearly 470 members.
    - BuDS was one of the first charities to sound the alarm about Long Covid

### Enquiries

63. This project answered questions and supported disabled adults and young people (plus carers and parents) on any disability-related issue or topic, filling gaps that other services could not provide. Demand for this service diminished in 2020, but the project was relaunched during Summer 2021. Work behind the scenes was completed, including putting in place systems and procedures needed to run a professional enquiries service such as secure software, telephone system and safeguarding. This made the project a highly professional, fully safeguarded project which, over 2021, was handling an ever-increasing number of enquiries with a high satisfaction rate from users.

## Fair4All

64. BuDS' Fair4All projects aim to build an inclusive world which is free of barriers which disable people: a Fair4All world in which disability is effectively abolished.

### Fair4All Attitudes and Hate Crime

65. Hostility and hatred towards disabled people have long been constants in today's society, but the pandemic saw increased hostility towards disabled people, whose lives were increasingly seen as disposable, or the acceptable cost of everyone else getting back to normal. BuDS has worked to oppose that hostility at every opportunity, and has supported around 30 victims of hate crime each year. BuDS was the only disability organisation represented on official

Buckinghamshire police liaison groups, including the Chief Constable's Independent Advisory Group, Community Safety Partnerships and a Crown Prosecution Service working party.

66. In a new development for 2022, in partnership with Buckinghamshire Council and Thames Valley Police, BuDS will create a county-wide hub for disability hate crimes and incidents, meaning disabled people who are victims of hate crime will be able to come directly to BuDS for support, including support to take the matter to the police.

## Fair4All Card Scheme

67. BuDS aims to support disabled people to get the help they need and are legally entitled to in the community. The Fair4All Card Scheme evolved from the "Letters of Authority Scheme", which was set up at the start of the first lockdown in March 2020. It is now fully up and running and rapidly expanding, with supermarkets such as Waitrose and the Co-Op signing up as Card Partners. In 2022, a new Partners+ scheme will see hundreds of cards issued to members of support organisations.

## Fair4All Education

68. The Fair4All Education project promotes the interests of disabled children and young people in the education system. Traditionally, BuDS had not had a SEND project, leaving this work to the many other charities and organisations that supported disabled children and parents. However, Fair4All Education was established in late 2021, following calls for a fully independent, disabled people led approach, that could respond to the challenges being faced by the system.

69. A large expert project team, including SEND professionals, parents and disabled young people, is being built, with a strong focus on safeguarding. Although in its infancy, the project team, combined with the skill and passion of many volunteers, has already made an impact, building influence with schools, academy trusts and the council, and creating a working community to identify the most pressing needs within SEND education.

## Fair4All Events

70. BuDS is committed to making large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled people, and has Buckinghamshire's only stock of accessible and inclusive children's games and activities. However, our highly successful Fair4All Events project has been dormant since the end of 2019, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

71. BuDS has issued regular advice on how to keep safe, especially if clinically vulnerable, in the changing requirements set out by the Government, and this included advising people not to attend indoor events, and outdoor events where social distancing couldn't be maintained, throughout 2021. Covid will continue to present challenges for the foreseeable future, and in 2022 BuDS plans to produce guidance for event organisers on how to stage Covid-safer events, to enable disabled and clinically vulnerable people to attend.

## Fair4All Public Spaces

72. Despite the pandemic, BuDS has continued its work to make Buckinghamshire's public spaces more accessible and inclusive for disabled people, contributing to a range of public space projects in 2021. These included the design of the GardenWay around Aylesbury, the refurbishment of Market Square and Kingsbury in Aylesbury, the town centre in High Wycombe, three new housing estates, various road and rail crossings, flood defences in south Buckinghamshire, two heritage properties and a church.

## Fair4All Services

73. BuDS has always worked to improve council, NHS and private-sector services for disabled people in Buckinghamshire. F4A Services is the only independent disabled-led monitoring and campaigning group in Buckinghamshire. A skeleton service was maintained through the worst of the pandemic, and Fair4All Services was relaunched in late 2021, re-establishing important links with service providers. Looking to the future, in 2022 significant changes are expected for services that disabled people rely on, including social care, transport and education, and this project will seek to influence and safeguard the interests of disabled people as decisions are made. Responding to needs expressed by disabled people themselves, there will be a particular focus on services for learning disabled and autistic people.

# Reach4Work

## BucksWorkability

74. The BucksWorkability Partnership was originally formed in 2016 by BuDS, TalkBack, the NHS community head injuries service and the DWP disability employment service. Led by BuDS volunteers, the partnership was fully relaunched in 2018 and started to expand to include new disability employment schemes in the public, voluntary and private sectors. In 2019, the BucksWorkability website was relaunched with a new service-finder tool for disabled jobseekers. This website was designed and coded by the BuDS Reach4Work Digital Team, made up of disabled jobseekers.

75. In 2021, despite the pandemic, the partnership has grown and diversified, reaching 39 members. The aim remains to bring together disability employment schemes and statutory services to work together to increase the employment opportunities for disabled people in Buckinghamshire.

76. BuDS recognises that unemployment and changes to job patterns arising from the pandemic are a particular threat to disabled employees. Amongst plans for 2022 is further outreach to employers, particularly those who traditionally have not taken on disabled employees.

## Reach4Work

77. Since 2010, BuDS has helped its volunteers towards work. Our Reach4Work project, created in 2018, has codified and developed that help, creating a professional wrap-around service for our disabled volunteers who want to move into or closer to work. Reach4Work is the only Buckinghamshire disability employment scheme which remained fully open and expanded during the pandemic.

78. The key elements of Reach4Work are:
    - BuDS is a supportive, inclusive and caring community which provides exceptional emotional and peer support to disabled jobseekers. When a disabled jobseeker joins BuDS, they are not merely a client or service-user but a member of the charity, a full participant in our wider working community.
    - The volunteer role which job seekers have within a BuDS project is bespoke and structured to provide the experience, skills and networking which the individual jobseeker needs – it is a ‘real unpaid job’ created for the benefit of both the charity and the jobseeker, with highly supportive staff and volunteer support.
    - Reach4Work provides disabled jobseekers with professional employment support elements such as training, mentoring, interview and CV skills, job placements, etc

- Through the work of the BucksWorkability project, jobseekers are brought into contact with local employers who are already being helped to create inclusive workplaces and opportunities for disabled workers.

79. Unsurprisingly, BuDS is exceptionally successful at moving disabled jobseeker volunteers into or closer to work, with 95% reporting positive progress and, even during the pandemic, around a third of our disabled job seeker volunteers moved into work or vocational training within a year of starting with BuDS.

80. During 2021, BuDS received funding from Children in Need and the Youth Work Foundation for its work to support disabled school leavers and young people towards work. This enabled us to support an additional 30 disabled young people, all of whom made good progress and some of whom entered employment despite the constraints of the pandemic. We also supported virtual school career fairs, as well as working with employers interested in employing young disabled people. Working with disabled young jobseekers will continue to be a priority in 2022, especially building more relationships with local schools, colleges, youth charities and Pupil Referral Units, and developing a specific service for disabled school leavers.

## Reach4Work Digital

81. This project is unique to BuDS and offers disabled young people gain key skills and experience to get jobs in the digital sector. The team employs Agile methodology, which is widely used in the digital sector. The project has built close links with local technology and IT employers. It is run entirely by disabled young people, with some staff support, and has delivered high quality products to industry standards, including phone apps, online databases and websites, including creating the BucksWorkability website, as well as working on the development version of the Reach4Work website.

82. BuDS is working to launch another digital team in 2022 in order to meet demand for support. The project also aims to diversify into other areas such the digital creative sector, including gaming.

## Reach4Work Work Experience

83. This project, new for 2021, provides disabled students with high quality work experience. As a first venture, it offered a unique work experience for disabled law students in summer 2021, offering them the chance to work on a range of issues relating to disability and the law. The project was very successful with over 100 applicants, 30 of whom were selected. The students produced high quality work across a range of fields including benefit, mental health and SEND law, which will be published in 2022. All participating students gave great feedback, and BuDS is delighted that four of them subsequently stayed as long-term volunteers. Another law summer work experience project will be held in 2022.

84. The project also offered virtual work experience opportunities for disabled students from Buckinghamshire SEND schools and colleges. Take up was low owing to Covid pressure inside schools, but the project was generally successful and will be repeated in 2022.

## Comms, Website and Creative:

85. In 2022, BuDS had no less than four websites and eleven social media channels to communicate with the public, its supporters and disabled people across Buckinghamshire. These were all created, maintained and developed by disabled staff and volunteer members of the very busy

Communications, Websites and Creative teams. To help BuDS maintain a consistent look across these multiple accounts, an editorial policy and brand guide were introduced.

86. During 2021, the BuDS main website was relaunched with new functionality and better accessibility, and a Fair4All website was created and launched. BuDS' social media following on all platforms grew strongly during 2021. One of our videos even achieved viral status, with over 85,000 views on Twitter.

87. In 2022, BuDS will seek funding to appoint a Communications Officer who can support our ever-growing volunteer team.

## Plans for 2022

88. BuDS' theme for 2022 is: **Bigger, Bolder, Better**. By this, we mean that we will secure the volunteers and funding not only to maintain the services and projects we already have, but also to innovate, develop and expand. This theme is expressed in the following specific strategic objectives:
    a. Secure longer-term strategic grants to fully fund the core functions of the charity and its essential staff and infrastructure over a 5-year period. This includes the charity housekeeping functions, fundraising and senior manager post.
    b. Secure project funding to ensure that BuDS can properly support volunteers in project teams and fund the operational costs of projects.
    c. When it is safe to do so, develop an office and project base to support a hybrid working model where staff and volunteers have choice about where they wish to work.
    d. Continue Covid-related projects which are still of high value to disabled people.
    e. Maintain existing Fair4All projects and develop dormant or evolving Fair4All projects. Appoint a paid Fair4All Project Manager when needed.
    f. Maintain existing Disability Services and evolve new or additional services as opportunity arises. Appoint a paid Disability Services Manager when needed.
    g. Continue to develop and expand Reach4Work. Appoint a paid Reach4Work manager when needed.
    h. Continue to develop housekeeping functions and build up volunteer teams in these areas. Appoint a paid Charity Manager when needed.
    i. Build BuDS as a social community through starting to develop the BuDS Include function.
    j. Maintain and increase the size, skills and commitment of the Trustee Board including planning a successful transition to a new Chair and Vice-Chair from November 2022.

89. The key strategic unknown for 2022 is Covid-19. It is impossible to predict how the pandemic will develop and how BuDS will need to act to continue to support disabled and clinically vulnerable people. Within the broad strategic framework above, decisions on Covid-19 projects will need to be made on a reactive basis.

## Achievements and Performance

### Achievements

90. The following table summarises the difference that each of our projects made to the lives of its beneficiaries:

| Project | Difference to Beneficiaries |
|---|---|
| Enquiries (unique) | Answered questions and offered advocacy support to disabled people which they could not obtain elsewhere |
| BuDDies | Befriended and supported lonely and isolated disabled and clinically vulnerable people |
| Covid-19 (unique) | Information, advice, guidance and analysis about the pandemic for disabled and clinically vulnerable people, including a weekly risk assessment |
| Benefits (unique) | Provided otherwise-unavailable free specialist information about disability benefits to disabled people |
| Fair4All Card (unique) | Helped disabled people get the help and support that they are legally entitled to in shops and public places |
| Fair4All Services | Improved local council and NHS services for disabled people through advocacy and campaigning |
| Fair4All Attitudes & Hate Crime (unique) | Represented the interests of disabled people to Thames Valley Police and the Crown Prosecution Service |
| Fair4All Education | Supported disabled children and young people by addressing deficiencies and problems in SEND education |
| Fair4All Events (unique) | Helped make large public events more accessible and inclusive for all disabled and clinically vulnerable people and educated event organisers |
| Fair4All Public Spaces | Worked with councils and developers to make public spaces, including urban regeneration schemes like Aylesbury Garden Town, more inclusive and accessible for disabled people |
| Reach4Work – General | Supported disabled BuDS volunteers who are jobseekers towards or into work |
| Reach4Work – Digital (unique) | Trains and develops disabled young people for careers in the digital industry |
| Reach4Work – Work Experience | Offers disabled children and young people meaningful and inspiring work experience opportunities |
| BucksWorkability | Works with employers to foster more inclusive workplaces |
| Housekeeping Projects | Allowed disabled people to volunteer in vocational roles which helped move them towards work |

## Cost Effectiveness

91. BuDS aims to be a highly cost-effective and efficient charity. Gifts in kind and the value of voluntary and pro bono support in 2021 amounted to circa £360,000, or £2.47 for every pound raised by BuDS. The principle ways in which this support was obtained are as follows:

    - 170 active volunteers worked a total of 30,493 hours, equivalent to 16 full time staff, representing a financial contribution in kind of around £310,000.
    - IT and software donations, including 183 Microsoft Office 365 licences, representing a financial contribution in kind of £33,160
    - Inhouse design and media production by volunteers saved an estimated £12,000
    - Pro bono professional legal and accountancy support saved an estimated £4,000

92. BuDS would like to thank all the businesses which have supported us, including Microsoft UK Ltd, CloudyIT Ltd, B P Collins LLP and Seymour Taylor Limited.

## Fundraising Activities

93. BuDS expenditure on fundraising activities in 2021, principally the salary of a part-time grants fundraiser, was £10,495, and income generated as a result of this activity was £130,764. This represents a return on investment of 1246%.

# Financial Review for FY 2020/21

*Please note that the accounting period cited in this report is from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, whereas the narrative report above is for calendar year 2021.*

94. Financial year 2020/2021 saw a ten-fold increase in BuDS' income as a result of the charity receiving substantial grants for its work, moving from an income of £13,169 in 2019/20 to £133,672. Much of this grant funding was received in financial year 2020/21, but designated and/or reserved for work to be delivered in calendar year 2021. This meant that the charity had a substantial cash balance of £79,195 at the end of financial year 2020/21 made up largely of designated and/or reserved funds allocated for spend later in 2021.

95. The charity's management accounts show that the cash balance held on 31 March 2021 was constituted as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Designated/reserved funds for spend in 2021: | £68,736 (87%) |
| General funds (later operational reserve): | £9,637 (12%) |
| Formal reserves: | £822 (1%) |

## Reserves Policy

96. The formal Reserves Policy for financial year 2020/21 remained unchanged from 2019/20, i.e. to hold a balance in reserve adequate to cover all legal or employment liabilities and three month's running costs based on the pre-pandemic totals. This total was calculated at £800 and held in the charity's legacy Cooperative Bank account.

97. In June 2021, the rapid expansion of the charity led to a revision of the charity's reserves policy. It was agreed that an operational reserve of £10,000 (drawn from uncommitted funds) should be held in addition to the former £800 formal reserve, to protect the future sustainability of the charity in the event of a cessation of major grant funding. Had this policy been in place as of 31 March 2021, the charity would have had no uncommitted balance of funds in place.

## Charity as a Going Concern

98. Like most charities without a significant standing endowment, BuDS relies on attracting a constant flow of grant and fundraising income to sustain its activities. This exposes the charity to a running risk of future financial deficits which, if unmitigated, could cause the charity to become insolvent or fail as a going concern. Trustees have taken steps to mitigate this risk as follows:
    - The charity treasurer is a qualified accountant and is charged specifically with warning the Board about any financial risk which may occur.
    - A qualified grants fundraiser is employed to generate a constant flow of grant applications, and a fundraising team is being developed to boost voluntary giving
    - A current budget and cash flow is examined at every monthly Trustee meeting and a forward plan is formulated at each Full Trustee meeting. This transparent planning enables all members of the Board to evaluate future risks and to raise concerns at the earliest opportunity
    - A strategic plan is in place which would allow the charity to contract to a size which would be sustainable long-term *without* major grant funding – this was the status quo before the recent expansion. All contracts, including employment contracts, can be terminated with short notice if funding was to fall significantly.

- Employment and service contracts are specifically examined so as to minimise longer-term financial liabilities. The charity had no significant longer-term financial liabilities such as pensions, property leases or redundancy payments in 2020/21.
- From June 2021, in addition to a small reserve, the charity has a policy of maintaining a working balance of uncommitted funds of £10,000 to protect the future sustainability of the charity in the event of a cessation of major grant funding.

99. As a consequence of the mitigations mentioned above, Trustees have no concerns about the charity's ability to remain financially viable and a going concern for the foreseeable future.

## Principal sources of funds

100. In 2020/21, BuDS' principal sources of funding in order of size were as follows. This information is from BuDS' management accounts and is not a complete account of all income received.

| Source | Type | Amount |
|---|---|---|
| The Rothschild Foundation | Unrestricted grant | £50,000 |
| The National Lottery Community Fund | Unrestricted grant | £36,176 |
| Children in Need/Youth Futures Fund | Restricted grant for Reach4Work with unrestricted full-cost recovery element | £20,605 including £1872 FCR |
| European Social Fund | Restricted grant – Reach4Work with unrestricted full-cost recovery element | £10,017 including £1788 FCR |
| Heart of Buckinghamshire Foundation | Restricted grants - Covid-19 projects | £8000 |
| HMG Covid-19 Additional Restrictions grant | Unrestricted grant | £3000 |
| Aylesbury Town Council | Restricted grant for Fair4All Card project | £1436 |
| Waitrose Community Matters | Unrestricted grants | £1332 |
| Donations from individuals | | £835 |
| Fundraising & Sponsored Events | | £378 |

101. As can be seen, in the unusual circumstances of 2020/21, BuDS was heavily reliant on grants with a small and much reduced income from donations and fundraising compared to previous years. Trustees have plans in place to return to a more diverse income stream in future years.

## Investment Policy

102. BuDS has no investment funds and therefore no investment policy. One will be adopted if needed in the future.

## Principal risks facing the charity

103. The principal risks facing the charity, and the mitigations in place for them, are as follows:

| Risk Type | Mitigation | Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| Structural Risks | BuDS has an appropriate legal form, registered with the Charity Commission and is in good governance, maintaining membership of NCVO and the Fundraising | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Regulator. Trustee Liability insurance is in place. Approval is in place for the charity to take the form of a charitable limited company and Trustees are moving ahead with this change in 2022. | |
| Trustee-related Risks | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to ensure a broad range of appropriate skills, and Trustee training is delivered. Good governance is maintained in the forms of transparent evidence-based decision-making at frequent well-attended meetings. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Conflicts of Interest | The size and composition of the Trustee Board is actively managed to avoid conflicts of interest and only two Trustees of 10 are related. Conflicts of interest are transparently managed by Trustees without a conflict, eg relating to the employment of family members of Trustees. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Safeguarding Risks | Safeguarding policies and practices are in place, and safeguarding is actively managed across the charity by a dedicated Trustee sub-committee which includes trained safeguarding personnel. Safeguarding incidents are managed appropriately and links to the MASH hub used as necessary. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Contractual Risks | The Senior Management Team actively manages all current contracts, and all significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Staff-related Risks | A qualified HR professional is in post and appropriate staffing policies are in place. Appropriate employment-related insurance is in place and regularly reviewed. A Staffing Committee of the Trustee Board meets as needed. Staffing decisions which might give rise to liability (e.g. disciplinary actions) are managed by HR professional with external lawyers input as needed. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Financial Risks | See above | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Reputational Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all reputational risks, and appropriate editorial processes and policies are in place including designated spokespeople and restrictions on social media use. Defamation and litigation liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Compliance Risks | The charity has few activities which are subject to formal accreditation or compliance regimes, but Senior Management Team actively manages compliance issues, and all significant contracts are subject to legal advice and Trustee approval. Professional liability insurance cover is in place for all activities. Where a new activity raises a compliance risk, this is assessed and mitigated before commencement | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |
| Legal Risks | The Senior Management Team and Trustee Board actively manages all legal risks, and appropriate processes and policies are in place to mitigate a legal liability including formal approval processes and staff training. Public and professional insurance cover is in place for all activities. The charity has a retained legal advisor, a leading local practice. | All significant risks are satisfactorily mitigated |

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name: Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS)

Other name the charity uses: BuDS

Registered charity number: 1102511

Charity's principal address: Buckinghamshire Disability Service, c/o B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL

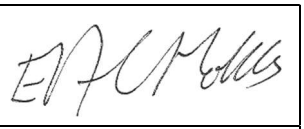
## Advisors

| Type of advisor | Name | Address |
|---|---|---|
| **Accountant** | Seymour Taylor | 57 London Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 1BS |
| **Solicitor** | B P Collins | B P Collins LLP, Collins House, 20 Station Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8EL |

## Declarations

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Signature(s)** |  |  |
| **Full name(s)** | Andrew Clark | Elizabeth Hobbs |
| **Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)** | Chair of Trustees | Charity Secretary |
| **Date** | 31/01/2022 | 31/01/2022 |

# Buckinghamshire Disability Service

**Registered Charity No. 1102511**

**Accounts for the year ended**

**31 March 2021**

Seymour Taylor Limited
57 London Road
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP11 1BS

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE DISABILITY SERVICE ("BuDS")**
**CHARITY NO. 1102511**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

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

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

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or

2. the accounts do not accord with those records

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.

Seymour Taylor Limited

Tim Fulker BSc(Econ) FCA
Seymour Taylor Limited
57 London Road
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP11 1BS

31 January 2022

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

| Buckinghamshire Disability Services ("BuDS") | 1102511 | CC16a |
|---|---|---|

Receipts and payments accounts

| For the period from | 1.04.2020 | To | 31.03.2021 |
|---|---|---|---|

## Section A Receipts and payments

| | Unrestricted funds to the nearest £ | Restricted funds to the nearest £ | Endowment funds to the nearest £ | Total funds to the nearest £ | Last year to the nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A1 Receipts** | | | | | |
| Grants Unrestricted | 89,176 | - | - | 89,176 | 3,548 |
| Grants Restricted | | 9,436 | - | 9,436 | 4,991 |
| Reach4Work -Restricted | | 32,152 | - | 32,152 | - |
| Fair4All Projects - Restricted | | | - | - | - |
| Disability Services - Restricted | | | - | - | - |
| Donations | 2,647 | | - | 2,647 | 2,140 |
| Other Income | 261 | | - | 261 | 2,490 |
| | | | - | - | - |
| *Sub total (Gross income for AR)* | 92,084 | 41,588 | - | 133,672 | 13,169 |
| **A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Sub total* | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Total receipts* | 92,084 | 41,588 | - | 133,672 | 13,169 |
| **A3 Payments** | | | | | |
| Reach4Work | | 18,201 | | 18,201 | - |
| Fair4All Projects | | 6,347 | - | 6,347 | - |
| Disability Services | | 21,459 | | 21,459 | - |
| Governance | 11,756 | | | 11,756 | |
| Digital & Internet | 6,426 | | - | 6,426 | - |
| Other Expenses | 235 | | | 235 | |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | - |
| *Sub total* | 18,417 | 46,007 | - | 64,424 | 9,278 |
| **A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| *Sub total* | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Total payments* | 18,417 | 46,007 | - | 64,424 | 9,278 |
| *Net of receipts/(payments)* | 73,667 | - 4,419 | - | 69,248 | 3,891 |
| A5 Transfers between funds | - 19,285 | 19,285 | - | - | - |
| A6 Cash funds last year end | 7,066 | 2,881 | - | 9,947 | 6,056 |
| *Cash funds this year end* | 61,448 | 17,747 | - | 79,195 | 9,947 |

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

**B1 Cash funds**

| Categories | Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CAF Bank account | 60,626 | 17,747 | - |
| | Co-op Bank account | 822 | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | ***Total cash funds*** (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s)) | 61,448 | 17,747 | - |

**B2 Other monetary assets**

| Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |

**B3 Investment assets**

| Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |

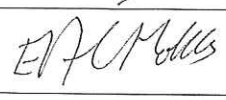
**B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use**

| Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |

**B5 Liabilities**

| Details | Fund to which liability relates | Amount due (optional) | When due (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

| Signature | Print Name | Date of approval |
|---|---|---|
|  | Andrew Clark | 31.01.2022 |
|  | Elizabeth Hobbs | 31.01.2022 |

# Buckinghamshire Disability Service

**Registered Charity No. 1102511**

**Accounts for the year ended**

**31 March 2021**

Seymour Taylor Limited
57 London Road
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP11 1BS

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE DISABILITY SERVICE ("BuDS")**
**CHARITY NO. 1102511**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Receipts and Payments Account and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

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

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

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or

2. the accounts do not accord with those records

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.

Seymour Taylor Limited

Tim Fulker BSc(Econ) FCA
Seymour Taylor Limited
57 London Road
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP11 1BS

31 January 2022

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

| Buckinghamshire Disability Services ("BuDS") | 1102511 | CC16a |
|---|---|---|

Receipts and payments accounts

| For the period from | 1.04.2020 | To | 31.03.2021 |
|---|---|---|---|

## Section A Receipts and payments

| | Unrestricted funds to the nearest £ | Restricted funds to the nearest £ | Endowment funds to the nearest £ | Total funds to the nearest £ | Last year to the nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A1 Receipts** | | | | | |
| Grants Unrestricted | 89,176 | - | - | 89,176 | 3,548 |
| Grants Restricted | | 9,436 | - | 9,436 | 4,991 |
| Reach4Work -Restricted | | 32,152 | - | 32,152 | - |
| Fair4All Projects - Restricted | | | - | - | - |
| Disability Services - Restricted | | | - | - | - |
| Donations | 2,647 | | - | 2,647 | 2,140 |
| Other Income | 261 | | - | 261 | 2,490 |
| | | | - | - | - |
| *Sub total (Gross income for AR)* | 92,084 | 41,588 | - | 133,672 | 13,169 |
| **A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Sub total* | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Total receipts* | 92,084 | 41,588 | - | 133,672 | 13,169 |
| **A3 Payments** | | | | | |
| Reach4Work | | 18,201 | | 18,201 | - |
| Fair4All Projects | | 6,347 | - | 6,347 | - |
| Disability Services | | 21,459 | | 21,459 | - |
| Governance | 11,756 | | | 11,756 | |
| Digital & Internet | 6,426 | | - | 6,426 | - |
| Other Expenses | 235 | | | 235 | |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | - |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | |
| | | | | - | - |
| *Sub total* | 18,417 | 46,007 | - | 64,424 | 9,278 |
| **A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)** | | | | | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | - | - | - | |
| *Sub total* | - | - | - | - | - |
| *Total payments* | 18,417 | 46,007 | - | 64,424 | 9,278 |
| *Net of receipts/(payments)* | 73,667 | - 4,419 | - | 69,248 | 3,891 |
| A5 Transfers between funds | - 19,285 | 19,285 | - | - | - |
| A6 Cash funds last year end | 7,066 | 2,881 | - | 9,947 | 6,056 |
| *Cash funds this year end* | 61,448 | 17,747 | - | 79,195 | 9,947 |

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

**B1 Cash funds**

| Categories | Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CAF Bank account | 60,626 | 17,747 | - |
| | Co-op Bank account | 822 | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | ***Total cash funds*** (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s)) | 61,448 | 17,747 | - |

**B2 Other monetary assets**

| Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - |

**B3 Investment assets**

| Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |

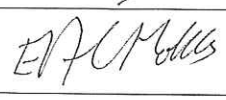
**B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use**

| Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |
| | | - | - |

**B5 Liabilities**

| Details | Fund to which liability relates | Amount due (optional) | When due (optional) |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |
| | | - | |

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

| Signature | Print Name | Date of approval |
|---|---|---|
|  | Andrew Clark | 31.01.2022 |
|  | Elizabeth Hobbs | 31.01.2022 |