

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

Report and financial statements
For the year ended 31st March 2024

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

Reference and administrative information

for the year ended 31st March 2024

Charity number 1113201

Registered office and operational address Wesley Centre
Royce Road
Manchester
M15 5BP
(PO Box 583 M16 6HF)

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

Ms Caroline Bedale
Mr Geoffrey Tweedale
Mr Anthony Coombs (resigned October 2024)
Mr Tony Whitston (resigned July 2024)
Mrs Lauren Ross
Mrs Lorraine Creech
Ms Susan Phillips (appointed July 2024)

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 2024

The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2024.

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 2024

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 2023/24 the three workers continued to offer home visits, although some advice and assistance was still provided by telephone because of the continuing risk of Covid-19. The workers helped 228 people newly diagnosed with an asbestos-related disease. 115 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. As the lockdowns were lifted, the numbers of people referred to GMAVSG rose again. Despite predictions that the mesothelioma epidemic would peak in 2015, the numbers have still not fallen significantly.

In 2023/24, 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) 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.
- 3) GMAVSG has continued to play an important role in the national campaigns of the Forum, particularly the 'Cape Must Pay' campaign, which included several protests at Cape factory sites, a lobby of Parliament, a lobby at the Labour Party Conference and promotion of an Early Day Motion. This campaign is ongoing as agreement has still not been reached with Cape over the demand that they pay £10 million to mesothelioma research.
- 4) Despite an active campaign, started in early 2022, the dedicated office that dealt with claims for industrial injuries benefits – Phoenix House in Barrow-in-Furness – was closed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in September 2023. This has led to a poorer service for people with asbestos-related diseases who face delays and errors in dealing with their benefit claims, as the staff at other DWP offices do not have the expertise and experience that those at Phoenix House had.
- 5) 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.
- 6) 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.
- 7) Events and Fundraising: through a variety of events, 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.
- 8) Two notable events were Action Mesothelioma Day (AMD, on the first Friday in July) and a day to commemorate Nellie Kershaw who was the first person to have her death recorded as specifically caused by asbestos. At AMD, Mike Kane MP, Debbie Abrahams MP, and Lisa Clarke

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Trustees' annual report

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of Mesothelioma UK spoke at the dove release in Lincoln Square on 7th July 2023. Dr Kate Hill of the June Hancock Mesothelioma Research Fund spoke after the lunch in the nearby Friends Meeting House. 14th March 2024 was the 100 year anniversary of Nellie Kershaw's death. Nellie worked for Turner Brothers Asbestos in Rochdale, and her death from asbestosis was widely reported in the media at the time. We held events in Manchester and Rochdale, which were covered by the local and regional press. If the UK had learnt the right lessons from Nellie's death at the time, many of the subsequent deaths from asbestos disease could have been avoided.

- 9) GMAVSG is involved in and supports a Families Group, which provides mutual support for families affected by mesothelioma (and other asbestos-related diseases) and encourages them to participate in events and campaigns to raise awareness of mesothelioma.
- 10) The support group for mesothelioma patients and carers – 'Living Well with Mesothelioma' – organised jointly by GMAVSG and the Mesothelioma Clinical Nurse Specialists at the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust – 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 2023/24.

Overall, the financial position of the charity continues to be healthy. The Trustees have not identified any current specific financial risks or uncertainties, since both income and expenditure remain steady and according to budget.

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 2023/24 amounted to a little under £327,000.

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.

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During 2023/24, there were 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.

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.

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 2024 which are set out on pages 7 to 8.

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 27 January 2025

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

**Receipts and Payments Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 £	2023 £
Receipts					
Donations		29,285	-	29,285	46,591
Gift aid		2,041	-	2,041	11,916
Fees and other income		-	-	-	416
Solicitors panel		120,000	-	120,000	86,250
Bank interest		5,869	-	5,869	1,274
Other income		2,689	-	2,689	-
Total receipts		159,884	-	159,884	146,447
Payments					
<i>Charitable expenditure</i>					
Premises		4,563	-	4,563	5,396
Events		1,840	-	1,840	-
Insurance		520	-	520	1,699
Sundry expenditure		3,682	-	3,682	810
Postage and delivery		2,110	-	2,110	2,205
Printing and materials		1,248	-	1,248	751
Publications		208	-	208	374
Telephone		1,027	-	1,027	1,316
Refreshments		668	-	668	242
Room hire		70	-	70	210
Stationery		342	-	342	281
IT		1,642	-	1,642	1,642
Travel and subsistence		2,646	-	2,646	1,002
Accountancy		208	-	208	799
Storage		273	-	273	314
Website		348	-	348	348
Bank charges		162	-	162	158
Donations/Gifts		6,060	-	6,060	10,387
Membership and subscriptions		620	-	620	50
Equipment and furniture		407	-	407	306
Salaries and Oncosts		100,573	-	100,573	95,688
Total payments		129,217	-	129,217	123,978
Net receipts for the year		30,667	-	30,667	22,469
Net movement in funds		30,667	-	30,667	22,469
Bank and cash balances at start of year		295,966	-	295,966	273,497
Bank and cash balances at end of the year		£ 326,633	£ -	£ 326,633	295,966

Greater Manchester Asbestos Victims Support Group

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities
as at 31 March 2024**

Note	2024 £	2023 £
Bank and cash balances	326,633	295,966
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Fixed Assests		
Computers (estimated residual value)	1,500	3,142
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Current assets		
Debtors	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Liabilities		
Creditors due within one year	2,118	840
Income in advance	45,000	-
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Caroline Bedale (Treasurer)

Date 26 January 2025

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 staff and premises to the charity and the cost to the charity in these accounts was £100,573 for staff and £4,563 for premises. A charge of £1,635 was paid relating to staff time for archiving. 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 There were no expenses or reimbursements paid to Trustees during 2023/24 (2022/23: £Nil).