



 **MEARS**
FOUNDATION
Building communities

Mears Foundation Annual Report & Accounts

For the year ended 31 December 2023

Foreword

In these pages, you will find more than just numbers and figures. You will discover the heartbeat of our commitment, and the unwavering dedication of the many individuals who believe in the power of positive action to support individuals and organisations that help to build our communities across the United Kingdom.

Beyond the numbers and financial metrics, these annual accounts encapsulate stories of resilience, hope, and empowerment.

Thank you to our many supporters and volunteers; thank you to Mears plc and special thanks to our Friends of the Mears Foundation. Your partnership and commitment have been instrumental in driving positive change and building brighter futures for those we serve. Your support fuels our resolve to continue making a difference, one life at a time.

Christine Losecaat MBE,
Chair



Our Grant Locations



Aberdeen

Aldershot

Beckenham

Belfast

Brighton

Bristol

Cambridge

Canterbury

Coatbridge

Dagenham

Darlington

Dover

Eastbourne

Exeter

Folkstone

Glasgow

Gloucester

Hammersmith

Hersden

Ilford

Islington

Kent

Leeds

Manchester

Maryport

Middlesbrough

Milton Keynes

Newcastle

Portree, Sky

Redbridge

Rotherham

Sedgefield

Sheffield

Stirling

Thurrock

Tower Hamlets

Wakefield



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Our vision and Mission

Our vision is a world where everyone can be an active member of their local community so they can flourish and actively contribute to society.

We do this through our mission of building communities.

Our aim is to empower and assist people so that they can develop their own skills and abilities to their maximum potential.

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The guiding principles of The Mears Foundation are to:

- ▶ improve the lives of people living within communities in the United Kingdom
- ▶ help build community cohesion and integration
- ▶ provide career and skills development opportunities to those needing them most
- ▶ be a positive contributor to the environment

We work with groups and individuals who share our values to improve their lives and life chances by providing them with opportunities and skills to become stronger and more self-reliant.

Objectives & activities

The Mears Foundation is the independent charitable arm of Mears Group.

The Foundation is a grant-making trust that seeks to harness the goodwill, talents, and skills within Mears Group plc to benefit charities or good causes that provide practical help and support to vulnerable people in communities in the United Kingdom & Northern Ireland.

The Mears Foundation undertakes to raise money through charitable donations and fundraising activities. The income is then applied to such charities or good causes and for such charitable purposes as set out in our Grant Strategy below.

Activities 2023

2023 saw us award more community grants than ever before.

Our fundraising events saw an uptake in participants, and we continued to

grow our Friends of the Mears Foundation.

Our community grants were spread throughout the United Kingdom and targeted specific projects in keeping with our Grant Giving Strategy. We also launched our Green Spaces initiative, where we supported the greening of over 65 spaces throughout the United Kingdom and we consolidated our relationship with FareShare to combat food poverty during the cost-of-living crisis.

We would like to thank the following Friends of Mears for their support:



WOLSELEY



Magnet
Better. By design



SAFPRO

BUILDBASE



PLUMBASE

JEWSON

Case Study

Fish For Me

Fishing trips which started as a hobby and form of escapism during lockdown have turned into a long term project supporting mental health.

Nick Coote, a Multi-skilled Operative on the South Cambs contract, applied to the Mears Foundation for a community grant to take people fishing. His 'Fish for Me' project is an opportunity to take people away from their everyday and not only engage in something different, but also find some time to get things off their chest.

Nick was acutely aware that not a lot of people want to sit and talk about their mental health and found that a simple fishing trip offers a safe space, making it much easier to talk.

Anyone is welcome to go fishing with Nick, but the biggest effect has been breaking down the stigma around men's mental health. To date, eight people have gone fishing with him and every one has asked to return, with some of them surprised by how much they've taken to it. The grant has generated three times as much in social economic value, with a combination of the grant itself and Nick volunteering a large proportion of his own free time.



Case Study

World Diversity Day –

Govan is one of the most diverse communities in Glasgow, the community reflects different races. 21st of May is the World Day of Culture & Diversity each year. Safety Awareness Glasgow being a Black led organisation in the heart of Govan was approached by some of the residents about their desire to see their culture shared with the community. 20 Mears service users took the lead in the development of an event that celebrated Glasgow's diverse communities through song, food and dance.



Approx 150 members of the local community visited the event and benefitted from the celebrations which focused on integration and socialisation within the community.

“It was a privilege to be part of such a significant event for the Govan community and the asylum community in Glasgow. We had such a warm welcome and the event demonstrated the rich cultural make up of the area and how this contributes positively to the community. We look forward to next year's event.” - Steve Robbins – Regional Head Of Operations

Case Study

FareShare Volunteer Driver Initiative

The volunteer drivers from Mears have been taking surplus food to schools, hospices, care homes and food banks throughout Ashford and Medway every Friday. They have also supported the Family Food Bank, the largest food bank network in Kent with parcel deliveries to their distribution centres. The partnership began in September for a three month pilot, during

which they have distributed over 6.6 tonnes of food which is the equivalent of 157,666 meals to those struggling with food insecurity. In addition, they have distributed 100 food parcels for the Family Food Bank. The Mears Orbit team have committed to support with volunteer drivers throughout 2024 and will look to extend the offer into 2025



“The Mears Foundation and MPS have done a fantastic job of helping Fareshare Kent deliver food to those in need over the past few months. Food insecurity is affecting more people this winter due to the cost-of-living crisis, and the volunteer drivers from Mears have come along to support us at a time of great national need. Their ongoing support has helped us expand to reach more charities in Kent in Medway, Dartford, and Ramsgate” - Emma White, Warehouse Manager, FareShare Kent

“It has been an absolute pleasure to work with such a worthy charity and we will continue to provide support for next year. It has allowed our staff to see beyond their employment role and support people who are in desperate need of help. Giving and kindness is the foundation of most things and Fareshare has allowed us to see this” - Jody Saich, Customer Success Manager Tonbridge

Case Study

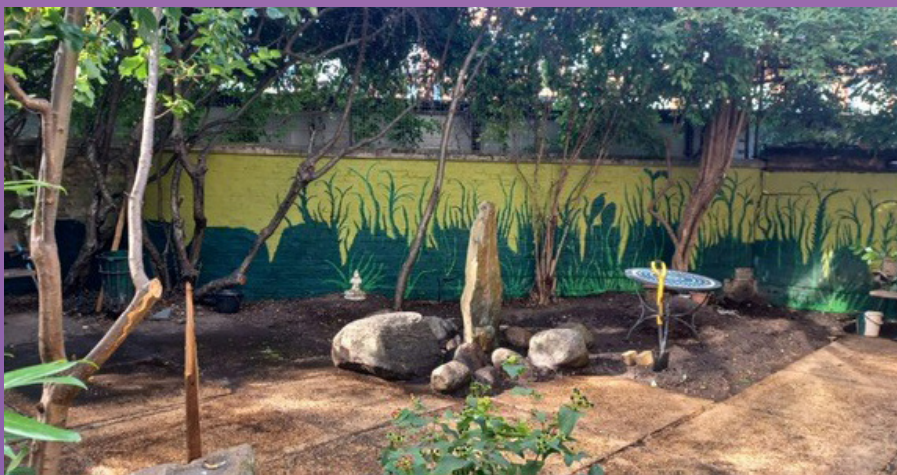
Green Space

The Mears Foundation supported Mears Group to become the most socially responsible business in the public sector by 2025 through the Mears Foundation 'Green Spaces Project'.

The aim of this initiative was to create or regenerate at least one green space for the benefit of each of the communities in which Mears works. Through the Foundations Green Space grants 60 green spaces

were created nationally with our branches, suppliers, sub-contractors and clients getting involved to support the project.

The health and well-being benefits of local green spaces and their positive contribution to tackling the climate emergency are clear. However, there's also plenty of evidence about a lack of access to green spaces across the country, particularly for the communities we work in.



North Lanarkshire – Buchanan School (Green Space)

The Boutique is a mini clothing bank within the school that encourages the recycling of pre-loved clothing and items to be re-issued within the school, to the larder or to local appeals in the community. The aim of the boutique is to stop clothing being sent to landfill, to re-use pre-loved items

and to help poverty proof the school in a sustainable way.

“The Boutique is used several times per day and is an invaluable provision for pupils in the school. One pupil recently described visiting the Boutique as being better than Christmas morning.”

- Mrs Neil

The Vinery – Aberdeen (Green Space)

The Project aims were for our Gardening Volunteers to plan, design and construct three 2 x 2 x 1200mm Metre Worm Farms known as Vermiculture. Our vermiculture project biologically is defined as the process of turning organic debris, predominantly kitchen food waste into worm castings that play a crucial role in increasing the fertility of our soil.

The by product was then used in community allotments where many individuals were

encouraged to come along and get involved in growing fruit and vegetables and making new friends along the way



Tower Hamlets (Green Space)

To renovate the community garden on Parkview Estate, Bethnal Green, The project made such a difference to the many residents on the estate who were eager to use the garden but it wasn't fit for purpose. The Mears team levelled up the garden, built planters and a seating area for the estate residents who also run the allotment creating a safe and calming area to sit together as a community

"I was contacted by the TRA of Park View with a request to consider their garden as a future project as it had become very overgrown and unsafe for residents to use, particularly elderly residents due to the uneven ground. What began as a simple tidy up slowly escalated into a full refurbishment and a complete transformation of the area. What was once a disused, unsafe

area will now be used for community events in the summer months including BBQ's and other social gatherings and can be used by all local residents to relax in the summer with their morning coffee, safely. The impact has been great, the feedback from residents has been very positive and this project is a testament to my colleagues in Tower Hamlets who committed above and beyond their volunteering requirements to ensure this project exceeded expectations."



Case Study ***Winter Warmer Packs***

The Mears Foundation has successfully given out 1,200 Winter Warmer Packs, through its partnership with 4Front Furniture.

The packs provided essential items including fleece blankets, thermos flasks, thermal socks, thermometers, hats and gloves, helping to

make a difference in the lives of vulnerable people during these challenging winter months.

The packs were distributed through branches and departments across the business supporting charities nationwide.





Strategy Forward Look

In 2024, the Mears Foundation will continue its work to build communities in the United Kingdom through grants and partnerships that alleviate the following issues.

1 Poverty

Food

The UK's food poverty rate is among the highest in Europe.

In June 2023, the latest tracker from the Food Foundation states 9 million adults in the UK, 17% of households, experienced moderate or severe food insecurity (a massive rise from 7.3% in June 2021).

Nearly a quarter of households with children experienced food insecurity.

Mears Foundation has partnered with FareShare to combat hunger and food waste.

Digital

Digital poverty is the inability to interact with the online world fully, when, where, and how an individual needs to. It exacerbates and is exacerbated by other socio-economic, educational, racial, linguistic, gender, and health inequalities.

It is both the product and the cause of other forms of socio-economic disadvantage.

The Foundation will look to support programmes that help with Device &

Connectivity (Affordability, Data, Infrastructure) Access (Accessibility, Availability) and Capability (Skills, Education and understanding).

Digital exclusion is a key driver of social isolation

Over 3 million tonnes of the food that goes to waste each year is still edible – that's enough for 7 billion meals.

Figures from World Wide Fund for Nature and WRAP.

2 Social Isolation and Loneliness

Most of us will experience loneliness at some point in our lives, regardless of age, circumstance, and background. We all experience loneliness differently.

Loneliness and social isolation have been linked to early deaths and an increased risk of heart disease, stroke, depression, cognitive decline and poor sleep. **It's as harmful to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.**

Social Isolation has also been found to cause several mental health issues including depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, sleep problems and increased stress.

The Foundation will support direct interventions focussed on helping people maintain existing relationships and develop new ones. This includes supporting group activities such as lunch clubs and walking groups, one-to-one approaches like befriending schemes, as well as developing volunteering, mobilising peer support, and intergenerational support in neighbourhoods.

In 2024, the Foundation will also support a **Green Communities** campaign as part of its net zero contribution and look to promote social inclusion through Sport by supporting **Grass Roots & Community Sports initiative.**



People who feel lonely are more than twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's (and other forms of dementia) than those who do not feel lonely.

Grant Strategy

The Mears Foundation awards grants to projects in the United Kingdom only.

The Foundation exists to support the vulnerable in our communities by awarding grants to charities and projects who are offering people and those communities a lifeline.

The Foundation awards grants that are submitted /endorsed by a member of Mears Group plc workforce.

The projects we look to support are ones that alleviate:

- ▶ Food Poverty
- ▶ Digital Poverty
- ▶ Social Isolation and Loneliness

And those that promote:

- ▶ Green Community Spaces (through either the 'greening' of outdoor spaces or the reduction in energy costs)
- ▶ Social Inclusion through Sport

Grant requests received and supported by a Mears Group plc employee are reviewed in March and September and awarded in May and November annually.



Structure, Governance & Management

The charity was incorporated on the 16 September 2009 and is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

The Foundation is managed by its General Manager, Heather Tyrer, under the guidance of the Chair and the Board of Trustees.

Registered Charity Name

The Mears Foundation

Charity Number

1134941

Company Number

07021016 (England and Wales)

Chair

Ms Christine Losecaat MBE

Company Secretary/ Treasurer

Mrs Judith Herbert

Trustees

Ms Karen Duncan (resigned 29.9.23)
Mr Patrick Grace
Mr Martin Gaffney (appointed 27.03.23)
Mrs Judith Herbert
Mr Richard Hughes (appointed 30.3.23)
Ms Diane Keay
Ms Alison Wilkinson
Mr Liam Wilkinson (appointed 12.4.23)

Executive Staff

Heather Tyrer

Registered Office

1390 Montpelier Court
Gloucester Business Park
Brockworth
Gloucester
GL3 4AH

Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC
18 Southgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 2DH

Financial Review

During the year, the charity raised funds in the amount of **£420,796**.

From these funds, the £42,176 incidental running costs of the charity were met and grants of £246,318 given. The excess funds remain in the bank account to carry forward for future projects and grants.

Small Company Provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

On Behalf of the Board

Christine Losecaat MBE
Chair

February 2024

Responsibilities of the trustees

The charity's 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).

- ▶ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ▶ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

- ▶ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ▶ observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

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 1993 and the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008.

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.

Accounting Policies

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the inclusion of current asset investments at market value, in accordance with the Financial Reporting

Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2015), the Companies Act 2006 and the recommendations in the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by Charities (the SORP).

Incoming Resources

Donations and gifts

All monetary donations and gifts are included in full in the statement of financial activities when receivable, provided that there are no donor-imposed restrictions as to the timing of the related expenditure, in which case recognition is deferred until the pre-condition has been met.

they relate to a specified future period, in which case they are deferred.

Grants for the purchase of fixed assets are credited to restricted incoming resources when receivable. Depreciation on the fixed assets purchased with such grants is charged against the restricted fund.

Grants receivable

Revenue grants are credited as incoming resources when they are receivable provided conditions for receipt have been complied with, unless

All other income is included in the statement of financial activities when received or when the charity is legally entitled to the income.

Fund Accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specified purposes laid down by the donor. Such purposes are within the overall aims of the organisation. Expenditure for those purposes is charged to the fund, together with a fair allocation of overheads and support costs.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for expenditure on

the general objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds which have been designated for specific purposes by the Trustees, for necessary work in connection with the ongoing provision of services yet fail to meet the stringent criteria of contractual obligation set out in FRS12 (Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets).

Accounting Policies

Resources expended

Grants payable

Grants payable are accounted for in the period in which the performance conditions attaching to the grant payment are met or, where no performance conditions apply, when a legal or constructive obligation arises.

Other expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, which 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;
- ▶ 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;

- ▶ governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity;
- ▶ all costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the Statement of Financial Activity on a basis designed to reflect the use of the resource. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly, others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.
- ▶ allocated directly, others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.



Statement of financial activities

	Note	Unrestricted Funds '23 (£)	Unrestricted Funds '22 (£)
Incoming resources			
Voluntary income	1	373,101	270,222
Activities for Generating Funds	2	43,189	27,603
Incoming resources from Charitable Activities	3	4,506	4,306
Total incoming resources		420,796	302,131
Resources expended			
Cost of Generating Funds	7	2,310	1,317
Charitable Activities	4	263,160	216,984
Salaries	8	39,866	38,043
Total resources expended		305,336	256,344
Net incoming resources for the period		115,460	45,787
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward		96,838	51,051
Total funds carried forward		212,298	96,838

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

Balance Sheet

	Note	Unrestricted Funds '23 (£)	Unrestricted Funds '22 (£)
Current assets			
Cash at bank		255,132	128,152
Debtor – Mears Group Match funding		24,166	21,417
		279,298	149,569
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	(67,000)	(52,731)
Net assets		212,298	96,838
Funds			
General Funds		212,298	96,838
Total funds	10	212,298	96,838

For the year ending 31 December 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustee's responsibilities:

- ▶ the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the period in question in accordance with section 476
- ▶ the trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part

15 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2015).

These financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 20th February 2024 and are signed on their behalf by:

Christine Losecaat MBE
Chair

Judith Herbert
Treasurer

Company Registration Number: **07021016**

Notes to the financial statements

1 Voluntary income	Total Funds '23 (£)	Total Funds '22 (£)
Donations	373,101	270,222
Total incoming resources	373,101	270,222

2 Incoming resources from activities for generating funds	Total Funds '23 (£)	Total Funds '22 (£)
Amazon Website Link	85	35
Sponsored Events	25,649	17,396
Mears Fundays	1,919	787
Collections / Raffles	15,536	9,385
	43,189	27,603

3 Incoming resources from charitable activities	Total Funds '23 (£)	Total Funds '22 (£)
Gift Aid	4,506	4,306
	4,506	4,306

4 Costs of charitable activities by fund type	Total Funds '23 (£)	Total Funds '22 (£)
Auctions & Raffles	444	180
Sponsored Events	15,232	10,148
Mears Fundays	1,166	245
Grants Given	246,318	206,411
Total incoming resources	263,160	216,984

5 Costs of charitable activities by activity type	Total Funds '23 (£)	Support costs (£)	Total Funds '23 (£)	Total Funds '22 (£)
Mears Fundays	1,166		1,166	245
Auctions & Raffles	444		444	180
Sponsored Events	15,232		15,232	10,148
Grants Given	246,318		246,318	206,411
Direct costs	263,160		263,160	216,984

Notes to the financial statements

6 Governance costs

Governance costs were met by Mears Group PLC.

7 Analysis of support costs

	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
Charity giving administration fee	1,265	872
Staff Expenses	413	181
Compliance Fees	176	
Merchandise	52	124
PR Fees	404	140
	2,310	1,317

8 Staff costs and emoluments

	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
Salaries	39,866	38,043
	39,866	38,043

9 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
Other Creditors	67,000	52,731
	67,000	52,731

10 Analysis of net assets between funds

All funds are designated as General Funds.



www.themearsfoundation.org.uk



For more information on anything enclosed within this report please email heather.tyrer@mearsgroup.co.uk