

Company registration number 06944317 (England and Wales)

Charity registration number 1135949 (England and Wales)

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	W A Wild (Chairman) RT Hon J W Straw A H Graham K D Robinson E L Swan A S Sidat P Skupski J Bates J H Lamb M A Kelly M Dixon	(Appointed 23 May 2024) (Appointed 23 May 2024) (Appointed 15 May 2025) (Appointed 25 September 2025)
Senior management	Leon Crosby	Chief Executive Officer
Charity number (England and Wales)	1135949	
Company number	06944317	
Registered office	Jubilee Street Blackburn Lancashire BB1 1EP	
Auditor	DonnellyBentley Ltd Hazlemere 70 Chorley New Road Bolton Lancashire BL1 4BY	
Bankers	HSBC Bank plc 60 Church Street Blackburn Lancashire BB1 5AS	

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

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BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

CEO'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

This year marks a powerful milestone in our journey. For almost 13 years, Blackburn and Darwen Youth Zone has stood strong, a safe space and a second home for thousands of young people. Today, we're proud to be in the healthiest position since opening our doors and even prouder to have opened **The Fusebox**, the latest chapter in our story.

The Youth Zone has always been more than just a building. It's a movement. A movement rooted in the belief that every young person deserves opportunities, connection, and hope. And as we look to the future, we do so with the same conviction: to serve not just today's generation, but the next 50 years of young people too.

The Fusebox embodies that promise. Once a powerhouse that lit up Blackburn with electricity in the 1800s, the space has been reborn as a learning and enrichment centre that sparks possibilities for young people today. Open seven days a week, all year round, it offers a bespoke employability hub, a Maker Zone for digital creation, a textiles and arts room, training spaces featuring state-of-the-art digital technology, and a fully restored music and production studio. Since opening in April, young people have filled the building with energy, creativity, and ambition, giving us record-breaking attendance month after month. Proof that when we invest in their futures, they show up and challenge the status quo 'young people of today remain in their bedroom, victim to the phone'.

We're deeply grateful to the DCMS Youth Investment Fund and the National Lottery Heritage Fund, whose generosity of over £3m helped turn our dream into reality.

Beyond the building, our work is reaching further than ever before. The launch of our Youth Work Bus, a reimagined mobile youth club, with the primary aim of breaking down barriers for young people who can't always make it to the Youth Zone. Each week, over 100 young people step aboard, finding friendship, support, and opportunity right on their doorstep. In bright orange, the bus is more than transport, it's a beacon of community spirit and hope. Our heartfelt thanks go to the WM & BW Lloyd Charity Trust for making this possible.

None of this would happen without our incredible patrons. Despite the economic challenges businesses face, 78 local companies have stayed committed to our mission, with more joining us this year. In times when charitable giving could so easily be cut, their unwavering support shows the belief they have in what we do: changing lives, one young person at a time.

Working hand in hand with BwD Council, we've also strengthened our stewardship through the new Business Network scheme (formerly The HIVE). Together, we're connecting businesses, celebrating local success, and ensuring opportunities are shared across our community. We're proud to call BwD Council a true ally in this journey.

And we're not stopping here. While it would be easy to rest after such a year of growth, we know young people need us more than ever. That's why, in partnership with BwD Council, we're creating a new home in Darwen. Knott Street Youth Club is undergoing a £4m redevelopment to match the aspiration, energy, and world-class facilities of Blackburn Youth Zone. When it opens in January 2026, young people in Darwen will have a space built for them, with them, and about them.

Finally, on a personal note, I want to pay tribute to Hannah Allen, who led the Youth Zone with passion and determination for nearly a decade. Being a CEO in the third sector is no small task. You carry the weight of delivering business goals while staying true to a noble cause. Every day, you know that over 5,000 young people and more than 90 staff are relying on you. That responsibility is both humbling and relentless.

Hannah rose to that challenge time and again. She not only kept the organisation strong through some of its most testing times, she leaves it in the best place it has ever been. And that, ultimately, is the mark of a true leader: to leave behind an organisation stronger than you found it.

Finally and most importantly, I also want to extend my deepest thanks to the incredible team and trustees at Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone. Too often, they are the unsung heroes and the ones who pour in the late nights, the energy, the creativity, and yes, sometimes the sacrifices, to make sure young people have the opportunities they deserve. Their blood, sweat and tears are the heartbeat of this flagship charity, and I could not be prouder to stand alongside them as we continue building a brighter future for our young people.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

CEO'S STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025



Leon Crosby
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 13/11/25

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)".

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

W A Wild (Chairman)

RT Hon J W Straw

A H Graham

K D Robinson

E L Swan

A S Sidat

P Skupski

J Bates

(Appointed 23 May 2024)

J H Lamb

(Appointed 23 May 2024)

M J Saxton

(Resigned 1 April 2025)

P M Mellor

(Resigned 1 April 2025)

J Carson

(Resigned 24 May 2024)

M A Kelly

(Appointed 15 May 2025)

D Park

(Resigned 1 April 2025)

M Dixon

(Appointed 25 September 2025)

Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone Objectives

Blackburn Youth Zone's objectives are to help educate children and young people resident in the North West of England through their leisure time activities. Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone does this by promoting their physical, mental and spiritual potential so that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society.

The Trustees have given due consideration to the Charity Commission published guidance on the operation of the public benefit requirement and are satisfied that this requirement is met by carrying out the activities described in this report.

Strategic Parameters

In January 2023, we commenced a root and branch review of our organisation in preparation for the next decade. We consulted widely with young people, our people, parents, patrons, partners and members of our communities. Together, we agreed on the following strategic parameters:

Our Purpose: To provide a safe environment for all young people to thrive and reach their full potential.

Our Vision: For all young people to be safe, healthy and happy.

Our Priorities

One: Place young people at the heart of our delivery & decision-making

Two: Extending our reach and influence into the wider community

Three: Investing in the Workforce of the Future

Four: Strengthening Partnerships for Enhanced Services

Five: Sustainability and Long-Term Impact

Six: Revitalising Spaces and Services

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Our Values

Our Values, developed alongside our young people and team members in 2017, still guide how we support each other, our wider community, partners and other stakeholders. These we express as our H.E.A.R.T. Values.

Honesty is the best policy

Excellence is learned through experience

Accountability is doing whatever is right

Respect should be universal

Teamwork makes the dream work

These values encapsulate the ethos of Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone, reflecting not only the aspirations of our organisation but also the enduring legacy of those who have contributed to our journey.

Our Strategic Pillars

Our work is built on three strategic pillars, which have guided our hand over the last decade. They have enabled us to focus on the central aspects of our Movement that do not vary, irrespective of the programme, project or initiative. These are:

- Health & well-being
- Social integration
- Aspirations, skills and employability

Our Delivery Model

Our brand of youth work is predicated on personal development through informal education. Even in a play environment, we believe that every young person can learn from their experiences and aim to provide a surplus of opportunities for young people.

Over the past year we have developed the seven youth work strands which drive our service offer in line with our engagement model of Try, Train, Team, and Teach. The “Try, Train, Team, Teach” approach allows our young people to experience many new activities for the first time. For those activities that prove popular, we codesign a training programme alongside young peoples’ aspirations and help them develop hard (technical) and soft skills (life skills.)

If there is sufficient demand and ambition, we then progress to a formal Team approach through a club, team or initiative, which allows our young people to develop their social, emotional and technical life skills. A small proportion take the activity to the next level and seek a qualification in the discipline. This approach accelerates learning and provides opportunities for essential life skills to form part of a young person’s unconscious competence.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Our Year in Numbers

Below is a summary of our delivery outputs. These are contextualised in the section 'Delivering our Services'.

Data Type	Volume	Explanation
Members	5,614	This comprises 2,203 Minis & Juniors (5-7 & 8-12) and 3,411 Ycs (13-18.) Out of the 5,614 members, 4,710 (83%) are considered Active (3 or more visits within 90 days) and 4,072 (72%) have had meaningful engagements.
Young Leaders	24	Young people 13-18 who have completed the Young Leader programme across both our Blackburn and Darwen sites.
Total number of Young Leader hours	476	Volunteer hours in youth work and/or community based service roles.
All volunteer hours	4,196	Comprising of all Volunteering Streams (Corporate, Volunteer, Work Placement, and Young Leaders)
Qualifications AQA, DofE and Sport Level 1	146	These are made up from Arts Awards.
Average hours of service per week	102	Representing delivery hours across our two sites in the towns of Blackburn (53) and Darwen (49).
Youth consultation	7,840	This represents the number of engagements by young people through questionnaires, consultations and focus groups. It also includes decision-making sessions delivered through our Youth Voice groups.
Young people trying something new	3,616	This includes activities from every youth work strand and includes 64% of our members.
Informal education sessions	3,624	These are engagements of young people in topic-based sessions across all provisions. These are planned on a needs/ask basis.
Young volunteers	88	The young people 11-18, who gave their time this year to community projects and Youth Zone events.
Average attendance per week	1,304	Lower due to building capacity during renovations at BYZ. This includes sessions in Blackburn and Darwen, onsite and detached outreach.
Young people attending ten or more sessions during the year	1,225	The number of young people who visited us on ten separate occasions or more.
Members who identify as Girl or Woman	1,720	31% of membership - lower due to report filter changing
Members who identify as Boy or Man	2,620	46% of membership
Members who self identify/other and prefer not to say	21	1% of membership
Members with a gender but no gender identity	1,253	22% of membership - Due to report filter change, these need to be changed manually or when members renew (this is currently being worked on and will catch up when renewals are made).
Ethnic minorities	2,984	53% - reflective of the borough demographic
Number of visits this year	66,146	Across both sites - lower due to building capacity
New members 2024/25	1,494	Across both sites
Members with a disability or special educational need	924	Representing 19% of our membership
Members receiving free school meals	2,722	48% of membership
Members from top 10% of the most deprived wards in England	2,223	39% of membership
Members living in the top 5 deprived borough wards	2,863	51% of membership

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Delivering Our Services - Activities, Programmes & Initiatives

Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone (the brand identity used for the registered charity 1135949 Blackburn Youth Zone) now operates from two sites and across the borough in detached and outreach settings. The largest of these two venues is on Jubilee Street, Blackburn, which houses, across three floors, a wide range of youth facilities. The second, in the town of Darwen, is located in a temporary space which houses, across two floors, a range of youth programming spaces.

Irrespective of the location from which our services operate, we provide high-quality youth facilities across our 7 Youth Work Strands. These include:

- Sports and Physical Activity (Next Level, TaAF, 6 Golden Sports)
- The Arts (MakerZone, Performance, Making, Music)
- Diversity (Diversity Zone- SEND, Allsorts- LGBTQ+ supports)
- Aspirations, Skills and Employability (Youth Hub; World of Work)
- Emotional Health & Wellbeing (Wellness Zone and Targeted Twilight)
- Cyber & Tech (Cyber Zone-AI, Cyber, Tech Zone-ESports)
- Outreach (Street Zone, Community Zone, Enrichment Zone)

Access to our venues and services is provided free of charge. Every young person and member of our youth work teams is provided with a free, hot, nutritious meal at every visit. This includes detached and outreach, where nutritious snacks are distributed alongside healthy drink options (Hot drinks in winter).

Our three pillars of social integration, health and wellbeing and aspirations, skills and employability permeate our programmes and activities. We are heavily influenced by the national levelling up agenda and are committed to providing our young people with every opportunity afforded to their more affluent peers across the UK, proving that postcode doesn't determine success.

This year, we have seen even more young people accessing our services, projects and programmes and now have a record number of 5,614 members. We welcome an average of 1,304 young people per week, 52 weeks a year, across our two sites and detached and outreach provisions.

Youth Zones across the UK historically focus their youth services around a universal offer. We are similar in this regard, but we also provide targeted services for young people who require an elevated level of support, particularly around emotional health and wellbeing issues.

Our Seven Youth Work Strands are a useful reference to view both our universal, outreach and targeted offers over the last year. Below is a snapshot of the strands and activities offered within them.

Sports and Physical Activity

We are committed to delivering a vibrant sports and physical activity offer directed and supported by our young people. We are keen for young people to have the opportunity to try as many activities as possible, and this is central to our Try, Train, Team, Teach methodology. Our sports programme, titled "Next Level Sports", funded through the generosity of Gordon Taylor, enables young people to live healthier, more prosperous lives through the power of sports and physical activity and for them to strive for their "Next Level." The three primary aims have been core to our sports offer this year:

- Introducing more sports opportunities (climbing wall, dodgeball, etc.)
- Increase Train and Team offers amongst Next Level Sports
- Increase Darwen Sports Offering

Young people have told us that football, boxing, cricket, badminton, gym, climbing, and basketball are their chosen sports (We term these 'Golden sports'). We have plans to develop an academy approach around these as we go forward while increasing targeted programming, making Next Level Sports accessible to all. As we continue to progress towards an academy, below is a summary of the progress we've made around sports and physical activity in general over the last 12 months.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Sports and Physical Activity (continued)

Activities Offered 2024-2025				
Climbing Wall	Badminton	Ice skating	Boxing	Dance
Volleyball	Cycling	Football	Rugby	Cricket
Mixed Martial Arts club	Dance Fitness	Open Gym/1:1 PT	Inter-Youth Zone Basketball	Bootcamps/ Assault Courses
Netball	Self-Defence	Glow in the Dark Dodgeball	Hockey	Tennis

Darwen Football Sessions: Utilising DACAs football pitch, we introduced Junior and Youth Football try and train sessions

Basketball Team Sessions: Over the past year we have seen an increased interest in Basketball across our Blackburn location, ultimately leading to the creation of a team, which competed against different youth zones across the country, even securing a few victories along the way.

Manchester United Tournament: OnSide hosted a football tournament at Manchester United where our Junior and Youth Football teams competed with Youth Zones across the country, with both teams securing first place in the tournament.

Quick Quote:
"We are really proud of what we can achieve through the power of sports at Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone. Among its many success stories is Aaron, a young boxer who, through the support and motivation from Youth Zone staff and coaches, has risen from novice to national and international champion and recently earning a spot on Team GB"
-Shaun Literland, Technique ABC

Partnerships:

In 2024, we had the ability to work with multiple partnership agencies, trusts, and foundations. These included:

Sports Legends: A pilot programme, funded by Hargreaves Foundation, where young people aged 13-18 who are excluded or at risk of exclusion, took part in learning life skills through sports. This pilot has been deemed successful, with young people leaving the programme with qualifications and progressing to positive destinations.

Blackburn Rovers: This partnership has led to youth training sessions for both genders for young people aged 13-18. The female team played in community football tournaments against professional community trusts and we aim to only increase this participation on both teams.

Blackburn Rovers Women's Team: Our Junior Girls Football team had the opportunity to walk out with The Blackburn Rovers Women's Team alongside serving as ball girls for the game.

Tauheedul Boys and Empire Fighting Chance: Boxing is extremely popular with our young people, and Empire Fighting Chance is a non-contact form of the sport that achieves the same results of self-discipline and hard work. Tauheedul Boys is a high-performing school, and we have worked closely with them to enable their young men to explore their feelings. This includes how they see themselves developing towards adulthood and plan to contribute positively to society.

Female Only Boxing: Through our partnership with Technique Boxing, we led a weekly session exclusively for girls aged 8-12. These sessions were extremely popular, promoting female empowerment across our boxing programmes.

Blackburn Hawks: A connection was created with a 4-week pilot programme to introduce Hockey to the Youth Zone and successfully created a partnership moving forward; this has led to one member being asked to train with the youth team at Blackburn Hawks.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Sports and Physical Activity (continued)

Case Study - Ayana

Ayana's first experience at the Youth Zone, she wouldn't leave her mother's side and lacked confidence. When touring she struck an interest in Netball, asking to join in on the session. In her first session, she was timid and didn't move much during the game. Over the next few weeks, staff worked with her to build her confidence up, even pairing her with an experienced young person on the Netball team. Through the programme, she made new friends, improved her confidence, and her hand-eye coordination, passing, catching, and shooting.

After accessing our 6 week Netball programme, she signed up for another 6-week programme learning rock climbing. Taking what she learned from Netball, she engaged in conversations with her peers, while challenging herself to learn new skills and push herself to do more and be more in her climbing journey. Since completing both programmes, she has continued to sign up for more sessions. She has changed from shy and fearful walking into sessions to now confident in trying new things.

"Her change in confidence and how she presents herself have been noticeable. I am very grateful to everyone at Blackburn and Darwen Youth Zone for supporting her." -Ayana's Mum

Attendance: Number of young people who attended sports	Engagements: Number of overall interactions
2,826	36,627

Engagements: Try	26,817
Engagements: Train	8,380
Engagements: Team	1,430

The Arts

Our Arts offer is represented across three distinctly different programmes. These are Performing Arts, Creative Arts and Digital Arts. Our young people are passionate about all genres of 'The Arts', and we intend to develop our programmes over the next period further to give this youth work theme greater prominence in our offer. Our Maker Zone makes up a large portion of our Arts programming offering.

The main goal of the Arts strand this year has been to increase performing arts and digital arts offers. This included the integration of We Are Noise's music programme to Blackburn at the end of the fiscal year, videography and AI sessions focused on creativity.

Activities Offered 2024-2025				
Jewellery Making	Therapeutic Drawing	Sewing	Vinyl Printing	Up-Cycle workshop
Precious Plastics	Comic Book Creation	Laser cutting	Clay Modeling	Henna Art
Bubble paint	Baking Club	DJ Workshops	Scrapbooking	Digital Arts
Creative Writing	Drum Machines	Ear Training	Drama	Music Production
3D Diamond Art	Music Performance	Screen Printing	Slime Making	Garment Design

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Arts (continued)

Breakthrough Podcast: In collaboration with We Are Noise, our Darwen youth session hosted a podcast during Children's Mental Health Week to share their thoughts and experiences regarding mental health.

Local Heroes Project: Young people designed and 3D printed their own Funko Pop characters based on the theme, "Local Heroes". The Funko Pops were displayed in a gallery exhibition at Darwen Library and highlighted through the Festival of Making.

Quick Quote

"I like art because art is a universal way to communicate and being a part of that is so meaningful, especially as a young person. Also being homeschooled allowed me to pick up the skill and find enjoyment in it doing it at school"

Maryam - 18

Partnerships:

In 2024, we had the ability to work with multiple partnership agencies, trusts, and foundations. These included:

Festival Of Making: We again participated in the wonderful Festival of Making this year, inviting over 500 residents and young people to our space over the weekend of the Festival of Making. Working alongside a local artist, our young people decided to explore the art of fashion and how 'fast fashion' is such an issue in today's society. They also explored the effect of fashion on mental health, culture, sexuality and community togetherness. They planned and designed their art pieces for six weeks leading up to the festival. They made four distinctly different outfits and plan to use them in a showcase at a fashion show later in the year.

Burberry Project: As part of this year's Burberry Inspire Project, we delivered 3 exciting creative enterprise projects: Bright Sparks, Re Thread, and Waves. Bright Sparks focused on enterprise, giving young people the chance to explore making, budgeting, and selling. They developed their own products, learned how to manage costs, and gained hands-on experience, building valuable skills in both creativity and business. Re Thread centred around fashion and sustainability, encouraging participants to upcycle clothing using waste and donated materials. They reimagined items with a focus on environmental responsibility and personal expression through design, sewing, and styling. Waves was our music project, where young people explored music production, DJing, singing, and developed their skills on various instruments. Whether they were starting out or building on existing experience, they had the opportunity to discover their musical identity, collaborate with others, and grow in confidence.

This incredible work was brought together during our Fusebox launch event, where the young people proudly showcased their achievements. In the Maker Zone, one participant hosted a stall displaying and selling pieces they had created throughout the year, including 3D-printed keyrings and jewellery. Beside the stall, a jacket upcycled during the Re Thread project was on display, while original music produced by Waves participants played in the background. The event was a true celebration of creativity, enterprise, and talent, allowing our young people to share their journey and take pride in their accomplishments.

We Are Noise: 'We Are Noise', our delivery partner in Darwen, delivered various music programmes four hours a night from Monday to Friday every week of the year. Simple drop-in sessions are available, as well as targeted engagement, subject-specific delivery and group practice. This provision offers the young people the opportunities to take part in a multitude of art practices, which include music production, recording, mixing, performance, singing, rapping, MC'ing, songwriting, drumming, guitar, keyboards, DJing, PC gaming, video production, podcasting, radio skills and photography.

Young Voices Unite: Alongside 'We Are Noise', young people participated in a 6 week journey of discovery, exploring music genres, and lyricism sessions to create musical pieces based on young people-led concerns such as substance abuse, bullying and overcoming financial hurdles.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Arts (continued)

Impact Story: Meet Vic

Vic, 17, has been a Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone member since 2016 and is a passionate singer with dreams of sharing her talent with the world. Initially shy and uncertain, Vic struggled with stage fright and self-doubt, finding it challenging to perform in front of others and often avoiding opportunities that pushed her out of her comfort zone. This lack of confidence also limited her ability to fully express herself in her singing. However, the supportive environment at the Youth Zone became a turning point in her journey. The music facilities provided a safe space to practice and refine her talent, while the dedicated and encouraging music staff helped her build vocal strength through attending the targeted Burberry sessions (Waves) that introduced her to vocal exercises, performance techniques, and opportunities to perform for small, supportive audiences. In 2023, Vic gained experience by singing two songs as background music for the entrance/welcoming drinks of the Patron's Dinner, which marked the start of her transformation. Over the following months, she performed at various local gigs, growing in confidence and developing her talent. In November 2024, her journey culminated in a standout performance as she closed the Patron's Dinner with a powerful rendition of Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You," captivating the audience and receiving high praise from the guests. The Youth Zone's state-of-the-art music facilities, coupled with the support of the staff, have played a critical role in Vic's growth.

Quote from Youth Worker - "It is amazing to see the difference just one year has made with Vic's confidence in herself and with her singing too."

Attendance: Number of young people who attended	Engagements: Number of overall interactions
2,050	21,920

Engagements: Try	19,475
Engagements: Train	1,851
Engagements: Team	594

Diversity

We support young people with various special educational needs and disabilities. Complex needs are adequately catered for across our local partnership network and within schools. Our Diversity strand aims to provide an inclusive space for all young people who enter our walls. Our primary programming within this strand falls into Allsorts (LGBTQ+) and Diversity Zone (SEND).

The goal of the Diversity strand over the past year has been to increase programming within the Rainbow Zone, build a more diverse SEND programming offer with the support of IMO, and increase partnerships to support growing needs of young people.

Activities Offered 2024-2025				
Dance Syndrome	Mask Painting	Gardening	Clay Moulding	Bracelet Making
Canvas Painting	Magic Tricks	Autism Awareness	Allsorts	Pride Events
Cooking Classes				

International Day of Signs: On September 23rd, our SEND group spent the day learning and practicing signs, including signing along to a few songs.

SEND Cooking: With support from Blackburn with Darwen Food Alliance, our SEND group engaged in hands-on cooking activities, learning crucial life skills in a fun way. The introduction of cooking classes amongst our SEND group have become a popular programme addition with the development of the training kitchen at Blackburn.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Diversity (continued)

Autumn Tea Party: Our SEND programme hosted a family tea party where young people enjoyed delicious treats, participated in Autumn themed crafts and gathered together providing a sense of community to the group.

Quick Quote

"The SEND programme has not only helped improve his confidence and how he approaches challenges but has also improved his health physically, working towards his stability in walking and communication skills. This programme has not only kept him busy and on track but has also made him a better person."
-SEND Member's Parent Feedback

Partnerships:

In 2024, we had the ability to work with multiple partnership agencies, trusts, and foundations. These included:

IMO: Through our partnership with IMO we have been able to support our SEND programme. Utilising their expertise, we have been able to provide a bespoke programme tailored to the additional needs of members. This programme provides weekend respite to families while also enabling our members with additional needs to reach their fullest potential.

Benefit Mankind: Through our partnership with Benefit Mankind, our SEND group packed and delivered hampers of food and essential resources to members of the community who are struggling through the cost of living crisis.

Burberry Project: Young people from Rainbow Zone designed a collaborative mural representing their voices and identities. Using spray paint and stencils, they created a banner that was displayed at the Burberry Head Offices in July 2024, symbolising their resilience and positive affirmations from their lived experiences.

Ignite Cricket: In partnership with IMO, our diversity club & ignite group attending a cricket competition camp, the first they've entered. Despite this, our team placed 3rd place in the tournament

SEND Family Fun Day: In partnership with IMO and Young People Services, our first family fun day was a success with 144 people in attendance. This event marked a significant step forward in our commitment to supporting SEND families, creating a joyful and inclusive environment for everyone involved.

Impact Story - Meet Corey

Corey began attending SEND sessions six months ago. Upon joining, Corey was very quiet and preferred to sit alone. He avoided interacting with both the other young people and the staff.

From the outset, Corey's lack of engagement was a concern for the staff. Despite his reserved nature, the staff remained proactive in attempting to engage him through gentle encouragement and tailored approaches.

Over time, Corey began to respond to the staff's efforts. Initially, he started talking in small increments, which marked a significant milestone given his earlier reluctance to communicate. As Corey grew more comfortable in the environment, he began showing a particular interest in the cricket training sessions. Initially, Corey would stand and watch the activities from the sidelines. However, with consistent encouragement from the staff, he gradually took part in the sessions.

Corey now actively participates in weekly cricket training sessions and has shown remarkable growth in confidence and social interaction. His enthusiasm for the sport has grown to the extent that he has joined the cricket team and is preparing to take part in an upcoming tournament.

Corey's journey highlights the importance of patience, encouragement, and creating a supportive environment. The staff's consistent efforts to include and motivate him have played a pivotal role in his transformation from a quiet and reserved individual to an engaged and confident participant in both sports and social activities.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Aspirations, Skills and Progression

Now in its fifth year, Youth Hub has undergone significant growth and evolution, cementing its role as a vital resource for the local youth community. The Youth Hub has diversified its offerings to address the needs and interests of local young people. This includes the introduction of new partnerships with local businesses, educational establishments, and non-profit organisations.

Over the past year, the Youth Hub has continued to diversify its offer, building on the voices of young people and introducing new pathways that reflect the realities of today's labour market. A key highlight this year has been the opening of our new Employability Hub, a purpose-built space designed to offer accessible, targeted support for young people navigating their route into employment, education, or training. Since its launch, we have fully mobilised the use of the space, running regular workshops, 1:1 coaching sessions, and drop-ins tailored to a wide range of needs and abilities.

Looking ahead, we are preparing to co-locate the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) within the building for four days each week. This will strengthen our offer by ensuring direct access to Jobcentre advisors, streamlining referrals, and reducing barriers for young people who may otherwise struggle to engage with statutory services.

Activities Offered 2024-2025				
CV workshops	Mock Interviews	World of Work Tours	School Engagements	Badminton
First Aid Courses	Career Fairs	Anxiety Workshops	Transferable Workshops	Skills Mentorship

STEM Week: In partnership with Mergon and Vital Energi, This week was packed with real-world applications of STEM as careers. Through presentations, industry day trips, and robotic demonstrations, young people's aspirations were raised. Though traditional Aspirations, Skills, and Progressions (ASP) programming is focused on supporting Youth members, this week supported youth and junior sessions from both Darwen and Blackburn.

JD Up Event: Young People participated in a World of Work tour of JD Group. Through hands-on practical activity, they explored everything from retail store design to visual merchandising, gaining an insight into how JD creates its signature shopping experience.

Quick Quote

Thank you for all of the amazing sessions we have had and all of the memories we have shared. It has been an amazing experience. Even though it is ending, I will never forget all the things you have done for me.

-Young Person, Aged 14

Partnerships:

In 2024, we had the ability to work with over 15 partnership agencies, trusts, and foundations. These included: Kings Trust, New Directions BwD Adult Learning, National Careers Service, Lancashire Mind, Department of Work and Pensions, Lancashire Skills Hub, Blackburn College, Aldridge Academy, North Lancs Training Group, Training 2000, UCLAN, BwD Leaving Care Team, BwD Virtual Schools, and Star Academies.

Our partnership approach to aspirations, skills, and progression has been highly impactful, creating synergy among organisations by merging resources, expertise, and networks. This collaborative effort has significantly enhanced our ability to deliver comprehensive support services and maximise positive impact across the borough. By working together, we have become more effective in identifying and addressing diverse educational, employment, and mental health needs, ensuring a holistic approach to progression and development.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Aspirations, Skills and Progression (continued)

UKSPF

With UKSPF funding, our Aspirations, Skills, and Progression service empowers young people facing barriers to employment by addressing specific challenges and bridging the gap to meaningful job opportunities.

Youth Hub Engagement: Our Youth Hub provides weekly one-on-one sessions for 14-18-year-olds, offering personalised support to tackle mental health stigma and life challenges, significantly enhancing their well-being and development.

Phase 1 - Engage: Young people participate in sessions linked to industry skills, focusing on active lifestyles, well-being, and community prosperity. The Skills Aspiration Hub aligns with local industry needs in areas like digital, energy, and healthcare.

Phase 2 - Train: Participants move to industry-specific workshops, earning accreditations and gaining work experience through our Industry Skills Incubator Hub. These sessions, supported by local businesses, address skill gaps and provide real-world exposure.

Impact and Benefits: These programmes help young people develop critical skills, improve well-being, and gain practical experience, making them more competitive in the job market while benefiting local industries with a skilled workforce and stronger community ties.

Henry Smith - Emotional Health & Wellbeing support:

The project enables us to work with young people who are furthest from the labour market due to multiple barriers such as emotional health or well-being issues. This year we renewed our funding and have worked with 69 young people, and the demand for support remains high. This cohort has had the opportunity to socialise with peers, overcome personal barriers, and visit our business patrons' workplaces to gain insight into the opportunities that await them. Through these experiences, they have developed greater confidence and a clearer vision of their potential career paths.

John Lewis Employability Programme:

Closing off our 2nd year of this partnership, we provided 405 young people from Darwen progression support toward positive destinations. This programme works closely with Herbert Parkinson, providing World of Work Tours, work experience, and employability skills workshops. This year, we were highlighted as an ideal partner for the Employability Fund and are featured on their website.

Impact Story- Meet Keinan

"Being a Young Leader at the Youth Zone has honestly been one of the best experiences I've had. From the beginning, I felt like I was part of something important. I've learned so much just by being around the team, watching how staff lead sessions, and seeing how they speak to everyone to make sure we all understand the plan and what's expected. It's shown me how important communication and teamwork really are. Every session is different, and there's always something new to learn. I've started to see how things work behind the scenes, from planning to delivering sessions, and I've realised how much effort goes into making the Youth Zone a great place for young people. It's helped me grow in confidence and given me the chance to reflect on how I can improve in every session. This role is giving me skills I know I'll use in the future, things like speaking clearly, listening properly, paying attention to detail, and working as part of a team. I've definitely become more confident, more responsible, and more aware of how my actions affect others, both in the Youth Zone and outside it with friends or at work. One of the biggest things I've taken from this experience is learning how to carry myself in a more professional and respectful way. I'm working on managing my emotions better, especially when situations are challenging. Being a good role model is important to me, and I'm learning what that really means. My favourite part has to be working with the young people, joining in with games and activities, being someone they can come to or just knowing I've made a positive impact in their day. It's such a good feeling to be part of something that's making a difference in the community. There have been challenges, like staying patient when things get tough or trying to improve how I present myself when leading activities, but all of that has helped me grow. I'm excited to keep learning, developing, and being part of something that matters. This isn't just a role, it's a journey, and I'm proud to be on it."

-Kienan, Age 18

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Aspirations, Skills and Progression (continued)

Attendance: Number of young people who attended	Engagements: Number of overall interactions
174	795

Key Membership Data:

- 2,452 hours of 1-1 support (increasing from 2300 the previous year)
- 18 careers and aspirations fairs attended
- 42 Young people moved into employment, education and training.

Emotional Health & Wellbeing

Emotional Health & Wellbeing Support is central to our professional practice and permeates every project, programme, and initiative. This is often delivered through our universal setting, but is also provided through targeted programming, running in smaller cohorts and in 1-1 settings.

The main goal of the Emotional Health & Wellbeing strand, both in targeted and universal provisions, over the past year has been the creation and implementation of the Wellness Zone and redevelopment of programmes to suit the needs of the young people we serve.

Activities Offered 2024-2025				
Targeted Twilight	Nurture Youth	Mentoring	Service Projects	Workshops
Wellbeing Champions	TeenZone	Self-care nights	Round Table Talks	

Targeted Twilight: These groups operate in smaller numbers and in quieter settings, allowing space for additional support by youth workers, trained in providing emotional health and wellbeing support. These sessions are provided at both site locations, multiple times a week.

Children's Mental Health Week: In February, our Wellbeing Leads planned a week full of programmes focused on improving the mental health of young people. Darwen TeenZone celebrated by spending Random Acts of Kindness Day by spreading joy at a Care Home, handing out roses, gifts, and heartwarming conversations.

Darwen TeenZone: Seeing an increased need for a transition group for 11-14 year olds in Darwen, TeenZone was created. TeenZone was designed to support the needs of young people as they transition from Juniors to Youth.

Think Neglect! Campaign: NSPCC, the nation's leading children's charity dedicated to preventing abuse and NK Theatre led young people through a workshop to create a performance that illuminated the many forms of neglect, fostering a deeper understanding of a critical issue.

Wellbeing Champions: Child Action North West hosted a Wellbeing Champion Programme with our members where 96 young people learned about their mental health and coping strategies.

Quick Quote

"I can't praise the organisation enough; my child would spend all day here if he could. He loves all the staff and every time I drop him off, everyone is happy and having fun. It's a safe place for kids to be kids."
-Parent regarding Summer HAF 2024

Partnerships:

In 2024, we had the ability to work with a multitude of partnership agencies, trusts, and foundations within Emotional Health & Wellbeing. These included:

It Takes A Community to Raise A Child: In partnership with Lancashire Mind and IMO funded by The National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund, we hosted a conference where 20 partner organisations came together to collaborate on designing a theory of change for grassroots, community-based initiatives enhancing young people's mental health and wellbeing, initially reaching 108 young people with stubborn barriers to access.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Emotional Health & Wellbeing (continued)

Stronger Communities: This project, funded by Islamic Relief, has already supported 15 young BAME women in its first year and is currently engaging another 15 in its second year. It provides a platform for these young women to share their stories and learning, inspiring others while promoting confidence and resilience. The project aims to create a lasting impact by embedding meaningful evaluation processes that can be shared with community stakeholders to drive systemic change in how BAME women are supported. It empowers young BAME women to actively participate in Youth Zone decision-making and programme development, ensuring their voices are heard and valued. By building on strong existing partnerships and forging new ones across educational, statutory, voluntary, faith-based, and community sectors, the project is reaching those often excluded from mainstream services. These sessions are a series of tailored workshops, activities, and cultural events. At the end of each year, each cohort plans a community event which is delivered by the participants themselves. In March, this was the Big Iftar.

Aldridge Project: 6 week programme delivered in small groups, aiming to increase confidence, self-esteem, and emotional health & well-being for young people attending DVHS, DACA, or DAES.

Healthy Young Minds: Through an initiative funded by Lancashire & South Cumbria Foundation Trust and led in partnership with Big Tank and the NHS, our members produced and released three short films that explore important mental health topics chosen by members. The topics covered were: social media and body image, balancing home and school life, and coping with intrusive thoughts.

Impact Story: Meet Elyse

Elyse joined the program while struggling with anxiety and stress. She found it difficult to settle and manage her emotions, which often left her feeling overwhelmed.

At the start, Elyse's heightened anxiety made it challenging for her to engage fully in activities or interact with others. She required additional support to navigate her emotions and build confidence in the sessions. To address Elyse's challenges, staff dedicated one-to-one time with her, providing a safe and supportive space for her to express her feelings and explore strategies for managing her emotions. Over time, Elyse began to open up about her struggles and gained a better understanding of how to handle them. As she grew more comfortable, Elyse started participating actively in group activities. Her natural empathy and supportive nature soon became apparent, and she evolved into a valued team member. Elyse's participation extended across all activities, where her encouragement of peers fostered a positive and inclusive environment.

Elyse is currently in college, studying sports, which aligns with her passion and skills. She has become a significant contributor to the sports teams within the program, demonstrating leadership and enthusiasm. Moreover, Elyse has expressed a strong interest in volunteering once she turns 18. She has already begun helping out during sessions, providing support to others and taking on responsibilities that reflect her growing confidence and commitment.

Elyse's journey highlights the transformative power of individualised support and the development of coping strategies. Her progression from feeling overwhelmed to becoming a supportive and active team member underscores her resilience and growth. Elyse's aspirations to volunteer further reflect her dedication to giving back and contributing positively to the program and community.

Attendance: Number of young people who attended	Engagements: Number of overall interactions
1,457	6,809

Engagements: Try	6,146
Engagements: Train	559
Engagements: Teach	104

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Cyber & Tech

This year we have expanded our Maker Zone capabilities with the employment of a full time creative lead who has been responsible for increasing the access our members have to relevant Art & Design, Technology skills and experiences in an informal STEAM framework. We have been developing and implementing a curriculum as part of the Maker Zone Network with the two other prototype Maker Zones to reduce the barriers our members would traditionally face when trying to access key technologies and instil a DIY "punk" aesthetic of focussing on the core principles and concepts that can be tested and developed with whatever is to hand.

Activities Offered 2024-2025				
Animation Club	Coding	3D Printing	Soldering Skills	Design Engineering
Arcade Emulation	Ozobot Robotics	Sphero Racing	DIY Guitar Pedal	BT Speaker Design
Origami Circuits	Gaming	Gen AI		

STEM Week: In partnership with Mergon and Vital Energi, This week was packed with real-world applications of STEM as careers. Through presentations, industry day trips, and robotic demonstrations, young people's aspirations were raised.

Quick Quote

"I liked the Gen AI Photography project because I learnt a lot about cameras, and it was my first time playing with a camera. I was really pleased because I got a certificate for all of my hard work. I really like Bespoke and I am proud to bring my creations to school."

-Halima, age 8

Partnerships:

In 2024, we had the ability to work with a multitude of partnership agencies, trusts, and foundations within Cyber & Tech. These included:

Sairo Gamification Consultation: We ran a workshop with Sairo as part of the National Youth Work Week to gain insight into what facilities our young people wanted from our upcoming building work and development. The young people generated a list of desirable features from the workshop and Sairo used RUNWAY AI to turn these into visuals. These insights were then given to the architecture team to help shape the look of the new building works including focus on the gaming area and how to make the corridors and hallways more interactive.

Virtual Reality Club: A group of our young people have supported and developed a Virtual Reality Club. The sessions now run every Saturday evening with a range of VR challenges. The young people have created a leaderboard for each activity for a more competitive edge. This has encouraged people to play, compete, and learn new skills. We have also used these at community events, which has also proved popular with all ages and families trying to challenge one another.

Girl Guides: As part of our Maker Zone Network collaboration with The Making Rooms we hosted a troupe of 30 girl guides to learn about screen printing and laser cutting techniques. Each individual came away from the event having made a personalised bag and laser engraved room sign.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Cyber & Tech (continued)

Impact Story: Meet Anna

Anna is a 16-year-old member of the LGBTQIA+ community from Blackburn who has been a member of the Youth Zone since starting as a Junior in 2017. Anna has a diagnosis of ASC and has had previous concerns about their mental health and wellbeing following a series of bullying incidents from their last school. Anna wishes to expand their side business with their Dad, who makes and sells 3D prints of fidgets and characters at craft markets. As a keen artist, they are also interested in setting up a brand identity for their work to sell prints, stickers and other merchandise featuring their artwork. Anna has participated in our "Bright Spark" sessions during Monday night Youth sessions as part of the Maker Zone's "Make Monday" provision. These sessions have been small, closed sessions where the participants can share their ideas freely and focus on the project without outside disruptions. Each person has been given a folder and sketchbook to record their ideas and has received induction on the machines they wish to use for creating their merchandise and guidance on how to recreate their ideas digitally. The programs we have used are open-source equivalents of industry-standard software that are free to download and run so that the participants can continue their journey outside the sessions at their own pace. Anna has created a brand, "Dionysus Designs", and has designed logos and stickers using Inkscape (a vector design program similar to Adobe Illustrator), which they downloaded and installed on their laptop after learning to use through the Bright Sparks sessions. They have been able to use the designs created with knife plotter equipment to print and cut their stickers and make signage for the market stall they run with their dad. Anna has steadily become more confident in discussing their designs with other people and offering constructive advice regarding the work of other participants. They have been very excited about using the software that allows them to work offline as they have limited access to the Adobe Creative Suite through their school, which is limited by an internet connection. As Anna continues to develop her brand and range of products, we will be able to help them expand into the enterprise side of running a business with a crossover with our Youth Hub programmes. We will also help them create a portfolio of work that will help them pursue employment or further education in an Art and Design career.

Attendance: Number of young people who attended programming	Engagements: Number of overall interactions
1,710	10,365

Engagements: Try	7,101
Engagements: Train	3,122
Engagements: Teach	142

Other Universal Programmes & Events

Holiday Activity Fund: During 2024/25, we ran three Holiday Activity Fund programmes across both of our venues at Easter, Summer and Christmas. Through funding from the Department of Education, Spring North, and Blackburn and Darwen Council, we were able to provide free membership, free entrance and free hot meals to 1,199 young people. HAF activities provide a safe place for young people during the school holidays- engaging them through enriching activities and trips such as ice skating, World of Work tours, cooking and life skill sessions, slip and slides, residential and beach trips.

Eid Family Fun Day: With partnership support from IMO, One Voice and local community vendors, we successfully celebrated Eid with over 700 young people and families participating in the fun which included face painting, bounce houses, crafts, food, and community. The day highlights Blackburn and Darwen Youth Zone's inclusive environment for young people empowering them to thrive.

Boxing Night: In partnership with Technique Boxing ABC, we hosted our first Boxing Night at King Georges Hall. 450 supporters watched young people exhibit their boxing skills, raising money to support Next Level Sport programmes.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Other Universal Programmes & Events (continued)

Festival of Making: We again participated in the wonderful Festival of Making this year. Highlighted as an official venue for the event, 492 young people and their families participated in a variety of activities including a junk golf course, ceramic course by FiredUp4Clay, Pixel Necklace creations, sword fighting coding game alongside Manchester Youth Zone's Making Zone, and more.

The Big Iftar: In collaboration with OneVoice Blackburn, our Stronger Communities programme hosted the 2nd annual Big Iftar, bringing together 235 members of the community to break fast through a community celebration of unity, reflection and togetherness.

Halloween Beastly Bash: Over 300 young people from Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone attended and participated in pumpkin carving, a critter workshop where young people held live snakes and other animals, laser tag, bouncy castles and a magic show.

School Uniform Exchange: Through drives at both Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone and donations from local businesses and community members, we were able to support 128 families by providing school uniforms for the upcoming school year.

Detached and Outreach

The detached and outreach programme is an essential support to young people across Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone. This programme aims to reduce barriers to inhouse programming by meeting young people where they're at.

As the programming offer continues to grow, we have provided outreach support to 2,071 members over the last 12 months, providing a rich and diverse level of support, including:

- Aspirations, Skills & Progression
- Positive Engagement & Mentorship
- Support Referrals

Darwen Street Zone Bus: In March, we launched our Street Zone Bus. Funded by WM & BW Lloyd Charity Trust, this bus will work in high need areas around Darwen working as a detached Youth Zone and providing programmes such as sports, arts, employability programmes, and emotional health and wellbeing support. This bus will allow us to support even more young people in the borough, especially those with barriers prohibiting them from attending the traditional Youth Zone locations.

StreetZone: Our Street Zone offer runs five nights a week, with our outreach bus out three nights and on-foot patrols taking place two nights a week. We engage young people directly where they are, offering a mix of enrichment activities, recreational play, and positive conversations. Alongside the usual focus on preventing anti-social behaviour, we also provide signposting and referrals to other organisations where needed, helping young people access the right support at the right time. We have continued to build partnerships with the local neighbourhood policing team and other agencies. To ensure we have a united offer across all areas.

Community Zone: Collaborations with local Islamic faith schools through the Madrassah project has allowed young people wider access to our diverse programmes. Our 'East Meets West' group participates in activities such as cake decorating, vision boards, female and male sports sessions, and community activity trips.

Quick Quote

"I love it when I see people from Street Zone when I'm playing outside with my mates. They have really helped me and my friends' families. They also run fun street games just for us and also give us free food parcels to take home for our families. Thank you Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone for always being there. You are so caring."

- Ivy, Aged 10

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Volunteering

The volunteer programme across Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone has now been firmly embedded within both our offer and our culture. We have a large team of dedicated volunteers whose continuous support has become essential as our membership grows.

Our volunteers have donated an impressive 4,196 hours over the last 12 months, providing a rich and diverse level of support, including:

Corporate Volunteers: Our Corporate volunteers have come from 17 different businesses. Out of the 17 businesses, over 200 volunteers served over 1,437 hours supporting both the Blackburn & Darwen Sites. From supporting master classes such as birdhouse building and baking workshops, our volunteer network gives interactive workshops utilising their specialty skillset to provide opportunities directly to our young people. Corporate volunteers also support through a multitude of support services such as present wrapping, event support, and additional young people support during school holiday time.

Young Leaders: Our Young Leaders programme has served 24 young leaders who have spent 476 hours supporting full and part-time youth workers in the delivery of sessions across both of our centres. Our support for volunteers also includes facilitating 9 work placements totalling 610 hours.

Impact Story - Symclean Takes it to the Next Level

Tanya is more than just a successful business leader - she's a dedicated community champion who embodies the values of service, support, and long-term commitment. As Director of Symclean, Tanya and her husband Gary, initially joined the Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone Patron Network as a Patron in December 2022, offering vital financial backing to support young people in the area.

But Tanya's impact goes far beyond patronage.

Every Friday, she gives her time volunteering at the Darwen site, where she supports staff, builds relationships with young people and helps create a welcoming environment. Her consistent presence has made her a familiar and trusted face, affectionately embraced as part of the "Orange Family" - a growing movement of individuals dedicated to the Youth Zone's mission.

"I do the simple things like play lollipop lady and clean dishes so the YZ team can focus on supporting young people," Tanya says, highlighting her hands-on approach and willingness to do whatever's needed to make a difference.

Inspired by her example, her son began volunteering at the Youth Zone, too. His journey has mirrored the values of growth and opportunity that the Youth Zone stands for - what began as volunteering has since progressed into paid employment, showcasing the transformative power of real-world experience and mentorship. Her commitment reflects the very heart of what Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone strives to achieve: a community that works together to empower the next generation.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Fundraising & Income Streams

Our funding is derived from a combination of unrestricted financial support from our local business Patron network, grants, trusts and foundations support from local and national organisations and income generated from the hire of our facilities.

Our Business Development Team has been reconfigured within the reporting period to position the charity financially for the future. We have developed a funding strategy that has a range of funding areas and targets which are now more needs-led. Our funding strategy outlines derived income targets from the following sources:

- Business Patron support (unrestricted funding) **£852,691**
- Grants, trusts and foundations support (restricted funding) **£1,186,308**
- Local Authority Funding **£270,063**
- Other donations **£30,980**
- Facilities hire **£5,400**
- Campaigns and events **£146,127**

Patron Involvement

Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone continues to be supported by a network of business Patrons. Their giving is predicated on unrestricted funding, which equals £852,691 which represents 32.8% of our total income (Excluding YIF) (23/24: £758,083 (30.8%)). The following Patrons supported us in 2024/25:

Graham & Brown	PM+M	Senator	Brian Mercer Charitable Trust
Bowland Charitable Trust	Forbes Solicitors	Pets Choice	BAE Systems
Napthens Solicitors	Blackburn College	Totally Wicked	AMS Group
Star Academies Trust	Navigator Tissue UK	Barnfield Construction	Nybble
Herbert Parkinson	Fagan & Whalley	Issa Foundation	Businesswise Solutions
ESF	Blackburn Chemicals	Staci	JDS Trucks
Prometheus	Sales Geek	Northern Industrial Radwell	Kingswood Homes
Mergon	Peter Cummings	Multevo Ltd	FMGS
Brookhouse Aerospace Limited	WEC Group	Handelsbanken	Flavour Warehouse
Panaz	Kay Group	Watson Ramsbottom Limited	Suez Recycling & Recovery Ltd
Cardboard Box Co	Symclean	Trevor Dawson	Cummins Mellor
Dobson + Beaumont	Hadgraft Electrical	Perspex	Catchpoint
Rosslee Construction	Lee Banner Electrical	IN4	Darwen Terracotta
Promethean	Murray Building Services	Crown Paints	Elgra Furniture
ACG Renewables	J&A Kay	Wellocks	WEPA
Pendle Doors	Gordon Taylor OBE	Cube Funder	BBF
MK Illumination	AMRC	Blackburn Round Table	Workhouse Marketing
Prestige Beds	Coolkit	Precision Polymer Engineering	Red Rose Holdings
Vital Energi			

We are once again grateful for the continued support of our Patrons, without whom we would not be able to provide vital help and support to the young people of Blackburn with Darwen.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

In-Kind Support

During the year, we have received £30,980 in In-Kind Support. We are grateful to the below Patrons & supporters who have provided this:

- Flavour Warehouse - Football Boots
- Staci - Children's bedding
- Mergon - Lego
- Graham & Brown - Children's bedding
- Various Patrons - Christmas Toys
- Multiple Companies - Easter Eggs
- Crown Paints - paint
- Morrisons - food items
- Various Patrons - consumables for HAF workshops

Grant, Trust & Foundation Funding

A major source of income for the charity in 2024/25 was derived from Grants, Trusts or Foundations. This amounted to £1,456,371 during the reporting period representing 56% of our total income excluding YIF (23/24: £1,367,938 (55.5%)). A further £2,682,045 (23/24: £227,198) was received from the Youth Investment Fund (DCMS) for the Fusebox refurbishment project. The following Grants, Trusts or Foundations supported us in the 2024/25 financial year:

BAE Capital Support	Shepherd Street Trust	Burberry Foundation	Hargreaves Foundation
Spring North	John Lewis Employability Fund	Henry Smith Charitable Trust	RL Charitable Trust
UK Shared Prosperity	National Lottery: Reaching Communities	Cadent	Gen AI
Eric Wright Foundation	Holiday Activity Fund	OnSide Impact Fund	Prudence Trust
Barrat Foundation	BBC Children In Need	NCS	Masonic Trust
BwD Council	Islamic Relief: Stronger Communities	Sport England	Together an Active Future
The Big Give	The National Lottery: Heritage Fund	W M and B W Lloyd Charity	D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
DCMS (YIF)	Hays Travel Foundation	Skipton Charitable Trust Foundation	John Thaw Foundation
Joanie's Fund Hertfordshire Community Association	Baily Thomas Charitable Fund	The Casey Trust	Duke of Edinburgh

Events, Gift Aid & Community Fundraising

Fundraising Events continue to be an important income stream for the charity with a total of £146,993 (23/24: £115,675) being raised. Our biggest fundraising event continues to be the very popular Blackburn Beer & Gin Festival which raised income of £62,011 whilst the Big Give raised an additional £30,051. Fundraising on behalf of the Youth Zone by third parties raised £32,222 and we are very grateful to the organisations involved.

Facility Hire

Due to the uncertainty of access to the building caused by the refurbishment project, we did not promote the use of our facilities to third parties. However, as a result of existing commitments we did raise £5,400 during the year.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Plans for the Future

Darwen YIF

Following the opening of The Fusebox this past year and the securement of £3.1 million from the Government's Youth Investment Fund (YIF), we've navigated a year of construction while continuing to deliver programmes—culminating in the grand opening of The Fusebox and the full return of activity at our Blackburn site in April 2025

Looking ahead, our focus turns to Darwen Youth Hub: a £4 million investment from YIF, owned by BwD Council, that will create a one-of-a-kind space for young people in Darwen—completely free of charge. Through Blackburn with Darwen Council's Youth Hub, we will operate Darwen Youth Zone which will serve as a central hub for youth engagement, developed in partnership with local businesses, organisations, and community members to ensure it reflects the needs and aspirations of the town.

We are deeply grateful to DCMS, the Youth Investment Fund, and Blackburn with Darwen Council for their substantial support—an investment that will continue to inspire and empower young people for many years to come.

Five Year Strategy

After an extensive consultation with stakeholders, we have created a 5 year strategy. This strategy will serve as a roadmap of vision and reflects our unwavering dedication to fostering a nurturing environment that utilises youth voice to create a holistic approach to programming. Our strategy serves as a guiding compass, steering us toward a transformative journey of positive impact and growth.

In pursuing our purpose to empower and uplift the youth of Blackburn and Darwen, we have identified six key priorities that will serve as the foundation for all our endeavours and aligned goals.

- **Priority 1:** To ensure young people are at the heart of our delivery and decision making.
- **Priority 2:** To extend our reach and influence into the wider community
- **Priority 3:** To be an organisation that builds and invests in the workforce of the future.
- **Priority 4:** To work in partnership to enhance services
- **Priority 5:** To be a sustainable organisation that has a long term positive impact on young people and the local community
- **Priority 6:** To refurbish the Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zones & relaunch services

Co-location of Crucial Services

We know how important it is for our centre to be a true community hub for young people across Blackburn and Darwen. In recent years, we've seen a growing need for signposting to specialist support, and we want to make that journey easier. To help remove barriers, we're working with partners including DWP, ICB, and Health & Wellbeing Services to bring their programmes directly into our building. By co-locating these services in a space where young people already feel safe and supported, we hope to reduce stigma and ensure that access to professional help feels like a natural extension of the trusted relationships they've already built here.

Increased 'Street Zone'

Over the past year, we have introduced our Street Zone provision throughout Darwen. Ensuring that we reach high-need areas on a recurring basis while creating positive impressions amongst young people has been the main goal. With 468 hours served across both Blackburn & Darwen, we aim to make strong connections with young people while steering them towards provisions. Through the conversion of the Street Zone bus, which was fully reconverted and brought to a series of locations in Darwen with an aim to reach more young people by meeting them where they are at and helping them towards where they want to be. With this addition, we aim to provide a 7 day provisional offer with designated staff focused on supporting the neighbourhoods of Darwen.

Enhancement of our Arts offer

The newly renovated Fusebox has become Blackburn's only dedicated digital arts space. This space gives us the opportunity to expand our offer while aligning closely with local creative initiatives including the Blackburn with Darwen Digital Arts Strategy. By working with local artists, partner organisations, and young people, we'll co-create a youth-led arts programme that raises cultural awareness, inspires creativity, and shows young people that Blackburn is a place where creative careers can thrive.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Plans for the Future (continued)

World Class Basics

Over the past year, we've grown significantly—expanding both our spaces and our team. As we look ahead, our priority is to return to the essentials and invest in getting the world-class basics right across the organisation. This means strengthening every part of our work: from internal operations and external communications to organisational structure and service delivery. By streamlining and refining these core areas, we will build a solid foundation that not only futureproofs the services we provide but also ensures we create the best possible workplace for our staff. With this foundation in place, we can embed a culture of continuous quality improvement, keeping excellence at the heart of everything we do.

Structure, Governance and Management

We operate as a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee without share capital. 'Blackburn Youth Zone' is registered under the Companies Act 1985, registration number 6944317. The company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association, dated 25th June 2009. We are also a Charity registered in England and Wales, registration number 1135949. Management of the company's affairs is vested in the Trustees.

In the event of a winding-up, the present members and those who have ceased to be a member within one year of such event have guaranteed liabilities of the company to the sum not exceeding one pound each year.

Organisational Structure

The legal entity, Blackburn Youth Zone, is governed by its Board of Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of Company Law, which retains overall responsibility for the strategic direction and the organisation's policies. The Trustees carry ultimate responsibility for the conduct of Blackburn Youth Zone and for ensuring that the charity satisfies its legal and contractual obligations.

The Board appoints a Chief Executive to manage the day-to-day operations. To facilitate effective operations, the Chief Executive has delegated authority as approved by the Board for all operational matters, including finance, human resources and operational delivery.

The board approves the strategic plan and annual business plan, scrutinising business performance, including financial performance, and provides advice to the Chief Executive on operational matters of performance.

The pay of the Chief Executive Officer is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees, benchmarking their salaries against those of similar Youth Zones within the OnSide Network.

Blackburn Youth Zone is part of the network of Youth Zones established by OnSide Youth Zones (Charity Registered in England & Wales no:1125893). Many of the operational policies and procedures of the Youth Zone are influenced by being part of this wider network.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees comprises 12 Directors representing the public, private and third sector, along with two more members who provide additional expertise but do not have voting rights.

Trustees can be nominated for a fixed or indeterminate term. One-third of the Directors will retire by rotation at each AGM; retiring Directors can then be re-appointed.

The Trustees normally meet quarterly where finance and delivery performance are scrutinised and strategic plans reviewed.

New Trustees will be recruited according to the needs of the charity and the suitability of possible candidates. The unanimous approval of existing Trustees leads to their appointment.

The Board appointed four new Trustees during the reporting period with four Trustees resigning during the same period.

The Board wishes to record their thanks to the retiring Trustees - Michelle Mellor, Denise Park, Marcus Saxton and Jamie Carson - who resigned in good standing. Two other advisors to the Board also stood down in good standing - Jo Siddle and Zaffer Khan. The Board wishes to record their thanks to both the retiring Trustees and Advisors.

Financial Review

Total income for the year, excluding the YIF project, was £2,600,296 (2024: £2,462,822). Of this amount, £949,663 (2024: £936,551) was from donations, primarily from the local business community; £547,167 (2024: £608,284) was from grants; public grants of £909,205 (2024: £759,654) were also received; and the balance of £194,261 (2024: £158,733) was income from charitable activities, fundraising and investment income. A further £2,682,045 (2024: £227,198) was received from the DCMS via the Youth Investment Fund for the Fusebox project, of which £2,516,676 related to Capital. Total expenditure for the year was £2,846,372 (2024: £2,383,435), of which £269,384 (2024: £188,697) related to fundraising activities and £2,576,988 (2024: £2,194,788) related to charitable activities.

The resulting surplus for the year of £2,435,969 (2024: surplus £306,535) was after charging £132,512 (2024: £136,057) of depreciation on fixed assets. Excluding the YIF funding the deficit for the year was £80,707 after funding a major repair of £92,029.

The total unrestricted funds held on 31 March 2025 were £712,026 (2024: £810,874). This included a Designated Fund of £127,780 specifically for the work within the town of Darwen. The total net assets of the organisation as of 31 March 2025 were £7,957,558 (2024: £5,521,589)

Reserves Policy

The Board of Trustees of Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone has established a reserves policy that appropriately reflects the risks to which the charity is exposed.

In reviewing the potential costs that could arise should a significant reduction in income be incurred, the Trustees have determined that it is appropriate for unrestricted, 'free', reserves to be maintained at a minimum of 3 months.

Due to the current uncertainty in the economic climate, shifting restrictions and an anticipated increase in demand for our services, the Trustees have agreed that the Charity will ideally hold more unrestricted funds than the minimum required in the reserves policy.

On 31st March 2025, the charity had accumulated unrestricted, 'free', reserves of £715,026; this provides cover equivalent to 4.2 months of operating costs, within the range that the Trustees are currently comfortable with. The reserves policy does not consider expenditure linked to restricted projects and therefore, covered by restricted funds.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Reserves Policy (continued)

The charity has plans in place to regularly review both the sum it wishes to hold in reserves in unrestricted funds and the basis for that figure, particularly considering the ongoing impact of the increase in the cost of living.

Total reserves at the end of the period were £7,957,558, of which £7,312,515 can only be realised by disposing of fixed assets. £2,686,682 of the Fixed Asset figure relates to the Fusebox project. Total reserves after deducting restricted funds, fixed asset funds and designated funds is £584,246.

Investment Policy

Any surplus funds that are not immediately required may, at the Board's discretion, be invested to ensure the charity's future sustainability. To ensure such investments are safeguarded;

- Any decision about investment will be made by the Board (potentially having professional advice) considering the suitability and diversification of investments, including investments in deposit accounts, to ensure that the failure of one investment or institution does not have a major impact on Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone
- Investments will be made in line with Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone Values
- Investment performance will be regularly reviewed
- Records will be maintained of all investments held (including details of all those sold or purchased) by the charity
- Accounting controls will be fully implemented to ensure that all dividends or interest payments due are received and accounted for.

During the year £510,194 was deposited with various accounts via Flagstone and terms ranging from 3 months to 12 months ensuring a reasonable spread of maturity should the funds be required. This amount is included in the Cash at bank and in hand total of £1,135,323.

Going Concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the Trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The Trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure are sufficient, with the level of reserves, for the charity to continue as a going concern.

Risk Management

The Board fully accepts its responsibilities under the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). The Trustees have considered the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are committed to ensuring these are effectively managed.

The Chief Executive and senior managers have undertaken a comprehensive risk assessment and established risk registers from an organisation and operational perspective and have established risk management and control procedures, which are reviewed regularly by the Board.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Risk Management (continued)

Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone's top risks are outlined below;

Risk	Mitigation
Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We review annually, our health and safety policy and procedures and ensure all team members are trained in line with the policy.- We have an annual external check of our health safety culture and compliance.- The BwD borough council manages all statutory compliance to ensure the highest standards.
Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Income- Expenditure- Cash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We have a finance committee that reviews monthly income, expenditure and cash.- We have a fully resourced finance team responsible for reporting management accounts and ensuring all financial controls are enforced.- We have a fully resourced Business Development team to ensure we maximise income, with governance around meeting targets.
Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Poor quality service, which does not meet the needs of young people- Low attendance numbers, which results in low return on investment- Poor performance from facilities staff, which results in an unclean or unsafe building- Poor performance from catering staff resulting in unhealthy or unsafe food- Poor performance from Business Development team resulting in financial instability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Staff are fully trained with regular refreshers to ensure youth offer is up to date.- Staff values ensure the team is happy, committed and passionate.- Proactive membership and engagement, which maximises all routes to securing new members and retaining existing members.- Regular one-to-ones and appraisals, along with spot checks where necessary to ensure staff performance is of expected levels. Check-ins with all team members and their managers every six weeks
Reputation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Negative impacts on the reputation of Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone due to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Negative press coverage of incidents- Negative opinions of stakeholders due to unprofessional work ethics- Mismanagement of time, resources, service delivery	<p>Maintain a professional, reliable and trustworthy appearance through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attendance at local and regional networking and multi-agency meetings- Fulfilling all obligations to funders including reporting and financial management- Sharing best practice and research as appropriate- Ensuring all policies and procedures are effectively followed and enforced
People <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Staff issues due to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Turnover- Sickness- Poor organisational culture/morale- Poor communication- Burnout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We have a clear plan to build the culture at Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone ensuring all team members feel valued and engaged in decision making.- A full review of HR functions was carried out during the year and as a result we have appointed a dedicated People & Culture Lead who will ensure that all of our policies are reviewed

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Fundraising Standards Information

Blackburn & Darwen Youth Zone raises funds by approaching businesses and philanthropic individuals interested in supporting young people. We also apply for Grants from Trusts that have the same interest. During the year, we used a mix of our own employees plus the services of an external team of freelance fundraisers who assisted with funding bids up to £20,000.

The charity is not currently a member of any voluntary scheme for regulating fundraising.

Primarily, we work with prospective business Patrons who have been introduced to our cause on a one-to-one basis. The Chief Executive monitors all fundraising. During the period, the charity received no complaints regarding its fundraising activities.

The charity does not do street or door-to-door fundraising, so it does not come into contact with vulnerable or other people who may feel intruded upon, unreasonably persistently approached or have had undue pressure placed upon them.

Business Plan

A 2025/26 business plan has been developed. This will be the benchmark against which the organisation will be monitored. This monitoring will occur monthly by the Senior Leadership Team and bi-monthly by the Board of Trustees. Each programme of work has an associated operational plan, fed into the annual objectives of all team members across the organisation.

Trustees Responsibilities

The Charity's Trustees (who are also directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Annual Report (including the Strategic Report) and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the charity's Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company, for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to;

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles of the Charity SORP 2019 (FRS 102)
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements, and
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume 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 charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and, hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that DonnellyBentley Ltd be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

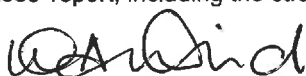
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The trustees' report, including the strategic report, was approved by the Board of Trustees.



W A Wild (Chairman)

Trustee

13 November 2025

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees, who are also the directors of Blackburn Youth Zone for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law 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, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company 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 adequate 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 Companies Act 2006. 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.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Blackburn Youth Zone (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE MEMBERS OF BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the company and the sector in which it operates and considered the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws or regulations.

We determined that the following laws and regulations were most significant: the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011 (as amended by the Charities Act 2022), Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial and Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102), those that relate to safeguarding and child protection, those that relate to employment law and those that relate to data protection. We designed audit procedures to respond to the risk, recognising that the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

We obtained an understanding of how the company is complying with those legal and regulatory frameworks by making enquiries of the management. We corroborated our enquiries through our review of board minutes.

Our tests also included agreeing the financial statements disclosures to underlying supporting documentation. There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. We did not identify any key audit matters relating to irregularities, including fraud.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

We also addressed the risk of management override of internal controls, including testing journals and evaluating whether there was evidence of bias by the management or trustees that represented a risk of material misstatement due to fraud.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Catherine Cole (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of DonnellyBentley Ltd, Statutory Auditor

Chartered Accountants

Hazlemere

70 Chorley New Road

Bolton

Lancashire

BL1 4BY

13 November 2025

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

		Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
	Notes						
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	1,228,051	3,860,029	5,088,080	1,269,726	1,261,561	2,531,287
Charitable activities	4	19,406	-	19,406	27,063	-	27,063
Other trading activities	5	146,993	-	146,993	115,675	-	115,675
Investments	6	27,862	-	27,862	15,995	-	15,995
Total income		1,422,312	3,860,029	5,282,341	1,428,459	1,261,561	2,690,020
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	7	269,384	-	269,384	188,697	-	188,697
Charitable activities	8	1,251,776	1,325,212	2,576,988	990,929	1,203,859	2,194,788
Total expenditure		1,521,160	1,325,212	2,846,372	1,179,626	1,203,859	2,383,485
Net income/(expenditure) and movement in funds		(98,848)	2,534,817	2,435,969	248,833	57,702	306,535
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		810,874	4,710,715	5,521,589	562,041	4,653,013	5,215,054
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		712,026	7,245,532	7,957,558	810,874	4,710,715	5,521,589

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	14		7,312,515		4,756,442
Current assets					
Debtors	15	144,372		199,147	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,135,323		948,741	
		<u>1,279,695</u>		<u>1,147,888</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	<u>(634,652)</u>		<u>(382,741)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>645,043</u>		<u>765,147</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>7,957,558</u>		<u>5,521,589</u>
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	19		7,245,532		4,710,715
Unrestricted funds	20		712,026		810,874
			<u>7,957,558</u>		<u>5,521,589</u>

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 13 November 2025



W A Wild (Chairman)
Trustee

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	24		2,847,305		366,495
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,688,585)		(187,528)	
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed assets		-		2,000	
Investment income received		27,862		15,995	
Net cash used in investing activities			(2,660,723)		(169,533)
Net cash generated from financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			186,582		196,962
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			948,741		751,779
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,135,323		948,741

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The company is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member of the company. The address of the registered office is Jubilee Street, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 1EP. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are to improve the life chances of young people in the Blackburn with Darwen area, helping them to gain increased levels of confidence and self-esteem and raising their aspirations for the future.

1.1 Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the note to the accounts.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) once the company has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Gifts in kind donated for distribution are included at valuation and recognised as income when they are distributed to the projects. Gifts donated for resale are included as income when they are sold. Donated facilities are included at the value to the company where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the company has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the company of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the company which is the amount the company would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

1.5 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities. Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the company and include project management carried out at Headquarters.

Costs of generating funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

Charitable activities and Governance costs are costs incurred on the company's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the company apportioned to charitable activities.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Leasehold land and buildings	2% straight line
Plant and equipment	25% reducing balance
Computers	33% straight line
Motor vehicles	20% straight line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.9 Financial instruments

The company only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.10 Taxation

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the test set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK Corporation Tax purposes.

1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.12 Retirement benefits

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the pension charge represents the amounts payable by the company to the fund in respect of the year.

1.13 Leases

Rentals under operating leases are charged to the Statement of financial activities incorporating income and expenditure account on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.14 Grants

Income from government and other grants are recognised at fair value when the charity has entitlement after any performance conditions have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably. If entitlement is not met then these amounts are deferred.

1.15 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the company; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Donations and gifts	949,663	-	949,663	936,151	-	936,151
Government grants	270,063	3,321,187	3,591,250	183,126	803,726	986,852
Grants	8,325	538,842	547,167	150,449	457,835	608,284
	<u>1,228,051</u>	<u>3,860,029</u>	<u>5,088,080</u>	<u>1,269,726</u>	<u>1,261,561</u>	<u>2,531,287</u>

Donations and gifts includes £30,980 (2024: £92,135) of In-Kind Support ranging from raffle prizes, toys, bedding and make-up.

During the year to 31 March 2025, volunteers provided 4,196 hours (2024:6,882) of support to the Youth Zone, which equates to an average of around 81 hours (2024:132) per week.

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Charitable activities		
Young People's activity sessions	14,006	16,222
Facility hire	5,400	10,841
	<u>19,406</u>	<u>27,063</u>

5 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Fundraising events	<u>146,993</u>	<u>115,675</u>

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

6 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Other income	27,862	15,995

7 Expenditure on raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Fundraising and publicity		
Staging fundraising events	84,392	59,749
Fundraising agents	37,553	36,166
Staff costs	145,127	92,782
Support costs	2,312	-
	269,384	188,697

8 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Charitable Activities 2025 £	Charitable Activities 2024 £
Direct costs		
Staff costs	929,576	839,466
Trips and minibus hire	22,859	15,514
Catering supplies	61,800	63,590
Partnerships & arrangements	241,263	132,954
Freelance staff	17,569	10,300
Youth activity consumables	152,536	164,572
	1,425,603	1,226,396
Share of support and governance costs (see note 9)		
Support	1,151,385	968,392
	2,576,988	2,194,788
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	1,251,776	990,929
Restricted funds	1,325,212	1,203,859
	2,576,988	2,194,788

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

9 Support costs allocated to activities

	Charitable Activities 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Staff costs	428,508	354,836
Depreciation	132,512	136,898
Insurance	29,673	18,601
Office costs	131,020	137,376
Other building running costs	298,195	212,331
Other staff costs	23,973	18,043
Other costs	81,151	70,313
Freelance staff	26,353	19,994
	<u>1,151,385</u>	<u>968,392</u>

Total governance costs included within support costs were £32,856 (2024: £24,447)

10 Net movement in funds

	2025 £	2024 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	12,000	9,000
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	132,512	136,056
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	841
	<u></u>	<u></u>

11 Trustees

During the year, no trustees received any remuneration (2024 - £NIL).

During the year, no trustees received any benefits in kind (2024 - £NIL).

During the year, 8 trustees received reimbursement of travel expenses totaling £323 (2024 - 6 trustees totaling £446).

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

12 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Fundraising and administration	13	9
Delivery	71	73
Total	84	82

Average headcount expressed as a full time equivalent:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Fundraising and administration	8	8
Delivery	40	36
Total	48	44

Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	1,476,614	1,267,255
Other pension costs	26,597	19,829
	1,503,211	1,287,084

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
£70,001 to £80,000	1	1

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Aggregate compensation	216,663	212,425

Key management personnel are considered to be the Chief Executive, Head of Operations and Director of Finance.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings	Assets under construction	Plant and equipment	Computers	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cost						
At 1 April 2024	5,515,459	158,572	145,672	47,817	19,794	5,887,314
Additions	-	2,528,111	45,306	22,465	92,703	2,688,585
At 31 March 2025	5,515,459	2,686,683	190,978	70,282	112,497	8,575,899
Depreciation and impairment						
At 1 April 2024	983,590	-	91,452	36,036	19,794	1,130,872
Depreciation charged in the year	110,309	-	13,365	8,838	-	132,512
At 31 March 2025	1,093,899	-	104,817	44,874	19,794	1,263,384
Carrying amount						
At 31 March 2025	4,421,560	2,686,683	86,161	25,408	92,703	7,312,515
At 31 March 2024	4,531,869	158,572	54,220	11,780	-	4,756,442

On 17 April 2015 the property from which the company operates was legally transferred to the company from Onside Youth Zones.

Onside Youth Zones previously built and developed the property with the support of a £5 million grant provided by the Big Lottery Fund, acting as agent for the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State holds a legal charge over the company secured on the property, for a period of 20 years from 26 February 2009. The charge has terms associated which if not met by the company could result in the grant becoming repayable.

15 Debtors

	2025	2024
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	80,892	73,632
Other debtors	200	126
Prepayments and accrued income	63,280	125,389
	144,372	199,147

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Other taxation and social security		54,066	43,388
Deferred income	17	245,887	103,773
Trade creditors		61,520	52,990
Other creditors		45,617	25,958
Accruals		227,562	156,632
		<u>634,652</u>	<u>382,741</u>

17 Deferred income

	2025 £	2024 £
Arising from grants and trusts	226,647	103,023
Arising from fundraising events	19,240	750
	<u>245,887</u>	<u>103,773</u>

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	<u>245,887</u>	<u>103,773</u>
Movements in the year:		
Deferred income at 1 April 2024	103,773	157,872
Released from previous periods	(927,955)	(679,912)
Resources deferred in the year	<u>1,070,069</u>	<u>625,813</u>
Deferred income at 31 March 2025	<u>245,887</u>	<u>103,773</u>

18 Retirement benefit schemes

	2025 £	2024 £
Defined contribution schemes		
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	<u>26,597</u>	<u>19,829</u>

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

19 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted Funds	20,276	1,177,984	(1,049,534)	148,726
Property Reserves	4,690,439	2,682,045	(275,678)	7,096,806
	<u>4,710,715</u>	<u>3,860,029</u>	<u>(1,325,212)</u>	<u>7,245,532</u>
Previous year:	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted Funds	10,835	1,034,363	(1,024,922)	20,276
Property Reserves	4,642,178	227,198	(178,937)	4,690,439
	<u>4,653,013</u>	<u>1,261,561</u>	<u>(1,203,859)</u>	<u>4,710,715</u>

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

19 Restricted funds

(Continued)

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers At 31 March 2025 £	£
Prudence Trust - Wellbeing Worker	-	3,741	(3,741)	-	-
Youth Hub - Henry Smith	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	-	125,000	(125,000)	-	-
Digital Futures - Maker Zone	3,000	-	(3,000)	-	-
BWD Mentoring	-	10,833	(10,833)	-	-
Eric Wright Foundation	-	40,000	(40,000)	-	-
OnSide Impact Fund - Maker Zone	11,894	57,362	(69,256)	-	-
BBC CIN - Darwen Targeted Support Worker	-	30,000	(30,000)	-	-
Casey Trust/Hays Travel	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
Burberry Foundation	-	22,066	(22,066)	-	-
NCS Community Experiences	-	21,650	(17,799)	-	3,851
Shepherd Street Trust	1,582	-	-	-	1,582
Tower Above Project - TaAF	-	72,747	(72,747)	-	-
Henry Smith	-	35,000	(35,000)	-	-
Doyle Carter	1,000	3,000	(4,000)	-	-
John Lewis Foundation Year 2	-	83,241	(83,241)	-	-
HAF Easter 24	-	22,860	(22,860)	-	-
Reaching Communities	-	100,000	(93,162)	-	6,838
Cadent	-	58,500	(58,500)	-	-
OF Impact Fund - Fundraising Sustainability	-	60,824	(60,824)	-	-
HAF Summer 24	-	101,032	(101,032)	-	-
Islamic Relief - Stronger Communities	-	6,819	(6,819)	-	-
John Thaw Foundation	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Heritage Lottery Fund	-	91,694	(91,694)	-	-
Prudence Trust 2024	-	18,461	(18,461)	-	-
Sport England	-	13,572	(13,572)	-	-
Duke of Edinburgh	-	5,478	(5,478)	-	-
Joanies Fund	-	1,750	(1,750)	-	-
HAF Winter 24	-	24,950	(24,950)	-	-
Winter Warmer	-	4,203	(4,203)	-	-
HAF Easter 25	-	-	(854)	-	(854)
BAE Maker Zone Grant	-	22,397	(4,593)	-	17,804
Sport England (Wheelchairs)	1,235	-	(249)	-	986
Active Lancashire (Boxing and UV Equipment)	1,519	-	(304)	-	1,215
Police Commissioner - Knife Crime	46	-	(46)	-	-
Lloyds Trust - Youth Bus	-	60,000	-	-	60,000
Heritage Lottery Fund	-	54,804	-	-	54,804
	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Building Project	4,531,869	-	(110,309)	-	4,421,560

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

19 Restricted funds

(Continued)

YIF	158,570	2,682,045	(165,369)	-	2,675,246
OnSide - Project Gen AI	-	2,500	-	-	2,500
Total	4,710,715	3,860,029	(1,325,212)	-	7,245,532

HAF - Easter Providing positive activity and food through the Easter holidays to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds tackling holiday hunger.

Youth Hub Various projects to help young people, particularly those with special needs, get into employment or training.

Capital Building Project Monies received for the initial construction and fitting out of the building. The original expenditure relates to the annual depreciation charge.

HAF Summer & Winter 24 Providing positive activity and food through the summer & winter holidays to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds tackling holiday hunger.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund To engage young people, community, and the private sector in community activities, volunteering and business engagement.

John Lewis Foundation Supporting young people aged 16-24 who are currently unemployed, not in training or learning and who may have a range of vulnerabilities and need help to move into employment, training or learning opportunities.

Doyle Carter - The Arts To deliver weekly performing arts sessions.

Digital Futures - Maker Zone To develop a flexible curriculum which aids the quality and impact of Maker Zone.

Burberry Foundation Creative/Enterprise projects.

NCS Community Experiences Encourage young people to try different activities and to step out of their comfort zone.

Shepherd Street Trust New basketball kits.

BBC CIN - Darwen Targeted Support Worker Funding for a Targeted Support Worker at Darwen Youth Zone.

OnSide Impact Fund - Maker Zone Development of the Maker Zone, digital arts space.

NCS Delivery of NCS programme to 195 young people.

YIF Capital grant to refurbish the Fusebox

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

19 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Lloyds Trust - Youth Bus	Capital grant to purchase and kit out an Outreach Bus
Heritage Lottery Fund	Wonderful Electric project - rediscovering the history of the Fusebox

20 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	At 31 March 2025 £
General funds	675,046	1,056,708	(1,147,508)	584,246
Designated fund	135,828	365,604	(373,652)	127,780
	<u>810,874</u>	<u>1,422,312</u>	<u>(1,521,160)</u>	<u>712,026</u>
Previous year:	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	At 31 March 2024 £
General funds	456,180	1,127,333	(908,467)	675,046
Designated fund	105,861	301,126	(271,159)	135,828
	<u>562,041</u>	<u>1,428,459</u>	<u>(1,179,626)</u>	<u>810,874</u>

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £
At 31 March 2025:			
Tangible assets	78,880	7,233,635	7,312,515
Current assets/(liabilities)	633,146	11,897	645,043
	<u>712,026</u>	<u>7,245,532</u>	<u>7,957,558</u>

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

(Continued)

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
At 31 March 2024:			
Tangible assets	66,002	4,690,440	4,756,442
Current assets/(liabilities)	744,872	20,275	765,147
	<u>810,874</u>	<u>4,710,715</u>	<u>5,521,589</u>

22 Financial commitments

At 31 March 2025 Blackburn Youth Zone had financial commitments of £223,378 (2024 - £57,967) not included in the balance sheet.

23 Related party transactions

AH Graham, who is a trustee, is a director of Graham & Brown Limited. During the year, this company made donations totaling £25,000 (2024 - £25,000) and sponsorship of events of £590 (2024 - £590).

E Swan, who is a trustee, is a partner of Forbes Solicitors. Wayne Wild, a trustee, is the husband of the Managing Partner of Forbes Solicitors. During the year, Forbes Solicitors made donations totaling £13,000 (2024 - £11,833) and sponsorship of events of £1,400 (2024 - £650). Blackburn Youth Zone paid £9,419 (2024 - £1,080) for legal services.

Wayne Wild is the sole director of Lumax Ltd, who are in turn the sole shareholders of 3g Pitch Hire Ltd. During the year the company paid 3G Pitch Hire Ltd £1,540 (2024 - £3,135) for the hire of the 3G pitch at AFC Darwen.

M Saxton, who is a trustee, is a director of Totally Wicked. During the year Totally Wicked made donations of £25,000 (2024 - £25,000) and sponsorship of events of £3,519 (2024 - £4,220).

P. Mellor, who is a trustee, is a director of Cummins Mellor Limited, Chef Jobs UK Ltd and Personnel Checks Limited. During the year Cummins Mellor made donations totalling £230 (2024 - £8,220). During the year Blackburn Youth Zone paid £8,243 (2024 - £nil) to Cummins Mellor Limited for recruitment services, £Nil (2024 - £3,848) to Chef Jobs UK Ltd for temporary staff and £2,442 (2024 - £2,390) to Personnel Checks Limited for DBS checking services.

BLACKBURN YOUTH ZONE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

24	Cash generated from operations	2025 £	2024 £
	Surplus for the year	2,435,969	306,535
	Adjustments for:		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(27,862)	(15,995)
	(Gain)/loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	841
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	132,512	136,056
	Movements in working capital:		
	Decrease/(increase) in debtors	54,775	(94,699)
	Increase in creditors	109,797	87,856
	Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	142,114	(54,099)
	Cash generated from operations	<u>2,847,305</u>	<u>366,495</u>

25 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.