

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

Report and financial statements
For the year ended 31st March 2023

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

Reference and administrative information

for the year ended 31st March 2023

Charity number 1113201

Registered office and operational address Windrush Millennium Centre
Unit 2.5
70 Alexandra Road
Moss Side
Manchester
M16 7WD

Trustees Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Ms Caroline Bedale
Mr Geoffrey Tweedale
Ms Ann Oldham (Resigned June 2022)
Ms Vera Rigby (Resigned June 2022)
Mr Anthony Coombs
Mr Tony Whitston
Mrs Lauren Ross
Mrs Lorraine Creech

Key management

Personnel	Graham Dring	Asbestos Victims Support Group Worker
	Rob Rayner	Asbestos Victims Support Group Coordinator
	Joel Sloan	Asbestos Victims Support Group Worker

Bankers Unity Trust Bank
Nine Brindleyplace
Birmingham
B1 2HB

Independent Examiner

Jennifer Daniel FCCA DChA
Slade & Cooper Limited
Beehive Mill
Jersey Street
Manchester M4 6JG

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

Trustees' annual report

for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2023.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the charity's trust constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

GMAVSG Charitable Objects:

To relieve the charitable needs of sufferers of asbestos-related diseases, in particular but not exclusively by

- (A) the provision of an advice and information service;
- (B) advice about and assistance in claiming compensation and state benefits;
- (C) advice about treatment, and the provision of medical aids or other financial assistance or means to enable such people to improve their conditions of life.

This helps members of the public for whom there is no other similar source of advice, information and support in the Greater Manchester area. Activities are carried out to ensure benefit not just for people suffering from asbestos-related diseases and their families, but also for the wider public who may be exposed to asbestos at home or at work or in the environment.

The main activities undertaken in relation to purposes (A) and (B) are:

- 1) Provision of an advice and information service to anyone suffering from an asbestos-related disease
- 2) Advice and assistance in claiming compensation and state benefits

These activities are mainly undertaken in the Greater Manchester area. If people from outside Greater Manchester contact GMAVSG, they may be referred to a group elsewhere in the country if appropriate; if there is no appropriate group, the staff of GMAVSG will do their best to help.

The main activities undertaken in relation to purpose (C) are:

- 1) Involvement in and support for a Families Group, which meets regularly.
- 2) A support group for mesothelioma patients and carers – 'Living Well with Mesothelioma' – organised with the Mesothelioma UK Nurses at the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust and covering the Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance.

There are also other activities undertaken by GMAVSG to further the charity's purposes for the public benefit. This involves local and national work to raise awareness about the dangers of asbestos, to improve benefits and compensation for people with asbestos-related diseases, and to press for more research into the care and treatment of people with asbestos-related diseases.

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for the year ended 31st March 2023

Achievements and performance

The charity's main activities and who it tries to help are described below. Its charitable activities focus on people with asbestos-related diseases and are undertaken to further Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group's charitable purposes for the public benefit.

In 2022/23 the three workers were able to offer home visits once again, although some advice and assistance was still provided by telephone because of the continuing risk of Covid-19. The workers helped 229 people newly diagnosed with an asbestos-related disease. 112 had been diagnosed with mesothelioma, an aggressive cancer caused by asbestos. During the continuing lockdowns, and even when these were lifted many vulnerable people were still 'shielding', so there had been a marked drop in the numbers of people with asbestosis, diffuse pleural thickening, and lung cancer being referred to GMAVSG by hospitals. Many people were reluctant to attend hospitals and GP surgeries, and the NHS was facing considerable strain and disruption. As the lockdowns were lifted, the numbers of people referred to GMAVSG have risen again for asbestosis and pleural thickening, though have dropped slightly for lung cancer. Despite predictions that the mesothelioma epidemic would peak in 2015, the numbers have still not fallen significantly.

In 2022/23, work to further the charity's purposes for the public benefit has included:

- 1) Participation in the All Party Parliamentary Occupational Group on Occupational Safety and Health – Asbestos Sub Committee. Via this and by formal responses to official consultation documents the group advocates to improve the rights of asbestos disease sufferers and their families.
- 2) The Forum is working with the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) and others to reform the way that compensation for asbestos-related lung cancer is paid. Currently, compensation is reduced if the insurer or one or more of the former employers cannot be traced. In contrast, people with mesothelioma get all their compensation so long as at least one insurer can be traced. The first step is an Early Day Motion, from which it is hoped a Private Members Bill will be introduced.
- 3) Participation in the Asbestos Victims Support Groups Forum (The Forum) across the country. With two nationally funded research organisations the Forum participates in the National Mesothelioma Research Network, to encourage cooperation between researchers to find better treatments, and in the long term possibly a cure, for mesothelioma. GMAVSG has continued to play a leading role in the national campaigns of the Forum especially as one of the workers, Rob Rayner, chaired the Forum during 2022/23.
- 4) Cape Case: Following the success of the Forum's legal battle to access documents relating to former asbestos manufacturer Cape Intermediate Holdings Limited, the campaign moved to demand that Cape should make a significant donation (£10 million) to mesothelioma research. This campaign is ongoing as agreement has still not been reached with Cape over this, despite protests and meetings.
- 5) GMAVSG has worked with the Forum and with solicitors to monitor the workings of the Diffuse Mesothelioma Payments Scheme, reviewing how long it has been taking to process claims, and to press for legislative changes to resolve deficiencies – such as that the scheme does not allow posthumous claims from non-dependants.
- 6) A new campaign was started in early 2022, when the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) announced the planned closure of Phoenix House in Barrow-in-Furness. This is the office that dealt with claims for industrial injuries benefits, and with redundancy of experienced staff, asbestos victims will inevitably face a huge increase in delay and error when it comes to the

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

Trustees' annual report

for the year ended 31st March 2023

handling of their benefit claims. By the end of March 2023 it looked unlikely that Phoenix House would stay open.

- 7) Asbestos in schools: GMAVSG has continued to work with other groups on the problem of asbestos in schools, and the dangers posed to pupils and staff.
- 8) GMAVSG has continued to be involved with the HSE and other organisations to raise awareness about the dangers of asbestos particularly for workers still exposed to asbestos in the course of their work.
- 9) Events and Fundraising: through a variety of events, such as Action Mesothelioma Day (AMD) on the first Friday in July each year, charity events, sponsorships and sporting events, GMAVSG has raised funds for our work and increased awareness about the dangers and effects of asbestos, within the workplace and beyond.
- 10) After two years of being held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was a poignant return to Lincoln Square in Manchester on 1st July 2022, for our dove release and minute's silence. Rebecca Long-Bailey MP, Janet Newsham of the Greater Manchester Hazards Centre, and Mairead Dixon of Mesothelioma UK spoke very movingly. Kate Green MP and Tony Lloyd MP sent messages of support. Over £8,000 was raised for the June Hancock Mesothelioma Research Fund and the National Centre for Mesothelioma Research.
- 11) GMAVSG is involved in and supports a Families Group, which provides mutual support for families affected by mesothelioma and encourages them to participate in events and campaigns to raise awareness of mesothelioma. There was a welcome return to face-to-face meetings, including a Christmas lunch.
- 12) The support group for mesothelioma patients and carers – 'Living Well with Mesothelioma' – organised jointly by GMAVSG and the Mesothelioma UK Nurses at the University Hospitals Manchester NHS Trust and covering the Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance – has continued to meet monthly, in person, and there was a well-attended Christmas lunch.

Financial review

The amount of benefits and compensation advice and information work has remained steady and has provided more than enough work for the one full-time and two part-time workers to cover. A considerable amount of the charity's reserves had been used since 2015/16, although the amount of donations had remained steady until the pandemic. Following a review of the financial strategy during 2017/18, the financial position of the charity has greatly improved: by raising the solicitors panel donations and encouraging general donations. No bids were made to grant-making trusts in 2022/23.

Overall, the financial position of the charity continues to be healthy.

Reserves policy

Any reserves of funds are held for the purpose of ensuring the continuation of the provision of the services and activities of the Charity in the event that current funding sources cease to yield the same level of income.

The reserves held at the end of 2022/23 amounted to a little under £299,000.

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Trustees' annual report

for the year ended 31st March 2023

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is an unincorporated charity. Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group was established under a constitution dated 1st July 2005 and registered as a Charity on 7th March 2006, number 1113201, in England and Wales.

The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 2 to the accounts.

There is a minimum of three Trustees, and no maximum number. A Trustee must be a member of the Charity or the nominated representative of an organisation that is a member of the Charity.

Membership of the Charity is open to individuals over eighteen or organisations that are approved by the Trustees. Each of the Trustees shall retire with effect from the conclusion of the annual general meeting next after his or her appointment but shall be eligible for re-election at that annual general meeting.

During 2022/23, at the AGM in June 2022, two Trustees resigned from the charity, leaving 6 trustees. Prior to the AGM of the charity each year, invitations for nominations are circulated to members of the support groups and to others who have attended meetings or expressed an interest in GMAVSG. Any nominations are considered at the AGM.

Currently there are no representatives of any organisation – all the trustees are individual members of the charity.

Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

None.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the period and of its financial position at the end of the period. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- 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 and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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. They 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.

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The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Trustees' annual report has been approved by the trustees on 17/01/2024 and signed on their behalf by

Name Caroline Bedale

Title Treasurer

Independent examiner's report
to the members of
Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2023 which are set out on pages 8 to 9.

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 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.

Jennifer Daniel FCCA DChA

Slade & Cooper Limited, Chartered Certified Accountants
Beehive Mill, Jersey Street
Manchester, M4 6JG

Date 19/01/2024

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

**Receipts and Payments Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 £	2022 £
Receipts					
Donations		46,591	-	46,591	39,117
Gift aid		11,916	-	11,916	9,780
Job Retention Scheme		-	-	-	3,762
Grant income		-	-	-	2,400
Fees and other income		416	-	416	-
Solicitors panel		86,250	-	86,250	93,750
Bank interest		1,274	-	1,274	597
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total receipts		146,447	-	146,447	149,406
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Payments					
<i>Charitable expenditure</i>					
Premises		5,396	-	5,396	6,084
Insurance		1,699	-	1,699	1,203
Sundry expenditure		810	-	810	2,063
Postage and delivery		2,205	-	2,205	3,370
Printing and materials		751	-	751	1,523
Publications		374	-	374	179
Telephone		1,316	-	1,316	1,601
Refreshments		242	-	242	302
Room hire		210	-	210	270
Stationery		281	-	281	487
IT		1,642	-	1,642	1,691
Travel and subsistence		1,002	-	1,002	172
Management fee		-	-	-	-
Accountancy		799	-	799	1,399
Storage		314	-	314	430
Website		348	-	348	394
Bank charges		158	-	158	186
Donations/Gifts		10,387	-	10,387	13,157
Legal Fees		-	-	-	150
Membership and subscriptions		50	-	50	50
Equipment and furniture		306	-	306	1,439
Salaries and Oncosts		95,688	-	95,688	95,680
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total payments		123,978	-	123,978	131,830
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net receipts for the year		22,469	-	22,469	17,576
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net movement in funds		22,469	-	22,469	17,576
Bank and cash balances at start of year		273,497	-	273,497	255,921
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Bank and cash balances at end of the year		£ 295,966	£ -	£ 295,966	273,497
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities
as at 31 March 2023**

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Bank and cash balances		295,966	273,497
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Fixed Assests			
Computers		3,142	3,142
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Current assets			
Debtors		-	713
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Liabilities			
Creditors due within one year		840	840
		<hr/>	<hr/>

Caroline Bedale (Treasurer)

Date 18/01/2024

Notes

- 1 Related party: The charity works alongside a company, Greater Manchester Hazards Centre Limited (company registration no. 2657947). Caroline Bedale is a trustee of the charity and a director of the company although otherwise the two organisations have separate management. The company provides premises to the charity and the cost to the charity in these accounts was £5,396. All other expenditure made by GMHC on behalf of GMAVSG is reimbursed at cost (such as photocopying, office telephone and internet, accounting payroll and pension costs, insurance).
- 2 Trustee Expenses Reimbursed: Nil (2022: Nil) Trustee claimed expenses reimbursed from the Charity totalling £Nil (2022: £Nil).