

**Charity number: 1109858**

**The RFL Benevolent Fund**  
**Trustees' report and financial statements**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2023**

# **The RFL Benevolent Fund**

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## **The RFL Benevolent Fund**

### **Legal and administrative information**

<b>Charity number</b>	1109858	
<b>Business address</b>	c/o University of Huddersfield Queensgate Huddersfield HD1 3DH	
<b>Trustees</b>	Tim Adams MBE Philip Clarke Gary Hetherington David Hinchliffe Karen Moorhouse Beth Sutcliffe Kevin Sinfield OBE Neville Smith Jane Walton Victoria Sinicola  Stuart Taylor	Resigned 1 June 2023     Appointed 28 April 2022 Appointed 1 June 2023 Appointed 1 June 2023 Appointed 1 June 2023 Appointed 9 August 2023; Resigned 30 April 2024 Appointed 9 August 2023
<b>Accountants</b>	SMH Howard Matthews Limited Queensgate House 23 North Park Road Harrogate North Yorkshire HG1 5PD	
<b>Bankers</b>	National Westminster Bank plc PO Box 154 8 Park Row Leeds LS1 1QS	

## **The RFL Benevolent Fund**

### **Report of the trustees for the year ended 31 December 2023**

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023. The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1.

#### **Structure, governance and management**

##### *Constitution*

The Charity was formed by a Deed of Trust dated 4 February 2005 and is registered with the Charity Commission - Registration number 1109858.

##### *Organisational structure*

The Trustees are appointed and removed from office by a 75% majority of the Trustees of the RFL Benevolent Fund.

New trustees are chosen with a view to ensuring that the Board contains an appropriate balance of experience relevant to the requirements of the operations of the Benevolent Fund.

The Board of Trustees aims to meet quarterly to meet the on-going commitments of the Benevolent Fund and to appraise grant applications. Day to day management of the Benevolent Fund is handled by its general manager, Stephen Ball. The Trustees act as key management personnel for the Charity, and are responsible for significant decisions made.

All new trustees are trained as appropriate and all existing trustees receive updates from the Charity Commission.

##### *Risk management*

During the year, the trustees have reviewed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, particularly those related to the finances of the Charity. The Trustees have considered the appropriate policies, procedures and systems and are confident that they are adequate to mitigate the Charity's exposure to the major risks.

The Trustees ensure internal financial control is maintained by having a system of periodic management information reports, clear administrative and financial procedures and clear lines of accounting. No fundamental weaknesses in systems and controls have been identified in the year.

The Trustees consider that an internal audit function is not required based on the relative size of the Charity, the risks identified, and controls in place to mitigate these risks.

In the opinion of the Trustees, the Charity has ensured that under normal conditions, risks are mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operations.

#### **Objectives and activities**

##### *Objectives*

The objectives of the RFL Benevolent Fund ("the Benevolent Fund"), as set out in the trust deed dated 4 February 2005, are to provide for the relief of people (and their dependents) who play, assist, or who have played or assisted in the game of Rugby League in the UK or for a team affiliated to an association primarily based in the UK, and who are in hardship or distress in particular as a result of injury or death through playing or training for the game of Rugby Football League or when travelling to or from a game or training session.

The key financial objectives in the period were to raise at least £200,000 and to retain at least 50% of available funds for beneficiaries. This policy is adopted by the Trustees to keep funds available in the event that funding is needed in respect of major injuries which require significant medical support.

##### *Volunteers*

All the Trustees of the Benevolent Fund are volunteers, in addition, other volunteers are used in the raising of funds.

## **The RFL Benevolent Fund**

### **Report of the trustees for the year ended 31 December 2023**

#### *Grant making policy*

The Benevolent Fund ensures the grants awarded contribute to the delivery of its objectives and priorities by the application of a review and assessment process designed for purpose.

All the applicants are reviewed to ensure eligibility of the applicant. Applications which fit the eligibility criteria are taken into assessment where analysis of the applications and all relevant supporting documents is undertaken.

All applications are reported to the Trustees for decisions. Trustees consider the assessment reports, risk factor and recommendations in deciding which applications to support.

#### *Public benefit*

The Trustees are aware of the Charity Commission's advice on Charities and Public Benefit.

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Trust's aims and objectives and in planning future activities for the year.

The Benevolent fund aims to improve the lives of all players who have been seriously injured whilst involved in the playing of Rugby League. Typical areas of support include physiotherapy, improvements to homes and vehicles and provision of household appliances and holidays, although other forms of support are given if deemed appropriate. Each request for support is considered on a case-by-case basis and support is open to all players without restriction.

#### **Achievements and performance**

During 2023 the problems associated with Covid 19 had reduced and the Fund in the main reverted back to its traditional way of working. Fortunately there was no permanent serious injury to any player but demand from our existing beneficiaries remained high.

Fundraising improved in 2023 with the reintroduction of the Presidents Ball. Funds were received from RFL and once again from the Steve Prescott foundation. 2023 also saw the introduction of the Brain Health Fund, a far reaching education and support programme for both current and retired rugby league players.

The Benevolent Fund continues to be much respected within the game of Rugby League and remains well thought of by many outside the game.

#### **Financial review**

The Benevolent Fund generated income of £420,726 (2022: £201,532) during the year. Since the Benevolent Fund was established, £3,816,437 has been distributed to beneficiaries, representing 61% of the £6,247,686 generated during the same period.

The surplus for the year was £217,529 (2022: £56,787 deficit) leaving the Benevolent Fund with net assets of £992,703 (2022: £775,174). The results for the year are set out in the Statement of Financial activities on page 7.

## **The RFL Benevolent Fund**

### **Report of the trustees for the year ended 31 December 2023**

#### *Reserves policy*

It is the policy of the Trustees to maintain unrestricted funds which are the free reserves of the Charity at a level to provide sufficient funds to cover administration and support costs and working capital of the Charity. In addition, the Trustees have adopted a policy of keeping funds available if funding is needed in respect of major injuries which require significant medical support. The Trustees have set target levels of £50,000 for administration and support costs and £100,000 for working capital of the Charity. The balance is to cover the eventuality of major injuries requiring significant medical support. The long-term target level of free reserves is set at £1,000,000 including the £50,000 for administration and support costs and £100,000 for working capital of the Charity. At the year end free reserves £850,498 (2022: £766,181). It is the aim of the Benevolent Fund to build up its reserves so it has funds available to make support payments, even if the funds generated in the year are at a low level.

#### *Investment powers*

The Trustees have powers to deposit or invest funds in any manner but to invest only after obtaining advice from a financial expert and having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification. The options for alternative investment strategies are currently being progressed by the Trustees.

#### **Plans for future periods**

The Trustees are confident that the value of donations and fundraising will continue in future years so that the Trustees can maintain and increase the value of all grants as and when required.

The Fund works closely with its sister charity, Rugby League Cares, which raises awareness of its activities by promoting its fundraising activities through leaflets, Rugby League Cares and the RFL websites, and by including articles about the Benevolent Fund in their central events programmes and newsletters.

#### **Statement of trustees' responsibilities**

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

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

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

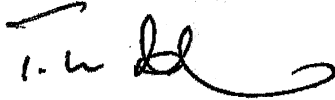
The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008.

**The RFL Benevolent Fund**

**Report of the trustees  
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the board of trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Adams', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**Tim Adams MBE  
Chairman**

**12 September 2024**

## **The RFL Benevolent Fund**

### **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The RFL Benevolent Fund.**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of The RFL Benevolent Fund for the year ended 31 December 2023 set out on pages 2 to 14.

#### **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**

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

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

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



.....  
**Howard Matthews BA FCA**  
**ICAEW**  
**Independent examiner**  
**SMH Howard Matthews Limited**  
**Queensgate House**  
**23 North Park Road**  
**Harrogate**  
**HG1 5PD**

**19 September 2024**

# The RFL Benevolent Fund

## Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 31 December 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Incoming resources from generating funds:					
Voluntary income	2	152,413	155,987	308,400	188,620
Activities for generating funds	3	68,546	-	68,546	11,960
Investment income	4	43,780	-	43,780	952
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<u>264,739</u>	<u>155,987</u>	<u>420,726</u>	<u>201,532</u>
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Charitable activities	5	175,185	22,775	197,960	207,709
Governance costs	7	5,237	-	5,237	50,610
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<u>180,422</u>	<u>22,775</u>	<u>203,197</u>	<u>258,319</u>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>		84,317	133,212	217,529	(56,787)
Total funds brought forward		<u>766,181</u>	<u>8,993</u>	<u>775,174</u>	<u>831,961</u>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<u>850,498</u>	<u>142,205</u>	<u>992,703</u>	<u>775,174</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

The notes on pages 9 to 14 form an integral part of these financial statements.

## The RFL Benevolent Fund

### Balance sheet as at 31 December 2023

	Notes	£	2023	£	£	2022	£
<b>Current assets</b>							
Debtors	11	39,818			61,770		
Investments	12	481,619			446,891		
Cash at bank and in hand		479,126			301,607		
		<u>1,000,563</u>			<u>810,268</u>		
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	13	<u>(7,860)</u>			<u>(35,094)</u>		
<b>Net current assets</b>				992,703			775,174
<b>Net assets</b>				<u>992,703</u>			<u>775,174</u>
<b>Funds</b>	14						
Restricted income funds	16			142,205			8,993
Unrestricted income funds	15			850,498			766,181
<b>Total funds</b>				<u>992,703</u>			<u>775,174</u>

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 12 September 2024 and signed on its behalf by



**Tim Adams MBE**  
Trustee

The notes on pages 9 to 14 form an integral part of these financial statements.

## **The RFL Benevolent Fund**

### **Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023**

#### **1. Accounting policies**

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year and the preceding year.

##### **1.1. Basis of accounting**

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011 and UK GAAP as it applies from 1 January 2015.

##### **1.2. Cashflow**

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS1 from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement because it is a small charity.

##### **1.3. Incoming resources**

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the statement of financial activities when receivable. Grants where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included.

Gifts donated for resale are included as incoming resources within activities for generating funds when they are sold.

Income from investments is included in the year in which it is receivable.

##### **1.4. Resources expended**

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

##### **1.5. Investments**

Current asset investments are at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

##### **1.6. Defined contribution pension schemes**

The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contribution payable by the charity during the year.

## The RFL Benevolent Fund

### Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

#### 2. Voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Donations unrestricted	10,163	-	10,163	30,010
Donations restricted	-	13,048	13,048	8,610
The Rugby Football League	100,000	-	100,000	100,000
Steve Prescott foundation	42,250	-	42,250	50,000
Logan and Gary's Lions Heart fund	-	33,193	33,193	-
Brain health fund	-	109,746	109,746	-
	<u>152,413</u>	<u>155,987</u>	<u>308,400</u>	<u>188,620</u>

#### 3. Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
President's ball	42,119	42,119	-
Lions lunch	26,427	26,427	11,960
	<u>68,546</u>	<u>68,546</u>	<u>11,960</u>

#### 4. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Income from UK investments	34,728	34,728	-
Bank interest receivable	9,052	9,052	952
	<u>43,780</u>	<u>43,780</u>	<u>952</u>

#### 5. Costs of charitable activities - by fund type

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Benevolent fund	144,858	22,775	167,633	200,323
Presidents ball	18,200	-	18,200	-
Lions lunch	12,127	-	12,127	7,386
	<u>175,185</u>	<u>22,775</u>	<u>197,960</u>	<u>207,709</u>

## The RFL Benevolent Fund

### Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

#### 6. Costs of charitable activities - by activity

	Activities undertaken directly £	Grant funding activities £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Benevolent fund	166,083	1,550	167,633	200,323
Presidents ball	18,200	-	18,200	-
Lions lunch	12,127	-	12,127	7,386
	<u>196,410</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>197,960</u>	<u>207,709</u>

#### 7. Governance costs

	Unrestricted funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Professional - Accountancy fees	3,382	3,382	3,430
Professional - Other	1,370	1,370	1,994
Just giving costs	360	360	450
Bank charges	125	125	74
Amounts written off investments	-	-	26,662
Other governance costs	-	-	18,000
	<u>5,237</u>	<u>5,237</u>	<u>50,610</u>

## The RFL Benevolent Fund

### Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

#### 8. Employees

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	48,843	44,967
Pension costs	9,200	9,489
Car allowance	4,800	4,800
Other costs	545	545
	<u>63,388</u>	<u>59,801</u>

No employee received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000 (2022 : None).

#### Number of employees

The average monthly numbers of employees (including the trustees) during the year, calculated on the basis of full time equivalents, was as follows:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Delivery of services	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

Trustees received no salaries or expenses in the year (2022 : None)

#### 10. Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The scheme and its assets are held by independent managers. The pension charge represents contributions due from the charity and was as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Pension charge	<u>9,200</u>	<u>9,489</u>

#### 11. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Other debtors	34,995	50,000
Prepayments and accrued income	4,823	11,770
	<u>39,818</u>	<u>61,770</u>

## The RFL Benevolent Fund

### Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

#### 12. Current asset investments

	2023	2022
	£	£
Managed investments	481,619	446,891

#### 13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other taxes and social security	714	166
Accruals and deferred income	7,146	34,928
	7,860	35,094

#### 14. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 as represented by:			
Investment assets	481,619	-	481,619
Current assets	376,739	142,205	518,944
Current liabilities	(7,860)	-	(7,860)
	850,498	142,205	992,703

#### 15. Unrestricted funds

	At 1 January 2023	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	At 31 December 2023
	£	£	£	£
Benevolent Fund	766,181	264,739	(180,422)	850,498

## The RFL Benevolent Fund

### Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

#### 16. Restricted funds

	At 1 January 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	At 31 December 2023 £
Defibrillator Fund	815	13,048	(1,550)	12,313
Bruce Fund	8,178	-	-	8,178
Brain Health Fund	-	109,746	(21,225)	88,521
Logan and Gary's Lions Heart Fund	-	37,193	(4,000)	33,193
	<u>8,993</u>	<u>159,987</u>	<u>(26,775)</u>	<u>142,205</u>

#### 17. Related party transactions

The Rugby Football League Limited is a debtor to the charity for £8,333 (2022: £25,000) at the year end.

Rugby League Cares, which has common trustees, is a debtor to the charity for £26,661 (2022: £25,000) at the year end.