

THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

England & Wales · Charity number 1142459

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	07573284
Registered	2011-06-17
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Life Project Bath The Old Acorn Barn Englishcombe Bath BA2 9DU
Phone	07708 217 901
Email	info@lifeprojectbath.org.uk
Website	http://www.lifeprojectbath.org.uk/

Activities

Objects: 4.THE CHARITY'S OBJECTS ("OBJECTS") ARE FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF PERSONS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OR OTHER MENTAL OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN BATH AND IN SUCH OTHER PARTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AS THE TRUSTEES MAY FROM TIME TO TIME THINK FIT ACCORDING TO CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES PARTICULARLY BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY BY THE PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER FACILITIES TO ENABLE THEM TO LIVE WITHIN COMMUNITIES AND TO FULFIL THEIR INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL.

Activities: Provide a home(s) for life, rooted in Christian principles and ethos, with opportunities for spiritual growth, leisure, learning, training, education and employment for people with disabilities, primarily learning disabilities, reflecting each individuals needs; to fulfil their potential in community together, living lives that have security, dignity and purpose.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, Accommodation/housing
- **Who:** People With Disabilities, Other Defined Groups

Geography

- Bath And North East Somerset

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£114,548	£120,402	-	-
2024-03-31	£108,974	£98,117	-	-
2023-03-31	£92,349	£104,542	-	-
2022-03-31	£90,878	£100,386	-	-
2021-03-31	£121,220	£89,491	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Ben Stokes		2020-05-13
CLIVE DOUGLAS BROOKS		2011-06-17
Kathryn Labate		2023-09-13
Philippa Phillips		2023-09-13
Rev Richard Penwell		2023-09-13
Rev Robert Trickey		2023-09-13

THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

England & Wales - Charity number 1142459

Accounts



THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

**ANNUAL REPORT
for the year ended
31 March 2025**

The Life Project (Bath)

1. Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: The Life Project (Bath)

Charity Registration Number: 1142459

Company registration number: 07573284

Registered Office and Operational Address:

The Old Acorn Barn
Englishcombe
Bath
BA2 9DU

Board of Trustees

Ben Stokes (Chair) (Re-appointed 29 October 2023)
Clive Brooks (Company Secretary) (Re-appointed 29 October 2023)
Kay Labate (Appointed 29 October 2023)
Kenny Nelson (Appointed 29 October 2023)
Pip Phillips (Appointed 29 October 2023)
Richard Penwell (Appointed 29 October 2023)
Rob Trickey (Re-appointed 29 October 2023)
Rob Appleyard (Retired 31 July 2024)
Paul Bright (Appointed 29 October 2023)¹

Senior Management

Richard Blake-Lobb*, Chief Executive²

Independent Examiner:

Colin Goater, 102 Freeview Road, Bath, BA2 1DZ

Banks

The Co-operative Bank Plc, PO Box 250, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT
Triodos Bank UK Ltd, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

¹ Post end of year note: resigned 6th June 2025

² Post end of year note: resigned September 2025

2. Structure, Governance and Management

2.1 Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 22 March 2011. The company was registered as a charity on 17 June 2011.

2.2 Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees

The Directors of the company are also charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, Trustees are appointed by the Charity's members, normally at the Annual General Meeting. Trustees are appointed without a time limit to their term of office but one third of Trustees must resign each year. The Trustees to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment. Trustees who resign may be re-appointed at the next Annual General Meeting. The Board must have a minimum of three Trustees but there is no limit to the number of Trustees it may have.

The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of people with learning disabilities are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Trustee body. Due to the nature of learning disabilities this representation typically comes through parent carers sitting on the board; during the 2024/25 year three of the nine Trustees were parent carers of adults with learning disabilities. A further two trustees have direct personal or professional experience of young people and adults learning difficulties.

The Board represents a broad mix of skills and experience. In an effort to maintain this broad skill mix, Trustees are requested to provide a list of their skills (and update it each year) and in the event of new skills being identified as necessary or particular skills being lost due to retirements, individuals are approached to offer themselves for appointment to the Board of Trustees.

All members of the Board of Trustees give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the Charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the Charity are set out in note 4 to the accounts.

2.3 Trustee Induction and Training

Induction is seen as a key element in retaining and supporting Trustees. New Trustees are invited to visit Life Project activities, sessions and events to become familiar with the work of the Charity. All Trustees are encouraged to make a project visit at least once per calendar year.

New Trustees are provided with a Trustee Induction Checklist, which includes information on:

- Assigning a mentor
- Training and Compliance
- IT and Login Information
- Essential Information and Documents (inc. Memorandum and Articles, Obligations of Trustees, Current Financial Position & latest published accounts, Policies, Future plans and objectives).

The Life Project (Bath) is a member of the local third sector network 3SG and access to the training, support and guidance is available to Trustees.

2.4 Risk Management

The Board of Trustees takes seriously the potential risks to which the Charity is exposed. A risk register has been established and it is regularly reviewed at Trustee meetings and is updated at least annually. Each risk is assigned to a Trustee as a lead responsibility. Where possible, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the Charity faces. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to

ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, service users and visitors. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the Charity.

2.5 Organisational Structure

The Board of Trustees meet at least six times per year and in addition meet for a longer time at an 'Away Day'. Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the Charity. A scheme of delegation is in place with day to day responsibility for the provision of the services resting with the senior management. There are two Committees of the Board. One is the Strategic Finance Committee and the other is the Resources Committee (primarily concerned with fundraising activities); both Committees report into the Board and have agreed terms of reference.

3. Objectives and activities

3.1 Objectives, Vision & Mission

Our Charity's objectives: - are as set out in the objects contained in the company's Memorandum & Articles of Association: *'The Charity's objects ("Objects") are for the public benefit to promote and protect the health and well-being of persons with learning difficulties or other mental or physical disabilities in Bath and in such other parts of the United Kingdom as the Trustees may from time to time think fit according to Christian principles particularly but not exclusively by the provision of accommodation and other facilities to enable them to live within communities and to fulfil their individual potential.'*



Our Vision: - *is for an inclusive world in which people with learning disabilities know they belong.*

Our Mission: - *is to create and model supportive community for people with learning disabilities, their families, and carers.*

3.2 Activities

The primary activities of The Life Project are as follows:

- (a) **Provision of Activities at the Old Acorn Barn:** For three days a week (during school terms), a variety of creative activities are provided for our Makers ie adults with learning difficulties. On each of these days a maximum of 8 Makers are supported by three Activity Leaders. Activities include art and crafts, woodworking and cookery. During the summer school holidays, a number of excursions and alternative activities are provided for 1-2 days per week.

- (b) **Provision of Activities at the Life Project's Allotment:** The Life Project is fortunate to have a large allotment which includes a number of raised beds. Makers are fully involved in the planting and cultivation of the variety of vegetables and fruit that are grown there.
- (c) **Springs Fellowship:** Springs Fellowship meets on the second and fourth weeks of each month for a time of Christian worship, teaching, prayer and fellowship in an informal atmosphere; it is attended and supported by volunteers, parent-carers and adults with learning difficulties.



- (d) **Social Activities and Special Events:** From time to time special activities and events are organised such as the annual curry evening, the quiz night and the Carol Service. These events are primarily about having fun and maintaining friendships and understanding between Life Project's different stakeholders.

3.3 The Public Benefit

The Trustees, in exercising their oversight of the Charity have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant. The sections in this report regarding the activities and performance of the Charity for 2024/25 demonstrate that public benefit is at the heart of what The Life Project is all about. Specifically, the benefits such that our activities enhance the lives in a variety of ways of those who have learning difficulties and disabilities and in so doing we enhance the lives and well-being of their parent-carers and families. Given that the direct cost of our services would be prohibitively expensive for parent-carers (even with financial benefits received from the state), our efforts to raise funds through a variety of ways is an additional and very tangible benefit.

4. Highlights of 2024/25

The Life Project has not been able to achieve as much as it hoped it would when we set out our aims and objectives for 2024/25 in our annual report for 2023/24. We have experienced some 'turbulence' but the positive news is that at the time of publication of this annual report (October 2025), the Charity is in good heart and is well placed to move forward. This is no mean feat in what appears to be an increasingly tough funding environment, when many small and medium charities are struggling to survive or are not surviving at all.

4.1 Front of House

The Life Project only exists to provide meaningful activities for those with learning disabilities – activities which nourish relationships, our spiritual heart and our capacity for learning and enjoyment. Our ‘front of house’ activities include:

- Despite a number of challenges during the year, especially with regards to staffing, the Charity has continued to provide high quality provision for three days a week to our Makers using the facilities of both the Old Acorn Barn in Englishcombe and the allotment in Monksdale Rd.
- Successful events have been held which have brought together our Makers, their parents and carers, volunteers, friends, supporters, staff and Trustees. These include the Carol Service in Englishcombe Parish Church, and the Curry Evening in Manvers Street Baptist Church,
- The Springs Fellowship has continued to meet fortnightly and is well attended and much appreciated; members from Springs have also led a service in Bath Elim Church

4.2 Behind the Scenes

In order to provide a quality ‘front-line’ service a considerable amount of resource and time on the part of management and Trustees must be given ‘behind the scenes’. This ensures both the development of good systems and policies and their implementation. In addition, there have been the inevitable challenges posed by the departure of key staff. Significant events this year have been:

- The commissioning of an HR Review by an independent consultant. This has resulted, amongst other things, in changes to the senior management structure and the revision of staff contracts, particularly with a view towards moving closer to a year-round model of activities and provision rather than term-time only activities.
- The commissioning of a Health & Safety audit
- Saying ‘farewell’ to valued staff, Trustees and volunteers and securing their replacements.
- The adoption of a number of policies (70 policies were identified in 2023/24 as being necessary)
- Providing training for staff (and Trustees where appropriate) in Safeguarding, First Aid, Fire safety, Food hygiene, Neuro-divergency, Microsoft 365, Rik Assessments and Makaton

4.3 Balancing the Books: Fund-raising

Like many charities, the Life Project is dependent on raising funds to do its work. Although our Makers (and their Parent-Carers and local authorities) pay fees for their daily attendance at the Old Acorn Barn, these direct fees only account for roughly 60% of the Charity’s total expenditure. In 2024/25, our non-fee income amounted to just over £43,000. As can be seen in the detailed accounts, this non fee income came from the following sources:

- **Donations from individuals:** Nearly £16,000 was received in donations from individuals. A number of donations were Gift Aided and this added a further £1,400.
- **Grants:** The Garfield-Weston Charity made a grant of £10,000 to go towards our general running expenses. [Also, we received the good news that the Community Matters Charity Shop in Bath will donate its ‘profits’ to the Life Project for 2025 to the Life Project. This was extremely good

news as previous recipients have had grants in excess of £30,000. A provisional sum of £30,000 has been included in the budget for 2025/26.]

- **Fund-Raising Activities:** Just over £15,000 was raised through fund-raising activities. Special mention should go Paul Bright, a Trustee (resigned July 2025) who did a gruelling sponsored bike-ride from Lands' End to John O'Groats and who raised over £2,500 for the Life Project. Sponsorship from Abseilers, runners in the Bath Half Marathon and swimmers in a Swimathon raised a further £2,500. We also benefitted from more than £2,000 raised by Monkton Combe School.

5. Overall financial review for 2024/25

5.1 Income and expenditure

Income: Total income for the year was £114,548 (2024: £108,974)

The main source of income for the year was from **fees** charged for Day Services activities ie £71,412 (2024: £58,617). Fees effectively covers the direct costs of providing day services.

Our income from **donations** (£15,896) was significantly down on 2024 (£37,867 – which included an accrued legacy of £10,000). The reduction in income was partially mitigated by (a) an increase in **fundraising activities** - £15,174 (2024: £8,976) and (b) an increase in **grant income** - a one-off grant of £10,000 from Garfield Weston (2024: Grant income £1,500). As noted in the previous section, we expect to have a grant of (at least) £30,000 from Community Matters.

Expenditure: Total expenditure for the year was £120,402 (2024: £98,216).

The significant increases in expenditure were staffing - £86,959 (2024: £78,786) and Day Services running costs - £16,461 (2024: £11,916). In addition, there was an increase of professional fees from £335 to £5,700. The increase primarily relates to the HR audit undertaken by an external consultant.

Net Expenditure/Income: There was an excess of expenditure over income of £5,854 compared with a surplus of income over expenditure in 2024 of £10,856. As a result of the 2025 deficit, the funds held by the Charity reduced from £71,499 (2024) to £65,596 (2025). The Trustees do not expect to report a deficit at the end of the 2025/26 year.

5.2 Investment Policy

The Life Project holds funds in an instant access Deposit Account as well as a 90-day notice Treasurer's Reserve Account, in order to gain interest on funds held. Both accounts are with Triodos Bank, which has a strong ethical investments policy. We may be in a position to move further funds from our current account into the Reserve Account as the year progresses.

5.3 Reserves Policy

The Trustees have agreed that we should continue to hold three months of operating costs in reserve (currently around £25,000), as a contingency should unrestricted income decrease unexpectedly.

6. Personnel

6.1 In Memoriam

The Trustees record their sincere thanks for the life and service of Rob Appleyard, who died on the 14th October, 2024. Rob who was a distinguished public servant and former Mayor of Bath gave his time generously to the Life Project both while serving in public office and later as a Trustee himself. As has been noted already in this report, he retired as a Trustee due to declining health on 31st July. We placed on record that his contributions are warmly remembered by Trustees, staff, volunteers and makers. Our thoughts and prayers continue for his wife Amanda and the rest of the Appleyard family.

6.2 Staff changes

In September 2024, Fiona Day stepped down from her role as Activity Leader to dedicate her time to pursuing her vision for a forest school. We also said goodbye to Esme Zarate who served as our Day Services Manager. The Trustees are grateful to Fiona and Esme for their dedicated service to the Life Project.

In January 2025 we welcomed Ruth Powell and Aimee Corbet to the team who have both been serving as Day Services Activity Leaders.

7. Plans for the future

The Trustees remain focused on building from the progress made during the 2024/25 year. Work has continued since the year end to strengthen staffing, management structures, and service delivery, ensuring that the Life Project is well placed for the year ahead.

The Trustees are confident that the Charity will make good progress in 2026 with achieving its longer-term goals. These remain:

- Expanding the provision of day services to a fourth and eventually a fifth day. This will require additional fee and grant income as well as additional staffing.
- Developing the potential of the Allotment so that it is usable in all weathers. This may require the appointment of a co-ordinator for the Allotment (on a temporary or permanent basis) - initially to create a development plan and then to implement it.
- Developing a sustainable arrangement for transporting Makers to and from the Old Acorn Barn
- Developing a drama and dance pilot project which will cater for those with moderate learning disabilities.
- Adding additional capacity and expertise to The Life Project in the areas of fund-raising, marketing and IT
- Continuing to keep under review whether a new base for the Charity is required instead of, in addition to the Old Acorn Barn

Fortunately, the Charity is expected to have a degree of financial 'cushion' for 2026 & 2027 when it can invest in or pump-prime some of the above activity. That said, it will continue to seek additional income beyond the fees it receives, in order not only to maintain what it does but to expand.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's Trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your Charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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

Name: COLIN GOATER

Signed: Col Goater

Date: 20/06/25

Address: **102 Freeview Road,**

Bath

BA2 1DZ

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds
		Funds	Funds	2025	2024
INCOME	Note	£	£	£	£
Donations		15,896	0	15,896	37,867
Gift Aid on donations		1,393	0	1,393	1,235
Grants receivable		10,000	0	10,000	1,500
Contributions towards activities		71,412	0	71,412	58,617
Fundraising income		15,174	0	15,174	8,976
Interest on bank		672	0	672	777
TOTAL INCOME		114,548	0	114,548	108,974
EXPENDITURE					
Fundraising costs		826	0	826	901
Charitable activities					
Staff costs		86,959	0	86,959	78,786
Staff expenses		1,921	0	1,921	1,101
Staff training & development		2,453	0	2,453	25
Day Services running costs		16,461	0	16,461	11,916
Family Support running costs		0	0	0	922
Allotment		714	0	714	394
Springs / Mini Springs costs		0	714	714	293
Administration		3,770	0	3,770	2,558
Insurance		634	0	634	616
Professional fees		5,700	0	5,700	355
Accountancy costs		250	0	250	250
		118,861	714	119,576	97,216
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		119,688	714	120,402	98,117
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	3	(5,140)	(714)	(5,854)	10,856
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April		69,185	2,264	71,449	60,594
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March		64,046	1,550	65,596	71,449

All of the Charity's operations are classed as continuing.
The notes on pages 3 to 8 form part of these accounts.
See Note 2 for fund accounting comparative figures.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Current Assets			
Debtors – Gift Aid + fees		1,393	2,146
Prepayments		1,523	1,201
Accrued income		269	10,595
Cash at bank		68,580	59,429
Total Current Assets		71,765	73,371
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year			
Accruals and deferred income	5	6,170	1,922
Net Current Assets		65,596	71,449
Funds of the Charity			
Restricted	6	1,550	2,264
Unrestricted	7	64,046	69,185
Total Charity Funds		65,596	71,449

The Trustees are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the company keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006. These accounts have been delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Trustees on 5th November 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Name: Ben Stokes Date:

COMPANY NO. 07573284 The notes on pages 12 to 16 form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Note 1: Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. Life Project (Bath) meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The Trustees have considered the immediate future of the Charity for the next 12 to 18 months and consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income recognition

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Income is deferred only when the Charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Grants and donations are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are receivable and are allocated to the appropriate fund.

Investment income is included when receivable.

Expenditure recognition and irrecoverable VAT

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis in the year in which the expenditure is incurred.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. As the Charity has only one activity, all costs are allocated against the charitable activity. They include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the Charity are:

- Unrestricted general funds – these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.
- Restricted funds – these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025 (continued)

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Note 2: Prior Year (2024) Comparatives

	Unrestric ted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024
	£	£	£
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE			
INCOME			
Donations	37,867	0	37,867
Gift aid on donations	1,235	0	1,235
Grants receivable	0	1500	1,500
Contributions towards activities	58,587	30	58,617
Fundraising income	8,976	0	8,976
Interest on bank	777	0	777
TOTAL INCOME	107,444	1,530	108,974
EXPENDITURE			
Fundraising costs	901	0	901
Charitable Activities			
Staff costs	76,048	2,738	78,786
Staff expenses	1,101	0	1,101
Day Services running costs	25	0	25
Family Support running costs	11,916	0	11,916
Allotment	0	922	922
Springs / Mini Springs Costs	178	216	394
Administration	0	293	293
Insurance	2,558	0	2,558
Professional fees	616	0	616
Accountancy costs	250	0	250
	93,047	4,169	97,216
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	93,948	4,169	98,117
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	13,496	(2,638)	10,856

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

Note 3: Net Income/(Expenditure) for the year

	This is stated after charging: 2024	2025
	£	£
Independent examiner's remuneration	250	250

Note 4: Staff Costs and Related Party Transactions

	2025 Total	2024 Total
Gross wages and salaries	83,146	75,789
Pension contributions	3,813	2,996
	86,959	78,785

Note

None of the Trustees received fees or reimbursed expenses in respect of their Trusteeship. The value of waived expenses was not considered significant. There are no other related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts.

The aggregate value of donations received from Trustees and related parties was £1,218. (2023 - £1,050).

The Trustees considers its key management personnel is the Chief Executive who received total employment benefits of £31,647. No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000.

	2025 Number	2024 Number
The average number of persons employed as full-time or full-time equivalents by the Charity during the year is detailed below.		
Management	1.0	1.0
Carers / other	1.6	1.6
	2.6	2.6

The average headcount during the year was 7.9 (2024 – 7.3).

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

Note 5: Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
HMRC liabilities	2,924	762
Other accruals	2,346	853
Deferred income	900	307
	6,170	1,922

Note 6: Restricted Funds

	Springs	Barn activities & allotment	Totals
b/f 1 April 2024	980	1,284	2264
Income	0	0	0
Expenditure	714	0	714
c/f 31 Mar 2025	266	1,284	1550

Purpose of Funds:

Springs - Springs caters for adults with learning disabilities which meets twice a month in the evening, supported by volunteers.

Barn Activities and Allotment – Grant to improve and develop the allotment.

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

Note 7: Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
General Fund	69,185	114,548	119,688	64,046
Total	69,185	114,548	119,688	64,046

Note 8: Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Current assets + debtors	3,185	0	3,185
Cash at bank	67,030	1,550	68,580
Current liabilities	6,170	0	6,170
TOTAL	64,046	1,550	65,596

Note 9: Bank Balances 31 March 2025

	£
Petty Cash	0
Current Account	16,421
Deposit Account	10,485
Treasurer's Account	41,674
TOTAL	68,580

THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

England & Wales - Charity number 1142459

Accounts



The Life Project (Bath)

Report and Financial Statements For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Registered Charity No. 1142459
Company No. 07573284

The Life Project (Bath)

Report and Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

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The Life Project (Bath)

Report of the Board of Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

The Management Committee presents its directors' report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

1. Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: The Life Project (Bath)

Charity Registration Number: 1142459

Company registration number: 7573284

Registered Office and Operational Address:

The Old Acorn Barn
Englishcombe
Bath
BA2 9DU

Board of Trustees

Ben Stokes (Chair)
Clive Brooks (Company Secretary)
Dave Twine (Resigned 31st July 2023)
Duncan Nash (Resigned 31st July 2023)
Kay Labate (Appointed 29th October 2023)
Kenny Nelson (Appointed 29th October 2023)
Paul Bright (Appointed 29th October 2023)
Pip Philips (Appointed 29th October 2023)
Richard Penwell (Appointed 29th October 2023)
Rob Appleyard (Appointed 29th October 2023)
Rob Trickey (Appointed 29th October 2023)
Tony Russell (Resigned 31st July 2023)

Senior Management

Rich Blake-Lobb, Chief Executive

Independent Examiner:

Colin Goater, 102 Freeview Road, Bath, BA2 1DZ

Banks

The Co-operative Bank Plc, PO Box 250, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT
Triodos Bank UK Ltd, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

2. Our Aims and Objectives

2.1. Purposes and Aims

Our charity's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the company's memorandum of association are:

"The Charity's objects ("Objects") are for the public benefit to promote and protect the health and well-being of persons with learning difficulties or other mental or physical disabilities in Bath and in such other parts of the United Kingdom as the Trustees may from time to time think fit according to Christian principles particularly but not exclusively by the provision of accommodation and other facilities to enable them to live within communities and to fulfil their individual potential."

Our Vision is for an inclusive world in which people with learning disabilities know they belong.

Our Mission is to create and model supportive community for people with learning disabilities, their families, and carers.

Our Objectives are to provide purposeful activities which value the holistic needs and well-being of each individual and the community; to create an environment that promotes social development and nurtures healthy relationships; and to offer platforms for people to express their uniqueness to the world around them and opportunities for those who want, to develop their faith.

Our Ethos

The values of The Life Project (Bath) are at the heart of who we are and what we do – they are guided by a Christian ethos. These values have strong roots in the Christian teaching and practice, whilst also being accessible and meaningful for all – regardless of background. We believe that every person is unique – fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:4) – and is a valuable gift to the world and our community.

Our Values

The Life Project (Bath) has four key values – Creative, Inclusive, Enabling, Community – which are detailed below:

- **Creative:** We refer to those who come along to our sessions at the Old Acorn Barn as 'Makers' to emphasise their role to come and be meaningfully, purposefully, and creatively engaged. *For Christians this name also has the added significance that we remember the first revelation of God in the Bible was as a Creator, a Maker.*
- **Inclusive:** We recognise the intrinsic value of each individual and welcome into our Life Project community adults with learning disabilities as well as family,

friends and carers from all backgrounds, all faiths and none. *Christians believe that all of humankind are made in the image of God.*

- **Enabling:** For us inclusion means enabling all people to have choices, to participate, and to undertake tasks whether these are considered ordinary or extraordinary. *Christians understand that God does not dictate our actions but offers us the choice to participate in the kingdom of God.*
- **Community:** We believe we share the responsibility to support one another through community. We understand our true selves and reach our full potential when we share life with others – respecting and celebrating differences through healthy relationships. *Christians believe in one God in three divine persons (Father, Son and Spirit), a living example of community. Although we are each unique individuals, humans are created for living together in community – one body with many parts.*

2.2. Ensuring Our Work Delivers Our Aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. This review looks at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous 12 months. The review looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those groups of people we are set up to help.

The review also helps us ensure our aim, objectives and activities remained focused on our stated purposes. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

2.3. The Focus of Our Work

Our main objectives for 2023-2024 continued to be to promote and protect the health and well-being of persons with learning difficulties through:

- Becoming an increasingly robust organisation
- Developing a business plan that will result in becoming a financially sustainable charity.
- Continuing to improve involvement of Members and Service Users in decision making processes.
- Launching at least one new session of Day Service.

The strategies we used to meet these objectives included:

- Providing Day Services for adults with Learning Disabilities which are reflective of relevant quality standards and the ethos and values of The Life Project (Bath).
- Offering support to Parent Carers and signposting to other organisations.
- Facilitating Christian fellowship and worship for adults with learning disabilities.
- Examining options for diversifying and increasing income streams, including the potential for a charity shop.

- Reviewing the structures, systems, policies and procedures throughout the charity.

3. How Our Activities Deliver Public Benefit

Our main activities and who we try to help are described below. All our charitable activities focus on promoting and protecting the health and well-being of persons with learning difficulties and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

In England, in 2021, 9.8 million people (or 17.7% of the population) were disabled¹ with 15% of working aged disabled adults reporting a learning disability² (a percentage of the population that has altered little over the past decade). “A *learning disability* is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities – for example household tasks, socialising or managing money – which affects someone for their whole life. People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand complicated information and interact with other people.”³ The Life Project (Bath) seeks to support and provide community for adults with learning disabilities in and around Bath. Our current Day Service provisions are concentrated on those who are typically labelled as having severe or profound learning disabilities (some people use the terms multiple and complex learning disabilities). This group of people contribute to the 6% of disabled people living in Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) whose day to day activities are limited a lot, as defined by the equality act.⁴ In Springs we continue to include those with severe or profound needs, but we also include those with mild and moderate learning disabilities.

Those who are more severely disabled, who report being limited a lot in their day-to-day activities, are more than twice as likely to report feeling lonely “often or always” as those who said they were limited a little (25.5% and 10.5% respectively).⁵ When it comes to learning disabilities the percentage of those living with chronic loneliness increases to 50%.⁶ The vision of the Life Project (Bath) is to provide purposeful activities which value the holistic needs and well-being of each individual and the community, contributing the positive well being of our service users through the purposeful activities they engage with and the community we model and support.

¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS), (2023) *Disability, England and Wales: Census 2021*, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/disabilityenglandandwales/census2021>.

² Esme Kirk-Wade (2023), *UK disability statistics: Prevalence and Life Experiences*, (House of Commons Library) p.10, <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9602/CBP-9602.pdf>.

³ Mencap, *What is a learning disability?*, <https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/what-learning-disability>.

⁴ Rachel Harker (2023), *Constituency data: Disability, 2021 census*, (House of Commons Library), https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/constituency-data-disability-2021-census/#single_constituency.

⁵ Office for National Statistics (ONS), *Outcomes for disabled people in the UK: 2021, Disability and loneliness dataset*, Table 2, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/outcomesfordisabledpeopleintheuk/2021>.

⁶ Public Health England (2023), *Learning disability - applying All Our Health*, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-disability-applying-all-our-health/learning-disabilities-applying-all-our-health>.

Whilst 19.2% of disabled people are more likely to live with their parents than their non-disabled counterparts (16.4%) this figure rises to 65.9% for people with severe or specific learning difficulties.⁷ At the Life Project (Bath) we are aware of the challenges presented for parent carers and hope to offer appropriate and meaningful support to the parent carers of adults with learning disabilities. This is also behind the long-term objective of the Life Project to aid with the provision of adequate housing for adults with learning disabilities.

Research demonstrates people with learning disabilities and the stories they tell that spirituality is important to them, people with learning disabilities have rich spiritual lives and want people to take this seriously as a vital dimension of the care and support they receive. People with profound and complex needs have expressed the importance of spirituality for their lives and their desire to have this acknowledged. "People with learning disabilities require access to appropriate teaching and learning materials that will enable them to participate effectively and fully in their religious tradition. People with learning disabilities should be consulted about their content."⁸ The Life Project (Bath)'s Springs fellowship group has been meeting this need for adults with learning disabilities who express or are interested in Christian spirituality for more than 20 years in BANES. We aim to play our part in supporting local faith communities to work with people with learning disabilities, to examine whether their community and faith practices are accessible for people with different needs.

3.1. Day Services

Maker's Involvement: Maker's have fully engaged and enjoyed the variety of activities that have been inspired by the following termly themes.

- Our Summer term theme was 'People in our World.'
- Our Autumn term theme was 'Blessings; Being a blessing and being blessed.'
- Our Spring term theme was 'Working together.'

Tuesday's Makers have enjoyed developing their woodwork skills and made signs for the allotment, bird boxes, a hedgehog house, and a bug hotel. Makers have continued to have opportunities to be involved in Art, Kitchen and Productivity Sessions which they were assigned to for three consecutive weeks during the Wednesday and Thursday sessions. Additionally, movement, music and drama sessions have seen some fantastic productions; a video tribute to Englishcombe, a Christmas puppet show, an Easter re-enactment and our Makers creating their own drama around the theme of Working together.

⁷ Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2021), *Outcomes for Disabled People in the UK:2021*, 'Chapter 6: Housing', <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/outcomesfordisabledpeopleintheuk/2021>

⁸ John Swinton and Elaine Powrie (2001), *Why Are We? Here Meeting the spiritual needs of people with learning disabilities* (The University of Aberdeen) https://www.abdn.ac.uk/sdhp/content-images/Spirituality_and_the_Lives_of_People_with_Learning_Disabilities.pdf

Sessions at the allotment ceased between October and April. We benefitted from saving seeds from our harvest and planting them up during the Spring term. Especially exciting was to plant seeds for our annual pumpkin competition saved from last year's winner.

Highlights:

- We held our first open day at the Old Acorn Barn which was well attended and all our visitors actively engaged in the various activities with our Makers.
- During the summer we were able to offer an increased number of days and variety of activities to date. We hosted a thanksgiving lunch at the barn for our neighbours in Englishcombe using produce that we had grown. We had a special LP memorial service in the village led by the Rev. Martin Blewett with contributions from our Makers. Including a poppy wreath made by Tuesday Makers.
- The Life Project Christmas Carol Service held at the village church was an opportunity to draw people together and celebrate Jesus being the Light of the World.
- Partnering with Kingswood school students. Being invited to their school for lunch and the opportunity to help them plant some fruit trees.

Challenges:

- **Staffing:**
The Spring and Summer terms saw staff working extra hard as we were one member of staff down and the position was not filled until the Autumn term when a new Cooking and Nutrition Activity Leader was appointed.
The Day Services Coordinator has for the best part of this period worked a third day as overtime responding to staffing needs and demands of the job especially in times of staff absences.
Staff have appreciated more contact and open communication with the trustees. They continue to be keen to encourage trustees to visit the Barn and/or the allotment.
- **Volunteers:**
During this period of time we welcomed 4 new volunteers however we also lost two and saw a reduction in volunteering hours that pre-existing volunteers gave to the Life Project. We do really appreciate the time and input that volunteers give but as a project we should highlight that it is difficult to deliver the standard of sessions that we have been giving, without them. We shouldn't be in a position where we depend on them for our sessions to run effectively. We are down significantly on volunteers especially at the allotment.
- **Maker Changes:**
The significant fee increase last year was of concern to a couple of our Makers who personally fund their places. A bursary supported one Maker to continue which was much appreciated. We had numerous enquiries from potential new Makers, the majority we had to sadly turn away as we were not able to meet their

physical needs or our environment at the barn was not accessible for them (sensory and/ or environmentally). In this past year we have had three new Makers and some movement of a Maker from one day to another which has brought us up to full capacity on each of the barn session days.

Prayer points:

- Give thanks for staff, volunteers and Makers and for the people the Lord has brought along our paths to partner and build relationships with.
- For wisdom and provisions as we plan future activities with our Makers and consider how to develop new sessions.
- That all the glory for what God has provided for the Life Project be given to Him. That we will be good stewards and managers of what He has given to us so that we will be able to continue supporting Adults with Learning Disabilities in and around Bath.

~ Esmé Zárate, Day Services Coordinator

It has been the desire of the trustees to increase the number of Day Service sessions delivered each week for the past few years. It was hoped that this would finally come to pass during the reporting period or early in the next period. Whilst the possibility of new sessions eases closer the work to become an increasingly robust organisation has identified areas for improvement within the charity's structures, systems, policies, and practices which trustees wish to address before committing to additional sessions.

3.2. Springs

In April 2023, our Springs fellowship group was full of excitement and expectation, looking forward to the King's Coronation. Springs was invited by the then Mayor of Bath, Rob Appleyard, to a Charles III Community Coronation. Our theme became "What is a King?" Members and volunteers made and designed bunting, with prayers, bible verses, and kingly qualities written on each flag. They reflected on the true King of Kings - our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. All their efforts were displayed and admired by the whole community and on 6th May they joined in the celebrations and enjoyed sharing afternoon tea with the Mayor himself, who has now become a Trustee of Life Project (Bath)!

It was also a joy for Springs members to celebrate with 'No Limits', another like-minded fellowship group in Trowbridge, when in April 2023 they celebrated their 25th anniversary.

In June, Springs volunteers started meeting together regularly to pray. We pray for Springs, and the wider Life Project, inviting Jesus to be front and centre in all we do, seeking His inspiration and guidance. As an offshoot of this it was agreed with members to hold a special Springs session of extended prayer and worship, made even more special when Sarah Couchman, who first established Springs, joined us virtually and shared a beautiful message for us all.

Our summer social was held at the Life Project's Old Acorn Barn in Englishcombe. It was a fantastic evening, blessed by good weather, delicious barbecue food, and karaoke! We were joined by Rev Kenny Nelson, pastor of the Elim church, Bath. He enjoyed the company of our lovely members so much that he too has become a Trustee and has now felt called to become our new Life Project Chaplain!

In late summer some of our Springs members had the joy of going to Lourdes with Hosanna House and Children's Pilgrimage Trust (HCPT). It was an amazing week of fellowship, worship, fun, friendship, and lots of new experiences. God's presence was tangible, it was an unforgettable experience.

During the autumn term our chosen theme was "blessings". We prayed, worshipped, and discussed the many ways that the Lord has showered His blessings upon us. Springs members came up with creative and generous ideas for reaching out and blessing others. To put this into action, Springs members held a Christmas service in a nearby Care Home. One of our members prepared a short talk and another sang a solo. We all sang Christmas carols, and prayers by one of our members were enjoyed and appreciated. Beautiful handmade Christmas cards were presented to residents by our members. Over 30 residents and staff joined in the celebration. The evening ended perfectly by watching a film (produced by one of our member's parents), of all of Springs singing and signing a song known as "The Blessing". It was a great way for residents to meet members who unfortunately were unable to be present due to lack of space. Those absent didn't miss out though as there was a parallel Springs session held at the cricket club with a big surprise - none other than our well-loved Sarah Couchman led the session and then whole group came together again for some reflective conversation and well-earned refreshment.

No sooner had we sung our hearts out at the Care Home, than we started preparing for Life Project Christmas Carol Service, led by Kenny, our new Chaplain, and held at St Peter's church, Englishcombe. Our Springs members were fully involved, and the church was filled to capacity. Our last Spring's session of the year was celebrated in party style with a fabulous bring and share Christmas supper. Our CEO, joined us and kept us amused by leading Christmas bingo with lots of his jokes thrown in!

At the beginning of the year we welcomed a local student to Springs who journeyed with us for several months as he chose to fulfil his volunteering challenge for his Duke of Edinburgh award through volunteering with us. Thank you, it was great having you as part of the Springs family.

For the Spring term we chose to cover the "I am" statements of Jesus. We have been steadily working through these and they have produced some incredible reflections and statements by many of our members. Members were asked to choose their favourite worship songs and lead a session, ably assisted by a volunteer. They have produced some incredible art and craft work and some serious and genuine reflection has ensued. We are particularly grateful to Paul Bright, another Life Project Trustee who has visited us on several occasions and has recently stepped in at the last minute to lead worship

on the keyboard. Speaking of Trustees, we are delighted that our very own Kay has also become a Trustee of the Life Project.

Alongside our usual Springs evenings, our members have greatly enjoyed The Life Project socials - the ever-popular curry evening, St Philips pantomime, zoom quiz night, Mexican Barn dance and auction of promises. One of our members, has even made and sold her craft at some of these events to raise funds for the Life Project. The next exciting event with Springs participation is abseiling down St John's Tower in Keynsham ... but you'll have to wait for the next Report to hear all about that!

Springs is led by a wonderful team of volunteers. If you're interested in volunteering, please do get in touch, you won't regret it!

~ Elizabeth Riley & Kay Labate, Springs Co-Facilitators.

Having reached capacity last year, this reporting period has been an opportunity to learn and reflect on the potential ways forward. There continues to be interest from new members who we are currently unable to accommodate, and we hope that the next reporting period will new opportunities open up without losing the essence of what Springs is all about.

3.3. Family Support

It was with a sense of sadness that we have had to bring our Parent Carer Drop-In's to a close. For six years we had offered Drop-In sessions for Parent Carers at the Weston Hub, Bath and from March to July 2023 we were able to pilot a similar drop-in at Radstock Baptist Church.

The reason for this work coming to a close was three-fold:

- A lack of ongoing funding.
- The numbers attending the Bath Drop-In didn't ever really recover following the covid pandemic and so the group was not cost—effective to run.
- The majority of the parent carers attending were of young children with neurodiverse needs rather than learning disabilities.

A few comments from parents who have been supported over the years include:

"It has been an absolute lifeline over the years and I'm so grateful for everyone's kind support."

"The support we received was incredible and we will always be thankful for the group."

"This group was my saviour place. It got me out of the house and my isolation and depression... it has been such a wonderful group."

In bringing this work to a close the trustees knew that it would be difficult for the parents who had been benefitting from the support offered and we have sought to direct them to

the provision of BaNES [Carers Centre](http://www.banescarerscentre.org.uk) which offers support for the friends and families helping their loved ones get the best out of life.

The Carers Centre website states, “Looking after a partner, friend or family member due to old age, illness, disability, mental health difficulties or an addiction can be very rewarding. However, without the right support in place it can take a toll on our physical and mental wellbeing. We’re here to help people stay happy and healthy in their caring role.”

- Website: www.banescarerscentre.org.uk
- Freephone Support Line: **0800 0388 885** (Monday – Friday, 9am – 1pm)
- Email: support@banescarerscentre.org.uk

However, as a charity we remain committed to supporting parent carers and the wider family of those with learning disabilities.

Retreats and Socials continue to be organised for parent carers throughout the year and we are planning to survey the parent carers of those who access our Day Services and Springs to understand the needs of Parent Carers at this stage in their life’s journey – when their children are in adulthood and housing and care needs change.

3.4. Socials & Events

Throughout the year as part of our aim to create an environment that promotes social development and nurtures healthy relationships we organise socials and special events. Some of these double as fundraising initiatives or are organised by outside agencies for the enjoyment of the Life Project Community.

During this reporting year service users and supporters enjoyed the annual Curry Night at Manvers Street Baptist Church and Virtual Quiz Night. One of our new trustees, Kay Labate, organised a wonderful Mexican Fiesta with Barn Dance and Auction of Talents with the support of Lucis Choir.

Members of All Saints Church, Weston, organised a fantastic art sale and exhibition, with local artists and also included art works produced by Parent Carers and some of our Makers.

We held a Carol Service in St Peters Church, Englishcombe, bringing together members of the local community and our Life Project community as Makers and members of Springs led an amazing puppet show, carol singing and prayer.

And, it has now become something of a tradition for a group from the Life Project to attend the Pantomime performed at St Philip and St James Church, Bath to the enjoyment of everyone involved.

3.5. Resourcing Team

With a significant change of trustees during the reporting period the Grant Writing Team and Fundraising Team lost several key members. In response a new Resourcing Team has been formed with a view to coordinating the fundraising and grant applications for the Life Project.

Terms of References have been drafted and the first applications for this newly formed team have been submitted.

The team are working to develop a fundraising strategy and diary of events alongside focussed grant applications for specific needs and projects.

Having met a few times it is recognised that there are key skills that would be beneficial to the team and they hope to recruit these in the coming months, having a team of five volunteers (including at least one trustee) to oversee the resourcing of the Life Project.

3.6. Structures and Systems

For the Life Project (Bath) to become an increasingly robust organisation work has been underway to improve structures and systems.

In the region of 70 policies have been identified for review or development with approximately half of these completed within the past year. Priorities include Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and Human Resources and where necessary steps are being taken to improve practices (including training and information sessions), this includes the planning for a Health and Safety Roadmap.

Life Project Members have met periodically during the year, appointing a chairperson and raising points of interest and ideas with trustees, responding to trustee enquiries, and praying for the Life Project.

The Fundraising Team and Grant Team concluded with the retirement of members/trustees in July 2023. A new group has formed, The Resource Team, as of Autumn 2023, that encompasses both community fundraising and grant applications. The team has already supported some successful fundraising events and made an application for funding. It is hoped the team will grow and bring in some specialist knowledge in the coming year.

All staff and trustees now have access to the tools available through Microsoft 365 – improving file sharing and access, as well as data protection. The roll out of all the features that will benefit the Life Project is an ongoing process.

4. Financial Review

4.1. Principal Funding Sources

The main source of income for the year was from fees charged for Day Services activities (£58,617, an increase of around £17.5k from the previous year, reflecting higher sessional fees as agreed in March 2023). Fees have been increased again in 2024, and so Day Services should continue to be broadly self-sufficient over the coming year.

Donation income was also up on the previous year, from £20,694 to £37,867 – this includes accrued income of £10,000 (a legacy payment, due in the early autumn) – but also reflects an overall increase of around £3.5k in both regular and one-off donations.

Fund-raising income has remained fairly constant at around £9k, and looking ahead, it seems that this figure reflects the capacity within the charity for fund-raising activity.

Grant funding was limited to £1500 from Gardening with Disabilities towards the development of the allotment; however, since the end of financial year, we have received a grant of £10,000 from Garfield Weston towards core costs, and with other applications in process we should be in a strong position to continue work on the allotment, as well as moving towards expanding our weekly provision at the Barn and consolidating the Springs ministry.

4.2. Investment Policy

The Life Project holds funds in an instant access Deposit Account as well as a 90-day notice Treasurer's Reserve Account, in order to gain interest on funds held. Both accounts are with Triodos Bank, which has a strong ethical investments policy. We may be in a position to move further funds from our current account into the Reserve Account as the year progresses.

4.3. Reserves Policy

The Trustees have agreed that we should continue to hold three months of operating costs (currently around £25,000) in reserve, as a contingency should unrestricted income decrease unexpectedly.

5. Plans for Future Periods

The trustees maintain their commitment for the Life Project to meet its Vision, Mission and Objectives through Day Services, the Springs Fellowship Group, Family Support, and Homes.

Our main objectives for 2023-2024 continued to be to promote and protect the health and well-being of persons with learning difficulties through:

- Becoming an increasingly robust organisation
- Developing a business plan that will result in becoming a financially sustainable charity.
- Continuing to improve involvement of Members and Service Users in decision making processes.
- Launching at least one new session of Day Service.

With a view to becoming an increasingly robust organisation an HR Review was commissioned to evaluate current roles and conduct a comprehensive salary analysis to ensure fair compensation and effective job descriptions within the organisation. A review of policies and procedures has resulted in an Health and Safety Road Map which is ready for implementation. The adoption of improved IT systems is ongoing, with time and training required to bring all staff and volunteers to the required standards and understanding, as well as now recognising additional tools (e.g. Customer Relationships Management (CRM)) that will bring improved productivity and record keeping.

Springs has reached capacity and there is a now a need to support the volunteer team and members of Springs to consider carefully any next steps, to understand preferences and possibilities for growing the group further. It might be necessary for the group to consider meeting in alternative ways and places to continue to meet needs of members, those who are unable to attend due to capacity, and to ensure a healthy and well-supported team.

The Life Project remains committed to Family Support, and following the closure of the Parent Carer Drop-In sessions the trustees are keen to understand the needs of Parent Carers, and other family members, supporting adults with learning disabilities (ie. The parent carers of Makers and Members of Springs). Before investing anew into Family Support the Life Project needs to understand the needs and the support that exists locally.

The trustees have the following objectives for 2024-2025:

- **Day Services: A Year of Consolidation**
This will include - maintaining the excellent service and community we offer for adults with learning disabilities; reviewing and implementing recommendations from the HR Review; implementing the Health and Safety Roadmap; training and equipping staff with the necessary IT tools; producing a clear plan for the development of the Barn and Allotment; review Maker transport needs.
- **Springs: Planning for Growth**
This will include – continuing to equip and resource volunteers and Members to make decisions and lead sessions; supporting the team to evaluate options for growth and to plan a way forward; improving management/ supervision support to the Springs team.
- **Family Support: Researching Needs**
This will include – offering periodic socials and/or retreats through to at least the end of the calendar year to meet with parent carers and other family members

informally; commissioning a survey of Parent Carers of our service users to understand their needs and existing support provision.

- **Homes: No Actions**

The trustees remain interested in homes and would explore options if an opportunity were to present itself. However, it is agreed priorities lie in other work areas and there is no objective to take forward Homes this year.

- **Resourcing: Recruitment & Strategy**

This will include – recruiting to the Resourcing Team; a calendar of fundraising initiatives and events; fundraising strategy.

6. Structure, Governance and Management

6.1. Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 22 March 2011. The company was registered as a charity on 17 June 2011.

6.2. Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law.

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Board of Trustees. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the members of the Board of Trustees are elected to serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting.

All members of the Board of Trustees give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 4 to the accounts.

The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs people with learning disabilities are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body. Due to the nature of learning disabilities this representation typically comes through parent carers sitting on the board. Of the current 9 trustees, 2 are parent carers of adults with learning disabilities.

The board represents a broad mix of skills identified as beneficial to the trustees. In an effort to maintain this broad skill mix, members of the Board of Trustees are requested to provide a list of their skills (and update it each year) and in the event of new skills being identified as necessary or particular skills being lost due to retirements, individuals are approached to offer themselves for election to the Board of Trustees.

6.3. Trustee Induction and Training

Induction is seen as a key element in retaining and supporting trustees. New trustees are invited to visit Life Project activities, sessions and events to become familiar with the work of the charity. All trustees are encouraged to make a project visit at least once per calendar year.

The chair and CEO have been reviewing the information and training provided to new trustees with a view to improving Trustee Induction.

New Trustees will be provided with a Trustee Induction Checklist, which outlines:

- Assigning a mentor
- Training and Compliance
- IT and Login Information
- Essential Information and Documents (inc. Memorandum and Articles, Obligations of Trustees, Current Financial Position & latest published accounts, Policies, Future plans and objectives).

The Life Project (Bath) is a member of the local third sector network 3SG and access to the training, support and guidance is available to trustees.

6.4. Risk Management

The Board of Trustees takes seriously the potential risks to which the charity is exposed. A risk register has been established, is reviewed at each trustee meeting and is updated at least annually. Each risk is assigned to trustee as a lead responsibility. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, service users and visitors. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

6.5. Organisational Structure

The Life Project (Bath) has a Board of Trustees who meet at least four times per year and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the charity. At present the Committee has nine members from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity.

A scheme of delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the provision of the services rest with the Chief Executive along with the Day Services Coordinator. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the charity delivers the services specified and that key performance indicators are met. The Day Services Coordinator has responsibility for the day to day operational management of the Day Services, individual supervision of the staff team and also ensuring that the team continue to develop their skills and working practices in line with good practice.

6.6. Related Parties

In so far as it is complimentary to the charity's objects, the charity is guided by both local and national policy.

7. Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

Company law requires the Board of Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements, the Board of Trustees should follow best practice and:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is not appropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. The Board of Trustees is 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.

7.1. Members of the Board of Trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees, who are directors for the purpose of company law and trustees for the purpose of charity law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 3.

In accordance with company law, as the company's directors, we certify that:

- So far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's Independent Examiners are unaware; and
- as the directors of the company, we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's Independent Examiners are aware of that information.

8. Independent Examiner

Colin Goater was re-appointed as the charitable company's auditors during the year and has expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity. This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued in March 2005) and in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small entities.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on *11th September 2024* and signed on its behalf by:



Ben Stokes (Chair)

9. Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of The Life Project (Bath)

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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

Name: COLIN MICHAEL GOATER

Signed:

Colin M Goater

Address: **102 Freeview Road, Bath BA2 1DZ**
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds
		Funds	Funds	2024	2023
INCOME	Note	£	£	£	£
Donations		37,867	0	37,867	20,694
Gift aid on donations		1,235	0	1,235	1,472
Grants receivable		0	1500	1,500	20,000
Contributions towards activities		58,587	30	58,617	41,173
Fundraising income		8,976	0	8,976	8,688
Interest on bank		777	0	777	322
TOTAL INCOME		107,444	1,530	108,974	92,349
EXPENDITURE					
Fundraising costs		901	0	901	1157
Charitable Activities					
Staff costs		76,048	2,738	78,786	81,640
Staff expenses		1,101	0	1,101	2,749
Staff training & development		25	0	25	
Day Services running costs		11,916	0	11,916	10,238
Family Support running costs		0	922	922	3,750
Allotment		178	216	394	39
Springs / Mini Springs Costs		0	293	293	314
Administration		2,558	0	2,558	3,250
Insurance		616	0	616	772
Professional fees		355	0	355	384
Accountancy costs		250	0	250	250
		93,047	4,169	97,216	103,385
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		93,948	4,169	98,117	104,542
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	3	13,496	(2,638)	10,856	(12,193)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April		55,689	4,905	60,594	72,787
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March		69,185	2,264	71,449	60,594

All of the charity's operations are classed as continuing.
The notes on pages 22 to 26 form part of these accounts.
See Note 2 for fund accounting comparative figures.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Current Assets			
Debtors – Gift Aid + fees		2,146	1,472
Prepayments		1,201	1,152
Accrued income		10,595	186
Cash at bank		59,429	62,060
		73,371	64,869
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year			
Accruals and deferred income	5	1,922	4,276
		71,449	60,594
Net Current Assets			
Funds of the Charity			
Restricted	6	2,264	4,905
Unrestricted	7	69,185	55,689
		71,449	60,594
Total Charity Funds			

The Trustees are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the company keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006. These accounts have been delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Trustees on 11th September 2024 and signed on their behalf by



Name: (Ben Stokes)
September 2024

Date: 11th

COMPANY NO. 07573284 The notes on pages 22 to 26 form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Note 1: Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. Life Project (Bath) meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees have considered the immediate future of the charity for the next 12 to 18 months and consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Grants and donations are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are receivable and are allocated to the appropriate fund.

Investment income is included when receivable.

Expenditure recognition and irrecoverable VAT

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis in the year in which the expenditure is incurred.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. As the charity has only one activity, all costs are allocated against the charitable activity. They include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the charity are:

- Unrestricted general funds – these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.
- Restricted funds – these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024 (continued)

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Note 2: Prior Year Comparatives

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	£	£	£
INCOME			
Donations	20,694	0	20,694
Gift aid on donations	1,472	0	1,472
Grants receivable	10,000	10,000	20,000
Contributions towards activities	40,701	472	41,173
Fundraising income	8,688	0	8,688
Interest on bank	322	0	322
TOTAL INCOME	81,877	10,472	92,349
EXPENDITURE			
Fundraising costs	1,157	0	1,157
Charitable Activities			
Staff costs	64,165	17,474	81,640
Staff expenses	2,509	240	2,749
Day Services running costs	10,213	25	10,238
Family Support running costs	0	3,750	3,750
Allotment	11	28	39
Springs / Mini Springs Costs	0	314	314
Administration	3,250	0	3,250
Insurance	772	0	772
Professional fees	384	0	384
Accountancy costs	250	0	250
	81,553	21,832	103,385
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	82,710	21,832	104,542
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	(833)	(11,360)	(12,193)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024 (continued)**

Note 3: Net Income/(Expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:	2024 £	2023 £	
Independent examiner's remuneration		250	250

Note 4: Staff Costs and Related Party Transactions

	2024 Total	2023 Total
Gross wages and salaries	75,789	78,318
Pension contributions	2,996	3,321
	<u>78,785</u>	<u>81,640</u>

Note

None of the Trustees receive fees or reimbursed expenses in respect of their trusteeship.

The value of waived expenses were not considered significant. There are no other related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts.

The aggregate value of donations received from Trustees and related parties was £715.
(2023 - £1,050).

The Trustees considers its key management personnel is the Chief Executive who received total employment benefits of £28,343. No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000.

	2024 Number	2023 Number
The average number of persons employed as full-time or full-time equivalents by the charity during the year is detailed below.		
Management	1.0	1.0
Carers / other	1.6	1.6
	<u>2.6</u>	<u>2.6</u>

The average headcount during the year was 7.3 (2023 – 7.5).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024 (continued)

Note 5: Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
HMRC liabilities	762	1,896
Other accruals	853	2,380
Deferred income	307	0
	<u>1922</u>	<u>4,276</u>

Note 6: Restricted Funds

	Spring s	Barn activities & allotment	Family support t	Totals
b/f 1 April 2023	1,273	0	3,630	4,903
Income	0	1500	30	1530
Expenditure	293	216	3660	4169
c/f 31 Mar 2024	<u>980</u>	<u>1284</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2264</u>

Purpose of Funds:

Springs - Springs caters for adults with learning disabilities which meets twice a month in the evening, supported by volunteers.

Barn Activities and Allotment - Grant to improve and develop the allotment.

Family Support - project closed down during the year, remaining funds used for running costs and salary.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024 (continued)**

Note 7: Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expendit ure	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
General Fund	55,689	107,444	93,948	69,185
Total	55,689	107,444	93,948	69,185

Note 8: Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Current assets + debtors	13,942	0	13,942
Cash at bank	57,165	2,264	59,429
Current liabilities	1922	0	1922
TOTAL	69,185	2,264	71,449

Note 9: Bank Balances 31 March 2024

	£
Petty Cash	0
Current Account	28,140
Deposit Account	10,281
Treasurer's Account	21,008
TOTAL	59,429

THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

England & Wales - Charity number 1142459

Accounts

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statement for 2022/2023



The Life Project (Bath)
Registered Charity: 1142459
Company number: 07573284

Annual Report and Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

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Trustees' Report

The trustees present their report for the year to 31 March 2023. Due to the trustees' status as directors under the Companies Act 2006 this report constitutes a directors' report as required by section 415 of the Companies Act 2006.

1. STATEMENT FROM CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

The Last year has been another year of change challenge and development and I have been proud to see the us through that year looking forward to a positive future.

In June 2022 we said goodbye to Sarah Couchman, as one of the founding members of the Life Project Sarah has been central to the core of its being, culture and ethos, and though she will be greatly missed we are very excited for her new life and adventure going forward. Following some re-structuring of our teams and roles we have been extremely blessed to welcome Esmé Neale De Zárate as our new Day Services Co-ordinator. Esmé has a background in Occupational Therapy as well as setting up a Christian charity for children with a learning disability in Peru and has a real heart for the Life Project.

Another change has been with the parent carers group which both Fiona and Rachel stepped away from in the summer of 2022 (we are thrilled that Fiona has continued to work in our day services as an activity lead) and we have been delighted to appoint Sarah Moxham-Hendra to be the Family Support Co-ordinator to lead and develop the parent carers group.

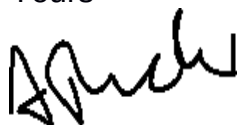
In the Autumn Ruth Taylor stepped down as a trustee after giving a huge commitment of time and energy which saw us safely through the pandemic.

With the staff changes it has been the ideal opportunity to review all the roles and responsibilities in the Life Project and develop new job descriptions and structures to equip us for the future. This has included developing a transport policy, a pay and reward structure and fee structure in order that The Life Project is more robust going forward.

The economic environment that we are now in is very challenging for all charities and services and I believe we have set the foundations in place to manage these challenges and continue to provide the caring and inclusive services which make being part of the Life Project a family.

I am finishing my term as a trustee with this final letter as Chair, my hopes and prayers are with you all to flourish and grow whilst being rooted in love for our community.

Yours



*Alison Tucker (Chair of Trustees)
(Until 31st March 2023)*

2. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

From the Memorandum and Articles of Association of The Life Project (Bath):

The Charity's objects ("Objects") are for the public benefit to promote and protect the health and well-being of persons with learning difficulties or other mental or physical disabilities in Bath and in such other parts of the United Kingdom as the Trustees may from time to time think fit according to Christian principles particularly but not exclusively by the provision of accommodation and other facilities to enable them to live within communities and to fulfil their individual potential.

During the reporting period the Trustees undertook an exercise to review the mission and vision of the Life Project (Bath). The outcome of the process led to the following:

Our Vision: An inclusive world in which people with learning disabilities know they belong.

Our Mission: To create and model supportive community for people with learning disabilities, their families, and carers.

Our Objectives:

- To provide purposeful activities which value the holistic needs and well-being of each individual and the community.
- To create an environment that promotes social development and nurtures healthy relationships.
- To offer platforms for people to express their uniqueness to the world around them and opportunities for those who want, to develop their faith.

The trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities we should undertake and confirm that all our activities are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

The key objectives to be initiated in 2022-2023 are as follows:

1. To review and reaffirm the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the charity in light of covid pandemic and current financial and political climate.
2. To become an increasingly robust organisation.
3. To develop a business plan that will result in becoming a financially sustainable charity delivering Day Services, Family Support and Discipleship.
4. To improve involvement of Members and Service Users in decision making processes.
5. To secure funding for Family Support – including ongoing delivery of existing Parent Carer Drop In and funding for new initiatives.
6. To have launched/ be close to launching at least one new session of Day Service.

The charity's performance against these objectives are reported in detail in Section 4 of this report.

Most Life Project staff, volunteers and families are members of Christian churches and congregations around Bath and NE Somerset and are committed to the Christian ethos of the organisation. They strive to reflect these Christian values in the way they contribute their efforts to the Life Project work and activities.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY EVENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

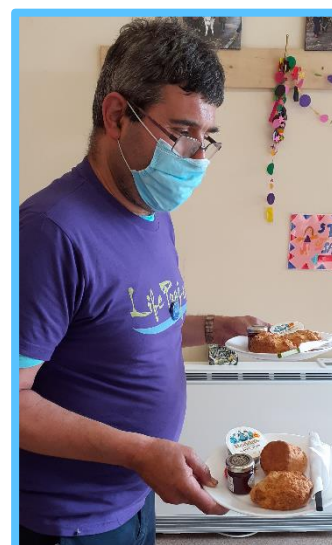
As the Covid pandemic continued to have a global impact, during the year significant adjustments had to be made to our mode of delivery and expectations needed to be managed. However, in summary the following activities were successfully achieved:

- **Staff Changes:** We have experienced staff changes as some roles have changed, people have moved on and new faces have joined our team. Of particular note was saying farewell to Sarah Couchman who was part of the initial conversation in 2000 that led to the formation of Springs and subsequently Life Project (Bath). Sarah established Springs and our work at the Old Acorn Barn – becoming our first employee and shaping the organisation for many years.



- **Day Services:** We continue to run three days of positive and meaningful activities – including gardening, cooking, drama, dance, art, woodwork, and much more – at the Old Acorn Barn and our allotment site. Esmé Zárate joined the team as our Day Services Coordinator and has been building relationships with staff, Makers and volunteers and introducing new projects and ideas.

- **Spring:** In April 2022 we celebrated the 20th Anniversary of our fellowship group, Springs. Springs has always been volunteer led and we were delighted to have Elizabeth Riley and Kay Labate take on the coordination of the group from May and have seen the group grow from strength to strength. There is talk that we may be at capacity and how we take this forward in the next year.
- **Family Support:** The weekly Parent Carer Drop-In continues every Tuesday during term time – with a new Family Support Coordinator (Sarah Moxham-Hendra) taking over the organising and welcoming parents each week. A second Parent Carer Drop In was launched in Radstock in March as we are monitoring the progress as we run it as a pilot project whilst looking for extended funding. Parent carers have also benefitted from two retreat days and the ongoing peer support through our WhatsApp group.
- **Socials:** During the year we have enjoyed gathering a barn dance, curry night, quiz and visit to the Pantomime – a real highlight for all attended – oh yes it was!
- **Cream Tea:** In June we celebrated our annual cream tea. It was wonderful to open the doors to the Barn and welcome so many people to enjoy scones and cream in the most glorious sunshine.



- **Volunteer Thank You Tea:** In July we introduced a thank you for all our volunteers – coffee and cake at the Barn. A chance for our CEO to meet and thank all volunteers for everything they do from helping in the Barn, serving at Parent Carers, worshiping at Springs, fundraising, providing governance as trustees and much more. We think it will become an annual event.
- **Colour Life for Life Project:** During the summer we welcomed a group of students from the University of Bath as they completed a project as part of their studies for an MA – we enjoyed a day at the Barn – welcoming visitors to plant seeds and paint rocks.
- **Bath Half:** The Bath Half Marathon returned following the Covid Pandemic and we were delighted to have a number of runners supporting the Life Project – we are thankful for everyone who took part, for all your training and for all the money raised.
- **Markets:** During November had opportunities to sell produce made and/or designed by our Makers at the Bath Christmas Market & Bath Communities and Charities Market. There was a lot of work involved but it was good to engage with visitors to the markets, whether locals or tourists to the city.
- **Carol Service:** In early December we held our first Life Project Carol Service – it was a wonderful start to the Christmas season and a celebration of bringing together of all different sides of the Life Project with drama, music and Christmas talk led by our Makers from the Barn and members of Springs.
- **Emergency Appeal:** In response to a lower than anticipated income from fundraising we launched an emergency appeal with the aim of raising £130,000 in 150 Days. The amount of *** was raised and includes *** raised through our Fundraising February initiative.
- **Trustee Changes:** Our team of trustees work hard to ensure we remain focussed on our core mission. We have welcomed Paul Bright to the board and Alison Tucker and Ruth Taylor have resigned during the year. We expect some further changes in the next year as we recruit to the board.



4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Achievement Against Objectives

Our stated strategic objectives were reviewed at the Trustee Away Day in July 2022 and with the following objectives agreed to be initiated for the reporting year April 2022 to March 2023:

1. To review and reaffirm the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the charity in light of covid pandemic and current financial and political climate.
2. To become an increasingly robust organisation, including:
 - a. Policies, procedures and practices reviewed and where necessary standards improved to meet legal and organisational expectations;
 - b. Adequate staffing (paid and unpaid) to plan, deliver and evaluate the services provided;
 - c. Reporting and communication systems to become electronic (including data and file sharing) in line with GDPR.
 - d. Increasing the trusteeship, specifically seeking skills including fundraising and finance
3. To develop a business plan that will result in becoming a financially sustainable charity delivering Day Services, Family Support and Discipleship, including:
 - a. A transport solution for Day Services that does not rely on staff;
 - b. Expanding Day Services to 5 days per week throughout the year;
 - c. Reviewing premise requirements and scoping out alternatives;
 - d. A sustainable funding (grants and community fundraising) strategy.
4. To improve involvement of Members and Service Users in decision making processes.
5. To secure funding for Family Support – including ongoing delivery of existing Parent Carer Drop In and funding for new initiatives.
6. To have launched/ be close to launching at least one new session of Day Service.

Objective 1: To review and reaffirm the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the charity in light of covid pandemic and current financial and political climate.

Following the Trustee Away Day in July 2022, facilitated by Ernie Messer, the trustees met to review the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the charity. The purpose of the exercise was to refine the mission of the Life Project establish charity wide objectives from which to demonstrate our achievements, to make successful decision, and give service users, partners and funders improved clarity about the purposes of the charity. A draft proposal was presented to staff and parent carers at separate meetings and their input sought to ensure the charity is shaped by the Life Project community.

The outcome of the process resulted in concise statements about *Our Vision, Mission and Purpose, Our Ethos and Values*, and *Our Faith in Practice* with can be found in [Appendices 1-3](#).

Objective 2: To become an increasingly robust organisation

a) Policies, procedures and practices reviewed and where necessary standards improved to meet legal and organisational expectations;

During the year we have begun a review of all policies and procedures, identifying where improvements are required and/or where new policies may need to be introduced.

During this reporting period the trustees have approved the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy (March 2023)
- Transportation of Service Users & Colleagues by Staff & Volunteers in Vehicles Policy (March 2023)

During the review and amendments of these two policies the following policies were recognised as requirements to review/produce and are the priority for the next reporting period:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Incident Procedure – Guide to Incident Reporting
- Lone working Policy
- Moving and Handling Policy
- Public Transport and Hired Vehicle Policy
- Reporting of Adverse Incident Reporting (AIR) Policy
- Safe Communications Policy
- The Safe Carriage of Equipment in Staff Member's Own Vehicles Policy
- Travel and Subsistence Policy
- Refund Policy

b) Adequate staffing (paid and unpaid) to plan, deliver and evaluate the services provided;

A staffing and salary review was conducted during the reporting period. The trustees acknowledge the need for increased time for staff to plan, prepare, set up, evaluate, assess, and report on sessions. It was agreed that from April 2023 Activity Leaders would have an increase of 0.5 hours per session, this will be kept under review. Due to the provision of transport by staff to Makers it remains challenging for staff to prepare and meet immediately before and after sessions.

The trustees agreed to adopt a salary banding scale, reflecting the different responsibilities and skills that staff possess.

Band	Role	Salary (Full Time Equivalent)	Hourly Rate
Band F	CEO / Director	40,000 to 45,000	19.23 to 21.63
Band E	Managers (e.g. Operations / Finance / HR / Office / Volunteer)	34,000 to 38,000	16.35 to 18.27

Band D	Project Coordinators / Fundraiser / Events Coordinator / Chaplain	26,500 to 32,000	12.74 to 15.38
Band C	Session Leader	25,000 to 27,000	12.02 to 12.98
Band B	Activity Leader / Cook / Administrator / Bookkeeper	21,923 to 24,357	10.54 to 11.71
Band A	Session or Activity Assistant/ Carer/ Admin Assistant	19,760 to 21,674	9.50 to 10.42

*Figures based on 40 hrs/week, 52 weeks/year

Please note:

- Some of these roles do not currently exist but provide guidance as the charity seeks to grow and develop.
- Any annual increase based on our policy of following the national index of average earnings is not including in these figures.

c) Reporting and communication systems to become electronic (including data and file sharing) in line with GDPR.

The way in which the Life Project has developed means that as different individuals have joined the team our systems for sharing have evolved, but not necessarily in unison.

Our systems for storing and sharing files, information and data are adequate but could be more efficient.

Our CEO has been learning how to use SharePoint and OneDrive to share files and bring together the files from different users into one place. With the appointment of our new Team Administrator we hope to speed up the process of integrating folders and removing duplication.

Our aim is for all staff and trustees to have Life Project email addresses/ login for Office 365 giving them access to a suite of tools for the work they do and access to files and data as required. To date all staff with Life Project laptops have been set up with email addresses and all address unified to the pattern <firstname><lastname>@lifeproject-bath.org.uk.

In the next reporting period all staff and trustees will have secure access to relevant shared folders and we will move away from using Dropbox (where this has been used for some file sharing in the past).

We have begun the process of reviewing the data we hold for Makers, Members, Staff, Volunteers and others. We aim to consolidate the information we have and ensure that it is up to date. We hope that by the end of the next reporting period to understand the data we hold, any additional data that would be necessary and helpful for different stakeholders and to identify a suitable Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System for the Life Project to adopt from 2024-25.

As we review the information we hold we are also reviewing the forms we use to collect data – ensuring we asking the correct questions and looking to move to a more automated electronic collection and storage.

d) Increasing the trusteeship, specifically seeking skills including fundraising and finance.

Due to personal circumstances for a number of our trustees, changes have taken place in the reporting period and further changes in the first quarter of the next reporting period. Ruth Taylor (Safeguarding Trustee) stood down in October 2022 and Paul Bright joined the board in January 2023, picking up the role as the Safeguarding Trustee. Alison Tucker resigned from the board and as Chair of Trustees at the end of March 2023.

The role of Treasurer was reviewed and separated into Treasurer and Bookkeeper with Rob Trickey joining as a volunteer Bookkeeper from summer 2022. As Tony Russell steps down as Treasurer during the next reporting period we have been advertising for a new Treasurer.

A number of trustees have indicated their intention to step down in the next reporting period and we are actively recruiting new trustees with a recruitment process scheduled to introduce and integrate them to the board.

Specific skills relating, but not limited to, fundraising and finance have been identified.

Objective 3: To develop a business plan that will result in becoming a financially sustainable charity delivering Day Services, Family Support and Discipleship

a) A transport solution for Day Services that does not rely on staff;

In reviewing the provision of Transport for service users it became apparent that whilst staff are providing transport to and from the Day Services provided by staff there is not adequate time for planning/set up or evaluation and team time before and after sessions. The trustees would like to remove the provision of transport to ensure Day Service staff have the time they need to prepare, deliver and evaluate sessions. This was proposed but feedback from some staff and parents highlighted the withdrawal of the provision would remove the ability of some service users to attend the Barn.

Following further reflection and consultation the Trustees agreed that for paid services:

- Existing agreements for the provision of transport will be upheld for duration the service user attends sessions or as long as staff are available and willing to provide transport.
- No transport agreements will be entered into for new service users or new sessions.
- If a service user leaves, this does not open a new space for another service user to fill, it will be an end of the provision.

The full statement on the provision of transport is available in [Appendix 4](#).

This solution is not ideal as staff continue to have no time before or after sessions without Makers present to set up or to review and evaluate. The trustees wish to identify a solution to the provision of transport that does not rely on staff who deliver sessions – options could include recruiting paid or volunteer drivers, liaising with a local taxi company or other transport provider. With further consultation with parent carers and other stakeholders we hope to identify a sustainable solution in the next reporting period.

b) Expanding Day Services to 5 days per week throughout the year;

It was hoped that with the appointment of a new Day Services Coordinator for 3 days per week, increasing to 4 days per week after the first year that we would be in a position of maximising the number of sessions delivered at the Old Acorn Barn.

However, our Day Services Coordinator started on 2 days per week in order to complete their re-registration as an Occupational Therapist and there has been significant staff sickness during the reporting period. This has meant that our goal of beginning new sessions has not yet been realised but plans and developments are underway.

With the plans progressing to develop the allotment we hope that as well as the Old Acorn Barn this will become a site that can be used much more frequently and for longer each year.

A consultation with Parent Carers of our Makers indicated that there is interest in expanding our services for more weeks each year. Our aim is to become a year round provider, with all new staff appointed to 52 week contracts rather than term-time only.

Our main break currently takes place each summer as we work within the school terms. Our aim is to build up the number of weeks and sessions offered each summer so that in due course (2-3 years time) our offer will increase from 37 weeks per year to closer to 48 weeks per year.

c) Reviewing premises requirements and scoping out alternatives;

The Old Acorn Barn is not an accessible building – it cannot be reached by public transport and an expensive journey by taxi for individuals. The building is not large, with stairs to the first floor, angled ceilings on the first floor, a galley kitchen and without an accessible toilet. In addition the grounds are uneven. As a team we recognise these challenges and the limitations the building and location hold.

The Old Acorn Barn also has limited capacity – we can accommodate a maximum of 8 Makers for sessions, and this can alter depending on support needs and Personal Assistants also attending.

We have always known these are the challenges with our location and facilities yet we also know, and Makers, Parents, Staff, Volunteers and visitors recognise that there is something very special about the Old Acorn Barn. It has been described a therapeutic

or retreat-like environment which offers so many benefits to all our Makers. We have strong, positive, and valuable relationships with many residents in the village of Englishcombe which add to our own sense of community and being part of the community.

A different venue may be more accessible and offer increased capacity but we are not yet maximizing how we use the Barn and the Allotment so we continue to review our service requirements.

d) A sustainable funding (grants and community fundraising) strategy.

It is rarely said that fundraising and grant applications are easy, we are pleased to have made it through the covid pandemic but as the cost-of-living crisis emerged we have not escaped the impact.

Unfortunately some of our fund raising goals and ambitions were not realised during the reporting year, adding considerable stress to those involved in income generation for the charity.

In the previous year we were delighted by the response from individuals taking up our challenge to swim, run, walk or cycle a distance of their choice to raise a minimum of £100. We hoped to build on this success, launching Challenge 100 in the summer of 2022, unfortunately this did not result in any participants.

In the Autumn we cheered on a number of runners in the Bath Half Marathon. It is always encouraging when people choose to put themselves through something gruelling like this in order to raise money and awareness of our work. Although we had some runners we ended up with unused places, in part due to the date changing twice but also as many of those who might run have already done so in the past for the Life Project.

As a consequence of the lower than planned fundraising income we launched an Emergency Appeal at the AGM with a view to raise £30,000 in the 150 days between 1st November and 31st March. The target was ambitious, double our basic need, with the hope we could start the next financial year with something of a boost and ease the fundraising pressures. During the Emergency Appeal we also launched Fundraising February – encouraging individuals and groups to do something to fund raise for the Life Project. It was encouraging to see those challenges and events which did take place (both during February and planned for the subsequent month) which led to an increase in overall donations from £1.5k between April and Oct 2022 to £9.7k between November 2022 and March 2023.

We recognise that this is not sustainable and alternative models for income generation are required, making better use of staff and volunteer time and the resources we have available.

Objective 4: To improve involvement of Members and Service Users in decision making processes.

Following a review of Life Project Membership in 2022 we have moved towards a model of members meeting together at least three times per year.

The first meeting took place in January 2023 where it was agreed that:

- Members meeting will not be chaired by a trustee.
- Trustees will appoint a representative to be the liaison between members and trustees (giving ownership of the meetings to non-trustee members).
- Staff are permitted to become members if they would like to, they can apply in the same way as everyone else.
- There is no limit on the number of family members becoming members, but this would be reviewed if it appeared that a single family was taking over.
- It is the responsibility of the members to organise themselves for meetings, if there is anyone they wish to attend to give appropriate notice.

It is hoped that the Members will have a greater sense of involvement and engagement with the Life Project – understanding and engaging in decision making processes to support the trustees and staff team.

Objective 5: To secure funding for Family Support – including ongoing delivery of existing Parent Carer Drop In and funding for new initiatives.

We are grateful to Edward Gostlin for their generous donation of £5k towards our Parent Carers Drop-In which also enabled the pilot of a new group in Radstock.

Applications for grant funding have been made to support the continuation of the Parent Carer Drop-In's have continued throughout the year. As it stands the charity will begin to use reserves to fund the Drop-In from May 2023 onwards.

Objective 6: To have launched/ be close to launching at least one new session of Day Service.

There have been two main factors in not yet being ready to launch a new Day Services Session.

Firstly, staff shortages have meant that the team has been below capacity and not able to give adequate time to planning, developing and publicising new sessions. Our priority is to staff health and well-being and therefore the goal of launching a new session has been pushed back, giving more time for the team to prepare.

Secondly, the time it takes for Makers to review their activities and agree budgets is longer than anticipated. With any new or altered session most Makers will need to seek a review with social care before knowing whether or not they will be able to attend a session. This process can take months and therefore we need to give plenty of lead time before launching new sessions.

We would like to see an expansion of the sessions offered, which will involve increasing the staff team but we are looking to more realistic goals for the time frame to achieve this – perhaps launching between April and September 2024 rather than 2023.

5. DETAILED PROJECT ACTIVITY

The story of the Life Project 2022-2023 with details provided by Project Coordinators

5.1. Day Services

Maker's Involvement:

Our Summer term theme was 'Celebrating what we have,' this gave opportunities for appreciating each other, our abilities and the resources we have at the Life Project and around us.



Our Autumn theme was 'Making connections with our Surroundings,' this lent itself to explore further afield and tied in well with getting out into the Community with the Bath City Christmas Market and the Carol Service.

Our Spring theme was 'Spring & New Life,' which opened up lots of different opportunities and to try new things and consider what New Life means at this time of year.

Our Maker's have continued to have opportunities to be involved in Art, Kitchen and Productivity Sessions which they were assigned to for three consecutive weeks. This proved to be successful on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Tuesdays Makers have had woodwork opportunities

during the whole year. Additionally movement, music and drama have been offered within all day sessions. Maker choice was introduced to some afternoon sessions where they were able to choose between board games and music.

Sessions at the allotment ceased between October and March however during the Spring term we were able to plant seeds harvested from the allotment last year and nurture these before returning to the allotment after Easter. The Social and Therapeutic Horticultural Course that Esmé attended last year has been of great value in implementing new ideas and generating a vision for the potential expansion and development of the time and space we have at the Monksdale Road Allotment.

Highlights:

Despite many challenges arising prior to the Christmas Market and the Christmas Carol Service both of these events have been considered highlights for both staff and Makers. Making sellable items for the Bath Christmas Market; candles, bee houses and



Christmas Chutneys which all sold well was a highlight once the stress of producing them had passed.



Having more clarity in our timetable by making a few adjustments in order to improve our time management and Maker involvement in sessions has been reported term on term as a highlight to the past year and what we offer Makers.

Staff planning meetings introduced at the start of each term which have also included time to be encouraged by a bible passage and time for prayer for the Life Project have been well received and appreciated.

Challenges:

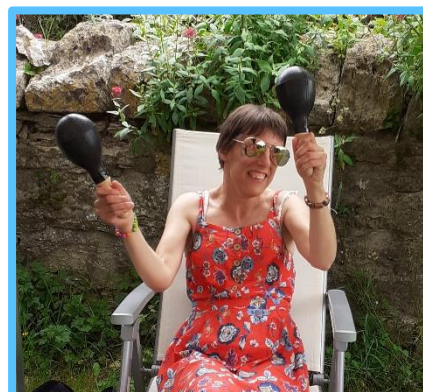
This past year has seen many significant changes which have presented challenges to Makers, staff, volunteers and parent/carers and resulted in many being unsettled and concerned for the future of the Life Project.

The issue of transport was the most upsetting to Makers, Parents and Carers.

There have been numerous amounts of time taken off sick throughout the year by staff and volunteers which has impacted on remaining staff needing to take on additional responsibilities and pressures which at the same time highlighted the limited people resources and time that the Life Project attempts to function on.

Minimal time being available for team planning and communication continues to be a challenge despite allocating one day at the beginning of each term for this purpose.

Staff would appreciate more contact and communication with the trustees and would love for trustees to come and visit and participate in sessions at the Barn and/or the allotment. We would love to improve our working relationship with you all as we seek to live out the Mission of the Life Project.



Volunteers:

This past year has seen a number of new volunteers join us which is really encouraging. We have however seen a reduction in involvement from existing volunteers, a couple of whom have indicated that they will sadly be finishing with volunteering.

Maker Changes:

At the end of the summer term we said goodbye to one Maker who moved on to other Day provisions and opportunities locally. This place was filled by a new Maker who had

just left school and started college in September. Following the fee increase we have lost another Maker who is unable to personally fund attending the Life Project. We have been working together with Bath College and Social Services for a new maker to start in the Summer term.

It would be advantageous to move a couple of Makers to the Tuesday session which would allow additional spaces to be available at our sessions on Wednesdays and Thursdays however there is some resistance to do this at present. Our Wednesday session is full to capacity with three Makers attending with PA's. We have been up to 17 people which is just about manageable this term with the gazebo offering extra space but it will not be possible to accommodate such numbers in the Autumn and Winter terms.

Staff Changes:

Sarah Couchman leaving was the biggest change to the Life Project Community which has obviously impacted on Makers and staff alike. Having stepped in as a new member of staff myself it has been obvious that she had many roles behind the scenes that made the Life Project work the way it did but is impossible to carry on with the current limited staffing and contracted hours.

Dinah Darby (Administrator) left in August and was not replaced until February. This was a huge loss and added extra pressure on staff and things did not run so effectively.

Susan Kyle (Kitchen Activity Leader) left with immediate effect due to illness in February Half term. Staff have covered but at the cost of more responsibility being given to volunteers and activities being reduced for Makers. To date the position has not been filled. Interviews for two candidates 27th June 2023.



Esmé Zarate: Appointed as Day Services Coordinator May 2022. Has been employed 16 hours per week (with additional overtime hours as required) whilst studying and working towards re-registering as an Occupational Therapist. HCPC registration gained April 2023.

Prayer points:

For staff morale, for renewed energies and enthusiasm for the precious work that we all value in the lives of the Makers.

For the Lord to bring along the people of His choice to the Life Project; Staff, Volunteers, Makers, supporters and Trustees who will be a blessing and who will be blessed.

For better communications within the Life Project and with local churches, individuals, and other organisations including Social Services

That all the glory for what God has provided for the Life Project be given to Him. That we will be good stewards and managers of what He has given to us so that we will be able to continue supporting Adults with Learning Disabilities in Bath.

Esmé Zárate (Day Services Coordinator)

5.2. Family Support

Parent Carers has continued for another year, but with lots of changes. Fiona and Rachel, moved on from the project last summer, so I (Sarah Moxham-Hendra) took over in September. My first session was a goodbye session for Rachel, when I was able to meet some of the group. Over the next three months, I got to grips with running the group with the support from Kay Skinner and our fabulous volunteers, and getting to know the different families that we are supporting.

In October we welcomed Lesley Bishop as a new volunteer, however in the new year we said goodbye to another volunteer – Josie. Fortunately, she has not left the Life Project but instead has moved over to the Springs team!

The numbers attending the group at the Weston Hub have been varied, between September and December we saw 16 carers attending. At the end of November we ran a Parent Carers Winter retreat. We ran the retreat at the Weston Hub, as there were a number of people who wanted to attend but would have been unable to if we had been outside of Bath. During the day we made clay Christmas decorations with Esther, and Kay ran a relaxing Pilates session. We then had lunch together. The feedback from the retreat was lovely



with everyone saying how much they enjoyed it and appreciated the opportunity to relax and be creative just before a busy Christmas period.

In December we said a temporary goodbye to Kay as she went off on Maternity leave. Running her last session with us on Tuesday and giving birth to Connie on the Friday! We hope to see Kay return to us in September.

Unfortunately, in the New Year, numbers dropped. This may have been due to weather, busy lives, or the fact that we were not offering Pilates.

In February, Stephen Magrath agreed to run some Mindful Art Sessions. Initially this was supposed to run for just 4-5 sessions. After people's initial misgivings that 'I am not artistic'. Those who have attended appeared to really enjoy the opportunity to be creative and produce some really beautiful pieces. Stephen agreed to continue the sessions after Easter and some of our artwork will be exhibited at the Life Project Art Sale in May.

We have also had a couple of visits from Sue Poole from BANES health watch, who has come along to discuss health and social care services in the local area and any positives or concerns that families have had.

Numbers have remained fairly low, with between 1-5 people attending each session over the weeks. However we are still getting new people coming along, as well as occasional visits from people who have attended the group in the past. I have therefore been reluctant to change the group and its venue, as people know where we are and are able to pop in when they can. However, with consistently low numbers we do need to consider what we do with the group.

When I started the post, there was a lot of discussion on the WhatsApp group about the need for support in the Radstock, Midsomer Norton area. I therefore looked at what we could do to help and in February I was able to set up a new group. We started as a pilot group meeting at Radstock Baptist Church, initially for five weeks to see the need, On the first session we had 8 people attend, which was really encouraging. New members have continued to join, with between 3 – 7 people coming along each week. We have set up a WhatsApp group for the Radstock members which is regularly used as a forum for information advice and support.



Early on we had a visit from Hannah Wilkins from SENDIAS an independent advice and support service, this was a really useful link and various members of the group have been able to get support and advocacy from the SENDIAS service.

One of the parents who has joined the Radstock group, has a job at the Radstock Museum as a development worker, she runs a carers café once a month, which I have been able to support and encourage people from our group to go along to.

I have also attended two Live Well events where I have been able to network with other support services and charities, then passing on information to our groups. If possible, we hope to have a Life Project stand at the next event.

So there have been some highs and lows for the Family Support over the last year, we need to make some tough decisions, but also celebrate the work we are doing in supporting the families we are involved with.

Sarah Moxham-Hendra (Family Support Coordinator)

5.3. Springs

April 2022 marked the 20th Anniversary of our Springs group. We gave thanks to God and celebrated with members and volunteers, old and new, and enjoyed a joyful evening of cake, worship, and dancing. It was wonderful to look back across the past 20 years and to see how much has happened in the group - truly beautiful. We produced a short video to mark the occasion, and this is available via the Life Project YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyJqSxAcuNY>)



During April and May we said a huge thank you and a sad farewell to Sarah Couchman who was instrumental in starting Springs back in April 2002 alongside Kathryn Spackman (who still volunteers to this day). Sarah has moved away, though remains very close to us all in our hearts (and sometimes on Zoom). We all miss Sarah at Springs and are so grateful for the ongoing legacy of her love, prayerful oversight and commitment to the group and her priority for member participation. This continues to bear fruit in Springs today as we continue to nurture spiritual exploration, growth and build community. Thank you Sarah.



Springs has always been run by volunteers and we are enormously grateful that following prayerful consideration Elizabeth Riley and Kay Labate stepped up to co-lead the group. It has been a huge amount to take on and a big learning curve for Elizabeth and Kay! They couldn't have done it without the amazing volunteer team who continue to help lead sessions and faithfully transport many members to and from the group. They are so proud of all the team who are stepping out in faith to work together. They are also

thankful and delighted that Springs has continued to grow, welcoming a number of regular new members this year as well as a new volunteer.

One of the joys of being involved in Springs is the way members encourage and support each other so well, showing so much love and care for one another but also for the world around us. This is demonstrated not only by the joy and enthusiasm of their reunions each session and the consistency of their attendance, but also by their readiness to welcome newcomers, their desire to draw alongside and pray for those who are struggling, and to remember in prayer those who are sick or unable to attend, and to pray for situations they've heard of in the news. Every member really matters to the group and it is in the context of this love and care that we see members growing in confidence and faith. All the members love to participate and take turns in leading the sessions - this is such an encouragement to everyone. Recently, one new member shared a testimony in front of the whole group - something he had never done before.



With the growth in numbers, members and volunteers have risen to the challenge and have stepped out using their gifts and skills. Sometimes it's been out of their comfort zones, but they've stretched themselves and have grown together in faith – sharing ideas and having a sense of ownership of the group.

In the autumn we were preparing for the Life Project Carol Service, making props and practising a drama, expertly directed by volunteers Faith and Jess, telling the story of Christmas in a unique and special way. One of our members, Robert, preached at the Service (his first preach ever) and everyone was blown away by his confidence, clarity and the beauty of his message. Seeing Robert preach has encouraged all of us in our leading – with members being even more keen to lead and share with one another,



asking who will be leading next time. A recent theme was “Characters in the Bible” with each member choosing who they wanted to focus on when they led a session.

Throughout the year other highlights include:

- Christmas social - a full Christmas dinner for 29 people, preparing, eating and

celebrating together. It was a lovely evening with delicious food, karaoke (which we love), and showing a film about the angels appearing to the shepherds made by Josh, one of our new members.

- In the New Year Springs and many others from The Life Project headed to the St Philip's Church Pantomime, Cinderella. It was such a fun evening, enjoyed by all. We are so grateful too because the drama group generously chose to divide the ticket sales from the opening night equally between the Life Project and NICU at the RUH.

We give thanks to God for all His goodness throughout this past year. Because of the growth in numbers Springs is now at capacity so we are prayerfully considering whether to open a second group and the most suitable way to approach this growth. We appreciate the prayers of our supporters and welcome any visitors who would like to get a better idea of what Springs is all about.

Kay Labate & Elizabeth Riley (Springs Coordinators)

5.4. Socials Programme

During the year we have enjoyed a number of social activities and events that have been open to all the Life Project Family. In June we enjoyed our Annual Cream Tea and were blessed with delightful weather as well as delicious scones and other treats. It was something of a learning experience for many of us at it was the first time we could host the cream tea without the restrictions caused by covid over the previous few years and wonderful to welcome so many to the Old Acorn Barn.

We were also joined by a group of post-graduate students from the University of Bath who were completing a practical project as part of their studies. They were given a brief and worked hard planning for a day at the Allotment to which we could invite those local to the area. However, permissions from the local authority were not forthcoming in time and therefore we held "Colour Life for the Life Project" at the Barn. It was lovely to see Makers, Parent Carers and our neighbours from Englishcombe coming together for food, seed planting and rock painting.



In the Autumn we came together for a Barn Dance... or was it a Ceilidh? Most of us don't know the difference but we do know that we had lots of fun dancing around the hall at Manvers Street Baptist Church with our caller Dave ensuring we knew when to do-si-do, promenade or

swing our partners. A couple of months later we returned to Manvers Street for a delicious curry night cooked up by Dave, Col and Josie. The curry was delightful matched by the company with many of our Life Project friends.

The New Year was welcomed in with a visit to the Pantomime – the highlight of the year for all those who attended. We are told the audience for the first night was the best because we had so many from the Life Project cheering, booing and calling out the “Oh no he isn’t!” and “He’s behind you!” We are hugely grateful to the St Philip & St James Church Drama Group for such a wonderful evening as well as choosing to share the takings from the opening night between the Life Project and NICU at the RUH! There is no doubt we will be back next year, whether we are being supported or not!



5.5. Community Fundraising

We have been busy with our community fundraising throughout the year with mixed success.

In May we learned of a charity abseil taking place at St John’s Church, Keynsham and secured a four places. Four intrepid souls took up the challenge and enjoyed launching themselves of the top of the church tower. Thank you for your bravery and for raising essential funds for the Life Project!



Hoping to build on the success of the previous year’s Swim 100, Run 100, Cycle 100 we introduced a combined event that we called Challenge 100. The premise is simple – chose a distance to aim to run, walk, swim or cycle with the aim of raising at least £100. Unfortunately we did not attract anyone to take part and the event failed to raise any money.



We have had places for runners in the Bath Half Marathon for a number of years, which has proved a success means of raising money for the Life Project. Unfortunately the Bath Half was postponed twice, initially from March to May and then again until October. This gave many charities the challenge of attracting runners and runners being able to maintain their fitness for months on end. The impact of this was a few changes in runners, with some having to drop out as they were unavailable on the new date, but we were also able to add a few people who had not run with us before. In the end we had 8 people running



on behalf of the Life Project – some of whom organised a place themselves and ran for us and other who used our charity places. We did not fill all the places we booked but we are grateful to everyone who took part and for the money they raised.

In the lead up to Christmas we were invited to have a stall as part of the Bath Communities and Charities Fair in the Widcombe Social Club and we also secured a charity stall at the Bath City Christmas Market for two days. There was a lot of work involved in preparing for these events, ensuring we had had enough merchandise and including Makers in the sales. We enjoyed ourselves at both the Fair and the Market, discovering at least one of our Members has a gift for drawing people in and securing a sale. We made some good connections with the other stall holders and also enjoyed a visit from the Mayor of Bath. There are lessons that we need to reflect on and decide how often to take part in such events – balancing the work involved, the publicity it gives us, and the funding we achieve.



Following on from the Market and the Fair we also trialed an Etsy shop but feel that this was premature and will need more attention and input if it is to be a successful fundraising venture.



Reviewing our community fundraising after the Second Quarter of the year we identified a significant deficit and we were not on track to meet our target for Community Fundraising. The implications of this would be a need to evaluate our service provision and as such an Emergency Appeal was launched with the aim of raising £30,000 in the 150 days between 1st November 2022 and 31st March 2023. It was our hope that we would be able to reach £15,000 to meet the shortfall for the reporting period as well as begin the next period with a head start

on fundraising. To encourage supporters to get involved in fundraising we also launched Fundraising February – asking people to complete a fundraising activity or event during the month of February 2023. This month witnessed coffee mornings, head shaving, and exercising challenges, with further events inspired by Fundraising February carried into the next reporting period. The result of the Emergency Appeal and Fundraising February an increase from £1.4k in donations received April to October 2022 to £9.7k between November 2022 and March 2023. This is short of our hopes and the trustees plan to review our fundraising initiatives for the year ahead – exploring the time and energy required to organise and promote fundraising initiatives versus the amount of money raised.



5.6. Grant Funding

We are thankful to The Roper Family Charitable Trust for providing us with £10k in unrestricted funds to support the work across of the Life Project.

We would also like to thank the Edward Gostling Foundation for their generous donation of £5k towards our Parent Carers Drop-In's.

We are grateful to Baily Thomas for a £5k contribution towards our core costs.

A number of local churches support us as part of their missional giving, those churches which have given to us prayerfully and financially include:

- All Saints Church, Weston
- Holy Trinity, Combe Down
- Widcombe Baptist Church, Widcombe
- St Philip and St James, Odd Down
- St Mary's, Saltford

Furthermore we thank Kingswood School and the Weston Social Club for their generous donations to support the work of the Life Project

We have several ongoing applications and continue to seek investment, trust and grant funding to support those projects which cannot generate their own income – namely Parent Carers and Springs as well as contribute to the core costs of the charity.

We would like to extend our gratitude to these funding bodies that have supported us this year.

6. FINANCIAL REVIEW

Over the year, the Charity received income of £93,349 with expenditure of £104,452, finishing with a deficit of £12,193.

There was a slight increase in overall income from the previous year, but this masks a drop in fundraising income which was compensated for by additional grant income, donations and fees.

Overall expenditure was also greater, with Day Services being hit by a significant increase in utility costs at the Barn. Staff costs also increased beyond the annual increment, largely due to consolidation of overtime by Day Services staff covering the third day at the Barn along with the new Day Services Coordinator coming in at 52 weeks and having some overlap with the outgoing Barn Coordinator.

At 31 March 2023, the Charity had net assets of £60,594 of which £4,905 were restricted funds and £55,689 unrestricted.

Whilst the charity finished the year with a deficit of some £12k, steps have been taken to address this. Trustees wish to ensure that Day Services fees fully cover the operating costs and so an increase in fees of 42% was agreed from 1 April 2023, in consultation with staff and makers. Grant funding for the Family Support work will be used up early in the new financial year and this will be reviewed with any continuation being dependent on securing further funding. As a result of these steps, along with ongoing monitoring of the finances, the trustees are confident that the Charity is financially secure to deliver its programme of activities for 2023/24.

Looking ahead, the level of unrestricted reserves carried forward will support continuing work on restructuring projects to reduce the need for grant funding and to make them self financing where possible. In due course this may involve relocating projects to a single venue that would allow greater capacity and improved accessibility.

Investment Policy

The Life Project holds funds in an instant access Deposit Account and a 90-day notice Treasurer's Reserve Account so as to provide some interest. These savings have been placed with Triodos Bank, which has a strong ethical investment policy.

Reserves Policy

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in the light of the main risks to the organisation. As a result of this they aim to hold reserves equal to at least three months' unrestricted running costs. This is to ensure the continued running of the charity if unrestricted funding decreases, until new sources of funding can be found. At the year end unrestricted reserves were £55,689, providing adequate reserves whilst also supporting work on restructuring the projects.

Tony Russell (Treasurer)

7. FUTURE PLANS

As we reflect on the successes and challenges of the reporting period the trustees are confident that the Life Project (Bath) is emerging from a difficult period with a sharpened focus on the core values of the charity and sustainable growth.

Making the difficult decision to increase fees to a level that will be sustainable for the charity, ensuring Day Services are fully funded through fees will demonstrate how this service can be maintained and developed.

Due to the staff changes and periods of reduced staffing within the Day Services over the reporting period the trustees are inclined to maintain a desire for growth but recognise that a season of consolidation may be required. The time frame required for existing and new Makers to move through the process of expressing an interest, obtaining funding and starting at a session typically takes upwards of 6 months and therefore it is expected any new session will be prepared to launch at the earliest of Spring 2024.

The success of Springs and desire of people to join has led to the group reaching capacity. The trustees wish to maintain the uniqueness of the group being volunteer led but also want to ensure the team are well resourced. This will likely involve looking for funding to appointment a member of staff to support the Springs team, help with reviewing and developing a second group, and building up relationships with local churches.

The Life Project remains committed to Family Support and know how valuable the drop-in sessions are for those who attend. With a reliance upon grant funding that has been difficult to come by the trustees are aware that maintaining the groups is challenging and if funding is not forthcoming difficult decisions will need to be made as we consider whether this is affordable for the Life Project.

The founding families established the Life Project for “the provision of accommodation” or what became known as “homes for life”. Following the successful completion of the HAS Trust opening a home, with the support of the Life Project, in the Autumn of 2021, it was decided to focus on the other elements of the charity with homes projects placed on hold for 18 months. The trustees would now like to return to the core aim of the provision of accommodation, with the introduction of phases to explore the needs, existing provisions, capacity, the options and opportunities for the Life Project in the provision of homes of adults with learning disabilities.

Lessons from the previous and current reporting period have highlighted the limitations of the current fundraising strategy and the need to identify more sustainable and consistent income. One possibility is to look into the opportunities a charity shop could offer, both in income generation as well as opportunities for people with learning disabilities to volunteer and engage in meaningful activity.

In the first quarter of the next reporting period we know of three trustees who will be finishing on the board and we have an active recruitment campaign. We are therefore aware of transition at the board level and need for continuing to look forward to improvements and development whilst also balancing the needs of all stakeholders

whereby some consolidation is necessary. As the new board takes shape we expect to continue with many of the objectives from the current reporting year, especially:

- Becoming an increasingly robust organisation
- Developing a business plan that will result in becoming a financially sustainable charity.
- Continuing to improve involvement of Members and Service Users in decision making processes.
- Launching at least one new session of Day Service.

8. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

8.1. Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 22 March 2011. The company was registered as a charity on 17 June 2011.

The Life Project (Bath) was initiated by over a dozen Christian families, mainly from the Bath area but also including Keynsham, most of whom had children, teenagers or adults with a range of learning disabilities. The families involved represented a variety of different denominations, but all shared a vision and passion for enabling their children to play a full role in the life of the church and in the community. The Life Project (Bath) aims for the highest standards of care and professionalism but is not seeking to create a home(s) or meaningful occupation(s) that isolate or removes those with learning disabilities from the wider world.

8.2. Governance Roles

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law.

Role descriptions for the Chair of Board, Treasurer and Bookkeeper as well as general trustees were updated in 2022. Code of Conduct for Trustees was produced in 2017 and is due for review along with other guidance and induction documentation use by new trustees.

8.3. Recruitment and Appointment of the Trustees

The trustees regularly review the skills and experience base of its board and new trustees are sought to reflect the needs of the organisation. A three-year term of office, with potential to renew, has been established. Based on a skills audit of trustees and identified skills gaps, potential trustees are approached. In order to be confirmed as a trustee DBS clearance is sought, a 'fit and proper persons' check carried out and candidates must sign up to all elements of the Confirmation of Appointment declaration.

During the reporting period the following changes have taken place at the board:

- Ruth Taylor – Resigned October 2022
- Paul Bright – Appointed January 2023
- Alison Tucker (Chair) – Resigned March 2023

8.4. Trustee Induction and Training

Induction is seen as a key element in retaining and supporting trustees. New trustees are given clear advice and support in relation to their obligations. A *Trustee Induction Checklist* is in use and all relevant documentation is made available, including details of resourcing, the current financial position as set out in the latest set of accounts and information about future plans and the strategic development of the charity. Other

governance specific training available for trustees in the charity sector is notified to trustees.

We are members of the local third sector network [3SG](#) and access the training, support and guidance offered to trustees.

8.5. Day to Day Management

The charity is run by its Chief Executive, Rich Blake-Lobb. During 2022-23 seven other part-time staff were employed at any one time.

The registered office is Old Acorn Barn, Englishcombe, Bath BA2 9DU.

9. SAFEGUARDING

The Life Project has continued to subscribe to *Thirtyone:eight* - an independent Christian safeguarding charity which helps individuals and organisations protect vulnerable people from abuse.

The Life Project use them as the umbrella organisation for the processing of Disclosure and Barring Service applications for volunteers and staff, support and guidance, and for the training of staff and volunteers.

Safeguarding training was provided for all staff and volunteers in September 2022.

There were no serious safeguarding incidents during the reporting year, and we have consulted with *Thirtyone:eight* experts for advice when we felt it necessary.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Life Project maintains a *Risk Register* that captures the main events that might have a significant adverse impact on the Life Project's service delivery, service users or financial/reputational integrity.

Following a review of the *Risk Register* trustees agree to include named responsibility/oversight for each identified risk event.

The register has been amended to describe the event, causes/ factors that will contribute to the event, the potential consequences of an event, and the mitigations that should be in place (with a implementation date for any newly recognised mitigations).

Each Life Project session has its own Risk Assessment and these are reviewed by the Project Coordinators with relevant team members and presented to the Chief Executive with relevant elements being included in the management level Risk Register.

The risks associated with 'normal business' continued to be reported and assessed routinely at Trustee meetings throughout the year. The trustees have satisfied themselves that systems or procedures are established in order to manage those risks effectively.

At the end of the reporting period the risks include:

- Insufficient Funds for Personnel
- Insufficient Funds for Venues/ Resources
- Safeguarding Incident
- Health and Safety Incident
- Transport Incident
- Data Breach
- Unplanned Staff Absences
- Failure to Appoint Key Personnel
- Environmental Factors "Acts of God" (E.g. Storm damage, Freezing Pipes, Flooding, etc)
- Failure to Comply with Current Legislation

11. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Name and Charity Number:

The Life Project (Bath)
Registered Charity Number: 1142459
Company Number: 07573284

Registered Office:

Old Acorn Barn
Englishcombe, Bath
BA2 9DU

Trustees:

Alison Tucker (Chair)(Retired 30/03/2023)	Duncan Nash
Ben Stokes	Paul Bright (Appointed 11/01/2023)
Clive Brooks	Ruth Taylor (Retired October 2022)
David Twine	Tony Russell (Treasurer)

Independent Examiner:

Colin Goater
102 Freeview Road
Bath
BA2 1DZ

Banks:

The Co-operative Bank Plc
PO Box 250
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

Triodos Bank UK Ltd
Deanery Road
Bristol
BS1 5AS

12. TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The charity trustees (who are also the directors of The Life Project (Bath) for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of 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 the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and 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;
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to 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 the group and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Statement as to disclosure to the Independent Examiner

In so far as the trustees are aware at the time of approving our trustees' annual report:

- there is no relevant audit information, being information needed by the Independent Examiner in connection with preparing their report, of which the charitable company's Independent Examiner is unaware; and
- the trustees, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the charity's Independent Examiner that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that they are obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Independent Examiner is aware of that information.

Approved by the Trustee Board on 13th September 2023

and signed on its behalf by: _____ **Ben Stokes** (Chair)

13. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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

Name: Colin Goater
Colin Goater

Date: 7 July '23

Address: **102 Freeview Road
Bath
BA2 1DZ**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds
		Funds	Funds	2023	2022
INCOME	Note	£	£	£	£
Donations		20,694	0	20,694	18,854
Gift aid on donations		1,472	0	1,472	1,539
Grants receivable		10,000	10,000	20,000	15,000
Contributions towards activities		40,701	472	41,173	39,983
Fundraising income		8,688	0	8,688	15,453
Interest on bank		322	0	322	48
TOTAL INCOME		81,877	10,472	92,349	90,878
EXPENDITURE					
Fundraising costs		1,157	0	1,157	437
Charitable Activities					
Staff costs		64,165	17,474	81,640	77,222
Staff expenses		2,509	240	2,749	1,258
Day Services running costs		10,213	25	10,238	8,140
Family Support running costs		0	3,750	3,750	5,471
Allotment		11	28	39	111
Springs / Mini Springs Costs		0	314	314	317
Administration		3,250	0	3,250	5,549
Insurance		772	0	772	645
Professional fees		384	0	384	986
Accountancy costs		250	0	250	250
		81,553	21,832	103,385	99,949
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		82,710	21,832	104,542	100,386
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	3	(833)	(11,360)	(12,193)	(9,508)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April		56,522	16,264	72,787	82,295
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March		55,689	4,905	60,594	72,787

All of the charity's operations are classed as continuing.
The notes on pages 38 to 44 form part of these accounts.
See Note 2 for fund accounting comparative figures.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Current Assets			
Debtors – Gift Aid		1,472	1,539
Prepayments		1,152	1,219
Accrued income		186	2,866
Cash at bank		62,060	71,583
		64,869	77,207
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year			
Accruals and deferred income	5	4,276	4,420
Net Current Assets		60,594	72,787
Funds of the Charity			
Restricted	6	4,905	16,264
Unrestricted	7	55,689	56,522
Total Charity Funds		60,594	72,787

The Trustees are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the company keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006. These accounts have been delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Trustees on 13th September 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Name: Ben Stokes (Chair) Date:

COMPANY NO. 07573284

The notes on pages 38 to 44 form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Note 1: Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. Life Project (Bath) meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees have considered the immediate future of the charity for the next 12 to 18 months and consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Grants and donations are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are receivable and are allocated to the appropriate fund.

Investment income is included when receivable.

Expenditure recognition and irrecoverable VAT

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis in the year in which the expenditure is incurred.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. As the charity has only one activity, all costs are allocated against the charitable activity. They include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the charity are:

- Unrestricted general funds – these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.
- Restricted funds – these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 (continued)

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Note 2: Prior Year Comparatives

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£
INCOME			
Donations	18,654	200	18,854
Gift aid on donations	1,539	0	1,539
Grants receivable	10,000	5000	15,000
Contributions towards activities	39,402	580.88	39,983
Fundraising income	15,453	0	15,453
Interest on bank	48	0	48
TOTAL INCOME	85,097	5,781	90,878
EXPENDITURE			
Fundraising costs	437	0	437
Charitable Activities			
Staff costs	44,340	32881.57	77,222
Staff expenses	1,206	52.25	1,258
Day Services running costs	8,085	55	8,140
Family Support running costs	0	5471.47	5,471
Allotment	0	110.81	111
Springs / Mini Springs Costs	0	317.21	317
Administration	3,569	1,980	5,549
Insurance	645	0	645
Professional fees	986	0	986
Accountancy costs	250	0	250
	59,080	40,868	99,949
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	59,517	40,868	100,386
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	25,580	(35,087)	(9,508)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 (continued)**

Note 3: Net Income/(Expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:	2023	2022
	£	£
Independent examiner's remuneration		250 250

Note 4: Staff Costs and Related Party Transactions

	2023 Total	2022 Total
Gross wages and salaries	78,318	73,862
Pension contributions	3,321	3,360
	<u>81,640</u>	<u>77,222</u>

Note

None of the Trustees receive fees or reimbursed expenses in respect of their trusteeship.

The value of waived expenses were not considered significant. There are no other related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts.

The aggregate value of donations received from Trustees and related parties was £1,050.

(2022 - £1,013).

The Trustees considers its key management personnel is the Chief Executive who received total employment benefits of £36,498. No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000.

	2023 Number	2022 Number
The average number of persons employed as full-time or full-time equivalents by the charity during the year is detailed below.		
Management	1.0	1.2
Carers / other	1.6	1.7
	<u>2.6</u>	<u>2.9</u>

The average headcount during the year was 7.5 (2022 – 8).

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 (continued)**

Note 5: Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
HMRC liabilities	1,896	1,690
Other accruals	2,380	1,883
Deferred income	0	847
	<u>4,276</u>	<u>4,420</u>

Note 6: Restricted Funds

	Springs	Barn activities & allotment	Family support	Core Costs	Totals
b/f 1 April 2022	1,387	54	14,823	0	16,264
Income	200	0	5,272	5,000	10,472
Expenditure	314	54	16,464	5,000	21,832
c/f 31 Mar 2023	<u>1,273</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,630</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,904</u>

Purpose of Funds:

Springs - Springs caters for adults with learning disabilities which meets twice a month in the evening, supported by volunteers.

Barn Activities and Allotment – Grant to allow additional activities to be provided for users of the Barn, such as Pilates and Wheels for All sessions, and to improve and develop the allotment.

Family Support – Further funding to continue Family Support, previously the Parent / Carer group.

Core Costs – Grants received specifically to cover core costs.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 (continued)**

Note 7: Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
General Fund	56,522	81,877	82,710	55,689
Total	56,522	81,877	82,710	55,689

Note 8: Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Current assets	2,809	0	2,809
Cash at bank	57,155	4,905	62,060
Current liabilities	4,276	0	4,276
TOTAL	55,689	4,905	60,594

Note 9: Bank Balances 31 March 2023

	£
Petty Cash	41
Current Account	26,427
Deposit Account	10,122
Treasurer's Account	25,470
TOTAL	62,060

14. Appendices

14.1. Appendix 1: Our Vision, Mission, and Objectives

Our Vision

An inclusive world in which people with learning disabilities know they belong.

Our Mission

To create and model supportive community for people with learning disabilities, their families, and carers.

Our Objectives

- To provide purposeful activities which value the holistic needs and well-being of each individual and the community.
- To create an environment that promotes social development and nurtures healthy relationships.
- To offer platforms for people to express their uniqueness to the world around them and opportunities for those who want, to develop their faith.

14.2. Appendix 2: Our Ethos and Values

Our Ethos

The values of The Life Project (Bath) are at the heart of who we are and what we do – they are guided by a Christian ethos. These values have strong roots in the Christian teaching and practice, whilst also being accessible and meaningful for all – regardless of background. We believe that every person is unique – fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:4) – and is a valuable gift to the world and our community.

The work of the Life Project, its staff, volunteers and service users, are supported by prayer.

Our Values

The Life Project (Bath) has four key values – **Creative, Inclusive, Enabling, Community** – which are detailed below:

- **Creative:**

We refer to those who come along to our sessions at the Old Acorn Barn as 'Makers' to emphasise their role to come and be meaningfully, purposefully, and creatively engaged.

For Christians this name also has the added significance that we remember the first revelation of God in the Bible was as a Creator, a Maker.

- **Inclusive:**

We recognise the intrinsic value of each individual and welcome into our Life Project community adults with learning disabilities as well as family, friends and carers from all backgrounds, all faiths and none.

Christians believe that all of humankind are made in the image of God.

- **Enabling:**

For us inclusion means enabling all people to have choices, to participate, and to undertake tasks whether these are considered ordinary or extraordinary.

Christians understand that God does not dictate our actions but offers us the choice to participate in the kingdom of God.

- **Community:**

We believe we share the responsibility to support one another through community. We understand our true selves and reach our full potential when we share life with others – respecting and celebrating differences through healthy relationships.

Christians believe in one God in three divine persons (Father, Son and Spirit), a living example of community. Although we are each unique individuals, humans are created for living together in community – one body with many parts.

14.3. Appendix 3: Our Faith in Practice

The Christian ethos and foundations of the Life Project (Bath) are important to us and yet we also understand that having a faith-based ethos can mean different things to different people. We are always open to answering people's questions and hope that this short page of information demonstrates our respect and welcome to people of all faiths and none.

Staff & Volunteers

Our governing documents require certain positions to be held by people with a Christian faith (agreeing with the Apostles Creed¹). These roles include:

- Trustees
- CEO
- Project Coordinators
- Staff and Volunteers working with our Springs Group

Other staff and volunteers are asked to respect our Christian ethos but do not have to share our faith.

Day Services and Family Support

Our Day Services and Family Support are open to all, whatever your background, and we will not proselytise to you – that is we will not attempt to make anyone believe in Christianity. We are non-discriminatory and uphold the protective characteristics of Equality Act (2010).

We will celebrate Christian festivals (namely Easter & Christmas) and we may use examples from the Bible to illustrate or explain a value or tell a story but not to promote Christianity.

Some service users may choose to share their own faith and religious experiences.

Only if our service users give prior consent and ask for personal prayer will staff who have a Christian faith provide this.

Discipleship (Springs)

Springs is an overtly Christian group for adults with learning disabilities and includes Christian worship, Bible teaching and prayer.

The group is open to all but has distinctly Christian content and is designed to encourage and support adults with learning disabilities in their Christian faith and relationship with the God of the Bible. Springs is also open to those wanting to learn more about the Christian faith.

All staff and volunteers involved with the delivery of Springs are committed Christians and members of local churches.

14.4. Appendix 4: Statement on Provision of Transport

The Life Project (Bath) is a creative, inclusive, enabling community and as such has always sought to make our services as accessible as possible.

Growing from a group of like-minded families who supported one another voluntarily into a charity for which fees are paid for services rendered has meant the need to ensure policies and practices are robust and meet the standards required by legislation and our own ethos and values.

The provision of transport has enabled service users to access and engage with the Life Project. As a small community organisation it was possible for members of staff and volunteers to provide this transport. However, it has become unsustainable to continue to offer transport to all who may benefit from it.

In consultation with staff, volunteers and service users the trustees have agreed the following:

- All those who provide transport for service users and/or colleagues to/from sessions do so voluntarily – there is no obligation or contractual arrangement for anyone provide transport.

- All those providing transport must abide by the relevant policies of the Life Project (Bath) including “Transportation of Service Users & Colleagues by Staff & Volunteers in Vehicles Policy” – this includes ensuring adequate insurance, driving license and vehicle as well as risk assessments.
- Any arrangements for the provision of transport must be agreed between the driver, service user (and their representative/s), and the service coordinator.

Furthermore, for journey’s which involve payment for services (beyond basic expenses) the following has been agreed as a means of phasing out the provision of paid transport:

- Existing agreements for the provision of transport will be upheld for duration the service user attends sessions or as long as staff are available and willing to provide transport.
- No transport agreements will be entered into for new service users or new sessions.
- If a service user leaves, this does not open a new space for another service user to fill, it will be an end of the provision.

ⁱ **Apostles Creed**

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.*

THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

England & Wales - Charity number 1142459

Accounts

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statement for 2021/2022



**The Life Project (Bath)
Registered Charity: 1142459
Company number: 07573284**

Annual Report and Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

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Trustees' Report

The trustees present their report for the year to 31 March 2021. Due to the trustees' status as directors under the Companies Act 2006 this report constitutes a directors' report as required by section 415 of the Companies Act 2006.

1. STATEMENT FROM CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

The start of our 2021-22 year saw the Life project stable but facing a further year of change. As we emerged from a covid lockdown we ploughed much of our focus into supporting our Service Users and continuing to keep them safe. We Sadly said goodbye to Sue Snell as our Director of Operations as she retired in April and we welcomed Rich Blake Lobb as our first CEO for the Life Project in June. The Trustees held an Away Day with Rich in July where we reviewed our objectives and set our priorities for the year. Responding to the changing landscape with Covid being a key challenge to our services and we were extremely blessed to have Ruth Taylor guiding us through, diligently providing our staff with clear and practical advice.

In June our dear Sarah Couchman gave us advance notice that she would be moving on. Being so central to the Life Project the challenge for the trustees was to focus on how we should replace Sarah and all the aspects of role Sarah has been delivering. Of course this was also an opportunity for us all to get more involved, learn how are services were working and connect more with staff. We have built some increased cross team networks with staff meetings initially with myself, as chair, then these were picked up with Rich and we have developed team reports which are fed into the trustee meetings. There have also been visits to all our projects by trustees and Rich.

With financial challenges continuing throughout the year and staff changes on the horizon, the trustees took the decision to invest in our services with a view to expanding for sustainability. We developed a job description for a Day Services Co-ordinator which would manage the services held at the Old Acorn Barn and allotment but would also have additional time for developing and growing the service. At the beginning of 2022 we went through a rigorous recruitment process and have again been blessed to find the right person to take on the new role of Day Services Co-ordinator.

Looking forward we know that the next few years are going to be tough. The economic situation is difficult and charities everywhere are feeling the squeeze. We need to change and respond to the environment and challenges around us and that can be scary. However the Life Project is rooted in faith, we believe we are called to care for each other and to recognise and celebrate the gifts and talents of all our family and while this remains core to what we do then I believe God will honour us with sustaining and growing our Life Project Family.



Alison Tucker (Chair of Trustees)

2. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The overall objective of the charity is to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people with learning difficulties or other mental or physical disabilities in Bath.

The Life Project is committed to:

- Providing a home(s) for life, rooted in Christian principles and ethos, with opportunities for spiritual growth, leisure, learning, training, education and employment for people with disabilities, primarily learning disabilities, reflecting their individual needs; to fulfil their potential in community together, living lives that have purpose, security and dignity.
- Enabling each of these vulnerable people to live a vibrant and abundant life, expressing their God-given gifts/talents and positively impacting the community around them. Also offering the church and wider community an insight into the significance and power of inclusive and intentional Christian community.
- Providing an environment where these individuals can grow and mature in their relationship with God and respond to His 'call' on their lives.

The trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities we should undertake and confirm that all our activities are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

The three key objectives for the year 2021-2022 were carried over from the previous year (2020-2021)

- To become a sustainable organisation
- To expand our reach and impact
- To nurture and grow the Life Project 'community' of families, individuals and housemate groups

and our performance against these are reported in detail in Section 2 of this report.

Most Life Project staff, volunteers and families are members of Christian churches and congregations around Bath and NE Somerset and are committed to the Christian ethos of the organisation. They strive to reflect these Christian values in the way they contribute their efforts to the Life Project work and activities.



3. SUMMARY OF KEY EVENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

As the Covid pandemic continued to have a global impact, during the year significant adjustments had to be made to our mode of delivery and expectations needed to be managed. However, in summary the following activities were successfully achieved:

- Returning to regular in-person sessions at the Old Acorn Barn three times per week from late April 2021 – initially with reduced numbers and an altered programme to maintain social distancing and with covid secure protocols closely monitored – providing creative and purposeful activities;
- From September 2021 returning to the full offer at the Old Acorn Barn and Allotment with covid secure protocols in place. From December 2021 to February 2022 some sessions were relocated to a variety of church halls to provide improved space for social distancing during the colder weather;
- A series of summer activities and outings, including cycling and a visit to the Bird of Prey Centre, during the closure of the Barn in August;
- A pilot walking group for adults with learning disabilities over 6 weeks in July & August 2021;
- A pilot group for adults with learning disabilities grooming ponies in the autumn of 2021, in conjunction with the stables of Bath Riding for the Disabled;
- Maintaining an Allotment at Monksdale Road – growing produce for eating and using in the creation of products;
- A weekly Parent Carer Drop In with play area for pre-school children and Pilates available for parent carers. A socially distanced format and café style arrangements were operated;
- Two Parent Carer retreat days for parents of children/adults with learning disabilities and other additional needs;
- Peer support for parent-carer group members through WhatsApp;
- Bi-monthly fellowship group meetings for adults with learning disabilities in the Springs group. April 2021 to August 2021 the group gathered virtually using Zoom and then as covid protocols allowed the group began to alternate between in-person and Zoom meetings from September 2021 to March 2022;
- Introduced a fundraising event during the summer of 2021 encouraging supporters to raise at least £100 by walking, running, cycling or swimming a distance of their choosing.



- Three social / fund-raising events for members and supporters of the Life Project – a cream tea, curry night and online quiz night;
- Christmas carols at the Old Acorn Barn in partnership with St Peter's Church, Englishcombe and a virtual carol service on Zoom for Makers and Members of the Life Project.
- A home owned by the HAS Trust opened to its first residents in Autumn 2021. The Life Project played an significant role in bringing this project to fruition and the tenants are all members of the Life Project.
- Unfortunately, meetings of the Mini-Springs group and K-Team were not maintained during the covid pandemic and capacity to re-establish these groups has not been possible to date.

4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Overview

Following the retirement of the Operations Director at the end of April 2021 the Life Project appointed its first Chief Executive, Rich Blake-Lobb who took up their post from 1st June 2021. Covid restrictions eased during the year and with suitable protocols in place the regular services and activities were gradually able to return to taking place in-person. The trustees reviewed the strategic objectives of the previous year and because of the impact of the covid pandemic agreed that these remained unchanged for the new reporting year, 2021-2022.



The return to in-person sessions was a long and on-going process as adaptations were required throughout the year. With the fresh eyes of a new CEO, a newly appointed Chair of Trustees (February 2021), and the recovery from a global pandemic the trustees introduced a bi-monthly Strategy Meeting on alternate months to the Operations/Business Meeting. Furthermore, from January 2022 weekly meetings to address pressing operational needs were introduced (including finance, risk, health and safety, and safeguarding).

4.1. Achievement Against Objectives

Our stated strategic framework for the financial year from April 2021 to March 2022 continued the same themes of the previous year and concentrated on three key strands:

- To become a sustainable organisation
- To expand our reach and impact
- To nurture and grow the Life Project 'community' of families, individuals and housemate groups

Strategic Theme 1 - To become a sustainable organisation

a) To establish a balanced portfolio of fundraising activities in order to diversify our income streams (e.g. to include community fundraising, personal giving, grant funding).

The covid pandemic continued to have an impact on fundraising activities, with the Bath Half Marathon posted twice and therefore not taking place during this reporting period.

We introduced a summer challenge to raise £100 through walking, running, swimming or cycling a distance of each individuals choosing. We were encouraged by the response, especially by 96-year-old Rosemary who emulated Captain Tom by walking around her parking area. Her achievements raised in the region of £1500.

Grant-funding remains challenging with one key grant that has supported the Parent Group no longer available for this purpose. However, new grant funders have been identified and we have been successful in a number of bids.



b) To maximise the use of the Barn by increasing activity days to at least three days per week and thereby its contribution towards central costs

During first half of the reporting period the Barn was able to re-open for in-person sessions but with only half numbers due to maintaining covid protocols for everyone's safety. From September 2021 we were open to full capacity but required the use of alternative venues during the coldest months which offered larger indoor space for social distancing.

The third day at the Barn has continued to attract new Makers and is established as a regular day, requiring a full complement of staff team due to the numbers attending. Additional hours were claimed, and contracts have been agreed for these additional hours to be regularised and from April 2022.

c) To increase the contribution made via trading, e.g. products or commissioned services.



Although sessions have been taking place in person throughout this reporting period the activities have been designed to encourage social distancing. Therefore it has not been possible to produce products for sale as these are closely guided activities. It is hoped that the production of saleable products will return later in 2022.

The trustees continue to remain interested in commissioning opportunities and have assigned a trustee to work with the

CEO to research opportunities and potential in this line of business. This process has highlighted areas that require attention to meet the standards necessary to become a successfully commissioned service and work has begun to address these.

d) *To expand the volunteer base to support and sustain existing and future services.*

Volunteers play an important role in the delivery of the Life Project services. Our Springs group is entirely volunteer led and has been for 20 years. April 2022 will see us celebrating the 20th anniversary of this group and we are excited for how it continues to thrive. Our Parent Carer Drop In is supported with volunteers who assist in the kitchen preparing and serving drinks and refreshments. The Barn and the Allotment are served by volunteers who support in all areas of these projects. We have said goodbye to a few volunteers during this reporting period – some unable to return following the covid pandemic, others whose circumstances have changed. We have also welcomed new faces and are grateful to everyone for the time, skills and commitment they offer.

We do not currently have a volunteer who can drive a minibus for us but are grateful to all those who are able to provide transport using their own vehicles.

Strategic Theme 2 – To expand our reach and impact

a) *To sustain and further develop the Outreach Worker role for the development of new initiatives and activities catering for the currently unmet needs of our learning disabled (LD) community.*

Our Development and Outreach Worker has continued to grow the third day at the Barn with new Makers joining through the year.

Pilot projects were run in the summer – including a walking group and a pony grooming group. These were successful in attracting one or two new people to the Life Project and drawing in others who participate occasionally. It is hoped that the learning from these groups can be used to support new sessions and that at least one of these activities will take place again in the summer 2022

Development and outreach will become part of the extended role of the Day Services Coordinator when they begin in May 2022, and we are looking at roles that are needed to support this transition and new positions.



b) *To develop our profile with the churches in Bath, demonstrating that the Life Project offers credible Christian outreach and is the organisation that can assist them to support those within their congregations with learning disabilities.*

Our CEO made it a priority when he first began to get to know local church leaders. This has been beneficial as we looked for alternative venues for the Day Services activities in the winter. It also highlighted the work required to build relationships and maintain these, we therefore hope to attract funding for a Discipleship Coordinator part of whose role will be to become a primary link between the Life Project and local churches.

Our CEO has been invited to speak/ preach at three local churches and has been well received - we would like to see more opportunities for this.

We are listed within several local church prayer diaries and grateful for all those who pray for the Life Project.

c) *To increase our presence and profile across our local area through social media and networking.*

Our website, monthly newsletters and social media posts have all been maintained with the objective of letting everyone know, and be encouraged by, news and pictures of our activities, users and the issues facing those who have learning disabilities and those who care for them.

Through the Bath Third Sector Group (3SG) we have benefitted from local networks with similar organisations and other small charities, gaining insights about potential opportunities, training, and funding providers.

Several links with schools have been developing, with invitations to participate in school assemblies and student committee meetings. This has led to several students raising money for the Life Project and others joining us for work experience.

We have renewed our links with *Count Everyone In*, a Christian organisation supporting churches to become inclusive and accessible to people with learning disabilities. There is a valuable regional network of groups similar to Springs which encourage and pray for one another.

Our links with the local community in Englishcombe village have flourished this year and was most noticeable when St Peters Church and the Life Project joined together to hold open air carols at the Barn when it was deemed unsafe to do so in the church because of social distancing requirements of the covid pandemic. We hope this will become a part of our annual calendar or events.



d) To actively develop our relationships with potential partners e.g. Liveability, B&NES/Virgin Care, Golden Lane and other smaller local organisations.

Working towards the HAS Trust home involved meetings with Liveability and Golden Lane Housing. The home opened in the autumn of 2021 and our links with the organisations involved remain in place but mostly dormant until such a time as the Life Project chooses to engage with providing homes.

The trustees are keen to explore the potential for commissioned services and as such the CEO has been reviewing our services and identifying potential links alongside trustees.

The Life Project was invited to partner with another local charity, however upon review of the proposal it was not deemed financially prudent for the Life Project and the invitation was rejected. However, the Life Project remains open to partnership working when there is a viable business case and it would be in the benefit of our service users.

Strategic Theme 3 - To nurture and grow the Life Project 'community' of families, individuals and housemate groups.

a) To promote the sense of belonging to a Life Project community amongst all those associated with our work and mission.

Our sense of "family" through the Life Project members, service users, volunteers and supporters was boosted during the year with the return of a number of social activities returning, with covid safety measures in place. The highlights included a socially distanced cream tea at the Old Acorn Barn, a curry night at Manvers Street Baptist Church, a virtual carol service, and a Zoom quiz night. As covid restrictions continue to ease we are looking forward to further social events and occasions.

Unfortunately some of our plans had to be altered due to the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. This included plans for an anniversary service at Bath Abbey and a Karaoke evening.



To improve our sense of community and involvement of service users and members we are exploring the potential for developing a Service User Committee that will improve the links between service users and the board of trustees. We have also conducted a review of official Life Project members and are looking into enhancing how the members can engage with the board in consultations and decision making.

b) To continue working with the HAS Trust to establish our first Life Project home in Bath.

The Life Project continued to act as support and facilitator to this project through to the opening of the HAS Trust home in Autumn 2021. The HAS trust commissioned a builder and works were completed in September 2021. Golden Lane Housing are the managing agent for the home and Liveability have been selected as the care provider.

The Life Project has played an influential role in this project, but we recognise that this is not a Life Project house. Many lessons have been learned and it is a credit to all involved that three Life Project service users were able to move in, choosing to live with one another as a friendship group.

c) To develop proposals for purchasing our own house(s).

Homes remain important to the Life Project however it was agreed that following the opening of the HAS Trust House and a need to focus on covid recovery of existing services any further action regarding Homes should be placed on hold until a review 2023.

d) To develop a Chaplaincy service for the households we support and to provide prayerful support for the whole organisation including staff, volunteers, groups and project teams.

Our volunteer chaplain retired in the summer of 2021, and we have not been able to offer this service since then.

4.2. Draft Development Proposal 2022-2023

Our new CEO presented a draft *Development Proposal 2022-2023* and in November 2021 the following proposals were agreed and accepted by the trustees:

- Focus on Life Project core business and not to be distracted by other needs or opportunities until an agreed review date or realistic prospect arises.

Core business comprises:

- **Day Services** (currently taking place at the Old Acorn Barn and Monksdale Road Allotments)
- **Family Support** (Currently Parent Carer Drop-In and socials)
- **Discipleship** (Currently Springs)

(Homes remain important to the Life Project however it was agreed that following the opening of the HAS Trust House and a need to focus on covid recovery of existing services any further action regarding Homes should be placed on hold until a review 2023.)

- Review of Staff Structure and Job Descriptions (e.g. Barn Coordinator to become Day Service Developer / Coordinator) and all new contracts to move to 52 weeks rather than term time only.

- Seek funding for a Discipleship Coordinator to provide support to the Springs group, help establish new groups and to develop relationships and support for local churches.
- Parent Carers Support to incorporate Families.
- Research needs of Families / Carers and partnership opportunities.
- Develop a committee giving service users (Makers & Families) a voice in Life Project governance.

5. DETAILED PROJECT ACTIVITY

The story of the Life Project 2021-2022 with details provided by Project Coordinators

5.1. The Old Acorn Barn & Allotment

Despite the challenges and complexities of living and working during this reporting period, it is extraordinary to look back and see that in this time we have also experienced some of our most wonderful highlights and sweetest successes. After Easter 2021, it was good to return to the Barn after a period of online Zoom sessions and weekly walks, albeit half the group coming for half a day initially. The purchase of a good-sized, robust gazebo enabled us to spend more time outside the small rooms of the Barn and soon we were able to invite the whole group to stay for full days. We had an appropriate theme of 'Building and Re-building' and besides learning how to put the gazebo up quickly(!) we were able to visit a number of local interesting constructions.

It was good to be able to offer special summer holiday sessions including a Wheels For All cycling event, a day by the river and time at the farm in Newton St Loe.

In the autumn we were back at the Barn enjoying a theme of 'Plot to Plate' ... as we moved through the seasons of harvesting, remembering and thanksgiving we thought about how we mark these in what we grow, cook and eat. Each day we enjoyed cooking with something we had picked at the allotment and Jieun led an ambitious drama telling the story of the pilgrim fathers and helped the Makers create charming Plot-to-Plate art books.

For some years we have wondered about creating a special Christmas display in the large glass windows at the front of the Barn. Jieun came up with a wonderful design that everyone helped to make little did we know that when covid numbers began to rise again before Christmas it would become the backdrop for the village carol service. It was so special to be singing with a lovely mix of villagers and Life Project members under a beautiful bright full moon. A golden moment!

Other highlights in the run up to Christmas included taking part in the biannual Christmas Tree festival at St Johns in Keynsham and being guided through a fantastic workshop by Stephen Magrath under the huge moon in the Abbey.



We were beginning to struggle to accommodate our larger Wednesday and Thursday groups in the barn as covid numbers were high at the start of 2022. It was chilly with doors open for ventilation and the small rooms made it hard to socially distance. So after exploring various options where we were warmly welcome (including St Peters Englishcombe, Rose Cottage, St Michael's Twerton, Manvers Street Baptist Church, Southside Centre and Twerton village hall), we settled for the spring term at the church hall of St Philip and St James in Odd Down. The large space meant we could work with the whole group, keep warm and cope with staff absence. We had a very purposeful theme of being 'Ready For Work'. This was reflected in our discussions, art and craft (personalised aprons and pencil cases), music (dancing a work themed line dance!) and whole group drama. The group responded very well to the large space and became very expressive in our drama and dance sessions.

There were also challenges including constantly transporting all equipment in staff cars and Sue and Fiona did an amazing job adjusting to new kitchens and coping with needing to take time off for illness and accidents.



As well as enjoying a wonderful staff team, we are blessed by some extraordinary volunteers who very generously, compassionately and with great humour support our work. We were sorry to lose two volunteers, Claire and Joy, who needed to move on to respond to family/work commitments but thrilled to receive two new volunteers, Therese and Pip, who have quickly fitted into the team.

We were also delighted to welcome two new Makers to the barn this year, bringing the total to 14 who come across the three days.

It feels like an achievement that we have managed to hold sessions every week this year and kept everyone safe ... until just before Easter when many of our group members caught covid (thankfully, mildly). It is special to have a group where each Maker has the confidence to speak up and share something of themselves and enthusiastically join in with all activities that are offered. Each week a collage of photos is sent home to each Maker showing them happily and purposefully employed. We have many joyful, life-giving stories to tell in a generally dark and difficult time.

Our times at the allotment are so happy, productive and peaceful and like the plants we grow, our makers seem to thrive in the warm, nurturing atmosphere of the Old Acorn Barn. It is wonderful when we are able to enrich the wider community through our participation in village life (such as making Mothering Sunday posies) and welcoming friends and neighbours to our cream tea events. This year we have also welcomed sixth-formers for work experience placements. Their reflections on the day were very moving and they will take back to their homes in China a story that people with learning disabilities are not to be pitied but with support can live a fulfilling and joyful life and in return have a positive impact on society.

May all continue to thrive and grow as I hand over my coordinating responsibilities to Esmé Zarate in the weeks to come.

5.2. Barn Development and Outreach



In spite of some of the continued challenges that the pandemic has presented, with the need for social distancing and smaller group sizes remaining in place for most of the year due to the vulnerability of many of our Makers, I am pleased to report continued progress in building the group on a Tuesday towards full capacity, with the number of Makers increasing and with more potential makers expressing an interest to join either a Tuesday or another day in the year ahead. We now only have 3 more places to fill, two of which may soon be taken.

We had originally expected to grow the Tuesday group even more quickly this year, but there were some (unavoidable) setbacks. Two young adults (friends of one of our current makers), who had deferred joining the Barn for a year to re-do their final years at college, opted in the end for another provision offering 5 days per week. And another young man

who visited the Barn and wants to sign up, hasn't yet been granted funding for the PA that he needs to accompany him.

Sometime has also been spent exploring referrals from social workers, social prescribers or through school link workers, but a number of these have needed 2:1 support which we, like other local services that are even larger than ours, are unable to accommodate at this time.

One of the outreach limitations this year has been that due to covid-19 measures in place to protect our makers, we haven't been able to facilitate visits for social workers, parent/carers and students preparing for adulthood for most of the year. Previously we have found that when visitors see and experience what we have to offer, they are keen to sign up or signpost others our way. Furthermore, it wasn't possible to arrange other face to face visits, such as visiting people in their homes.

With hindsight though, the slower than anticipated growth has probably helped the existing makers to cope better with the transition out of the restrictions of lockdown, and to assimilate the new members more easily in a way that has not undermined the cohesion of the group. With our groups being relatively small, it always requires sensitivity and care introducing new people. So, on reflection, a more organic, slower rate of growth (especially in times where everyone is already coping with so much change) is probably more in the interest of the existing makers anyway.



Successes this year have included:

- Two new makers joining the group and the positive impact in their lives:
 - One, who had recently lost her husband and her job, was already part of the Life Project's Springs group, but felt the need to connect with others and do more. She really enjoys coming and has, among other things, been learning new cooking skills she hadn't learnt before.
 - The other had been extremely isolated since the death of his main carer. Commenting on him joining the Barn, his sister has written, saying, *'He absolutely loves coming to the Barn and says how lovely everyone is. It's lovely to see him doing such a variety of activities and enjoying himself. Coming to the Barn is really stimulating for him as I thought it would be, a focal point to his week and giving him lots to talk about with others. It's such a fantastic offer for people with LDs in Bath.'*
- Other parent/carers' comments have included:
 - *'She looks so happy! It is great to see her so engaged. Many thanks to you for all your hard work'*
 - *'It is lovely to see her participating, she really enjoys her time with you all, she has been much calmer this afternoon.'*
 - *'He came home full of smiles, which is great.'*
- One of the makers, who used to be frightened of knives, is now happily chopping veg (with support from his PA). And all the makers have improved their food prep skills.
- All the Tuesday makers have said at different times and in various ways how they love coming and how they look forward to it every week, as have our lovely volunteers!
- Recruited two brilliant new Barn volunteers who have contributed so much, and proved invaluable keeping the service operational when staff were off sick.
- Our highly valued activity leaders happily agreeing to increase their hours to increase our capacity.
- I also thank God for His faithfulness, in that we have not once had to cancel any of our planned Barn days this year, even in the face of one staff member needing to be off sick for a total of 2.5 months due to Covid and then an injury (not sustained at work!).



- The successful development of new woodwork activities, which have included making a bug house, ladybird houses, planters, a bird table, and a footstool for one of the makers to use at the Barn. Skills developed include measuring, marking, sawing, sanding and using an electric screwdriver. This has complemented the range of other excellent activities already offered (cooking, art and crafts, music, exercise and dance, and nature walks).
- Partnering with local charity *Cycling Projects (Wheels for All)* for one of our fun summer activities.
- A marked increase in the number of men wishing to join our services, redressing the previous imbalance.

Tom Riley (Outreach and Development Worker)

5.3. Pilot Activities

Summer Walking Group: four weekly evening walks in and around Bath were planned. One was cancelled due to the weather, but the three that went ahead were greatly appreciated by the 5 men who came along. One of them, new to the Life Project, hadn't met with anyone socially outside his family since the lockdowns began, and the others, who knew each other through Springs or other previous connections, had not seen each other face to face for many months, so they hugely appreciated us facilitating this.



Pony Care Group: Partnering with Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), I recruited two excellent volunteers and ran a small group learning how to care for, lead and groom miniature Shetland ponies. Through this group we were able to reach out to some who had been very isolated, providing an opportunity for them to socialise and make new friends during a time of sharing lunch together afterwards, as well as learn about



ponies. One young man hadn't done anything outside his home since the lockdowns began, and his mother thought he might not cope with the group. But he ended up loving it, cracking jokes with the volunteers and even getting out of his wheelchair for a while to walk behind the pony while long-reining. Two of the young ladies had also been very isolated, and this helped build their confidence to start seeing people again. One of them now continues to go regularly to the RDA. The onset of colder weather prevented us from continuing, but everyone said they would be interested in returning next year.

Tom Riley (Outreach and Development Worker)

Haven Café – An opportunity was identified to partner with Manvers Street Baptist Church to provide a safe haven for those with additional needs wanting to visit the Bath Christmas lights. It was hoped that we would host a welcoming café at Manvers Street and sell Christmas cards, soap, candles, scrunchies and other items made at the Barn. Whilst all involved and all those consulted felt this was a good idea it was not well attended and brought to a close earlier than initially planned.

5.4. Parent Carer Drop-In

A lot has changed over the last year - back in April we were running morning and afternoon sessions which parents had to book in to using Eventbrite as we had to adhere to limited numbers, social distancing, mask wearing checking people felt well and taking their temperature on arrival.

We had a morning session where people with children came and an afternoon session where people without children came, then we had a session with even smaller numbers for those who had been shielding. Our parent carers were prepared to put up with these measures as they were in such need of support after the lock downs - which were hard for everyone and took a particular toll on some of our parent carers.

Returning after May half term brought the re start of Pilates to everyone's relief and joy. Our wonderful Kay had done some zoom Pilates for our parent carers but nothing is as good as the real thing.

Through this time we continued to get new parent carers finding us and coming along. It was fantastic to start after the summer break without booking - back to a 10am-2pm drop in with Pilates and crèche – wonderful!

Unfortunately October brought illness and injury for me and I was signed off for 8 weeks, this however spotlighted Rachel and her true capabilities she did an amazing job. The group was very safe in her hands and to this day she has continued with some of the extra responsibilities she took on in this time.

It was very special to be able to run a retreat just before Christmas the first one since March 2019. We had a Pilates session followed by a wreath making workshop which was very popular. Feedback from the day included:



- 'Thank you all for such a lovely day! This group is so precious and today felt particularly special after such a long time without being able to have a retreat. What a wonderful treat. Thanks to all of the team who worked so so hard to make it such a special time.'
- 'It was such a special day, thank you all so much felt very spoiled and looked after such a lovely much needed break.'
- 'Very grateful for today, thank you for organising such an amazing day. It was wonderful - great company, relaxing place, lovely food. Thank you.'

With covid still prevalent we managed to get through the winter and spring with very few closures due to self-isolation of staff and volunteers. And continued to welcome new parent carers.

The end of March saw another retreat and although we were a bit stretched for volunteers it did not impact on the parent carers:

- 'Thank you for a lovely day, much needed'
- 'Thank you for a wonderful day it's beautifully managed, thank you to Fiona, Rachel, Kay and whoever was helping for making our day so relaxing and spoiling us. It's soo much appreciated. Thank you!'
- 'Second and third all that! Didn't know how much I needed today! Thanks so much everyone who made it possible. X and so great to have found the group, very grateful. You are all very lovely and welcoming.'

Fiona Day (Parent Carer Coordinator)

5.5. Springs Group

Usually 20-30 people gather for our Springs meetings. We didn't feel confident we could do this safely early in 2021 so our meetings remained on Zoom through the summer term. With careful thought the team managed to prepare engaging, fun, meaningful and encouraging sessions and consequently attendance remained good throughout.

However, it was such a delight to finally meet in person together for our summer social.... a picnic in Victoria Park. It is hard to describe how sweet it was to be together again, to see friends reunited.

From September 2021 to March 2022 we alternated meeting on Zoom and in person at the Weston Hub, where we also enjoyed a very happy Christmas party.

In the spring we used the 'Discover God's Heart' resources that have been developed by Christians in Malawi and challenged us with how we can make a difference and show God's love in the world.

Needless to say it has been a challenge for the team to be flexible and engaging as we have switched between different formats, but it is a testament to the commitment, care and spiritual maturity of the volunteers to rise to the challenge. We have a very diverse group with some members living independent, yet complex and painful lives and others have less complicated lives but need us to be very intentional to ensure that what we do is meaningful and participative for them too. The result is a group with an incredible and extraordinary atmosphere of care and faith restored and growing, amongst helpers and members alike. Members regularly comment that the group feels like a family. They value not being judged and love the opportunity to worship and pray.



At the end of this reporting period, the group was preparing to celebrate its 20th birthday(!) and handover to new coordinators.

Sarah Couchman (Springs Coordinator)

5.6. Social Programme

The aim of the Life Project socials has been to build a time when everyone involved or associated with the Life Project can come together, where friendships and trust is built and people gain a deeper knowledge of one another, thus bridging the gap between the different projects.

Due to the Covid pandemic decisions were required to prioritise the work in which we engaged and which would be practical for the Life Project to deliver. Unfortunately, as we continued to evaluate, during the year, what work in terms of activity and frequency we acknowledged that transport, in particular, is a key factor in enabling everyone to participate. The programme of social activities was therefore sadly suspended in March 2020, however we have been able to return with a small number of socials from late 2021. November 2021 saw the return of our popular Curry Night, with social distancing and other protocols in place families, friends and supporters gathered at Manvers Street Baptist Church for a delicious meal and time of fellowship. Due to uncertainties around new variants of covid we held a Quiz Night using Zoom in January 2022 that built on lessons of the previous year and was very popular. As we look towards the new reporting year plans are afoot to re-establish a regular programme of social activities including crafting, disco, picnic and barn dance.



5.7. Community Fundraising

Just as other aspects of the Life Project's work continued to be impacted by the covid pandemic, so our community fundraising has taken a significant hit.

The Bath Half Marathon was postponed for another consecutive year, an event which has previously seen us raise in the region of £10k and for which we had budgeted during this reporting year.

In response we built upon the success of the Bath-to-Bethlehem campaign from the previous year and encouraged supporters to select a distance of their choice to run, walk, swim or cycle to raise £100 during the summer of 2021.

We came close to reaching our target and are grateful to all who participated and for all the money raised enabling us to deliver our invaluable services.

We had hoped to hold a special service to celebrate 10 years since the Life Project became a registered charity. Sadly this event was not able to go ahead and financial donations that we hoped to receive through the event were not possible.

Similarly the Bath Christmas Market – which has proved successful in the past did not take place in 2021 and therefore opportunities to sell produce made by our Makers was limited.

Fundraising has been particularly challenging throughout the pandemic and as all of the restrictions ease, we face rising inflation resulting in increased costs and know our supporters have reduced disposable income. Looking forward to the next reporting period we know that the challenges are only going to become harder.

5.8. Grant Funding

The identification and sourcing of dedicated funding to support the work of the Life Project has continued to be a time-consuming task. A small committee has formed to assess potential funders and share the process of completing applications.

As we had not been running all services during the pandemic the final of three years' grant funding of the Parent Carer Drop-In received in the previous reporting period from the St John's Foundation was able to fund the group through to the end of the year. We are thankful for funding for the Parent Carers Drop-In granted by the Edward Gostling Foundation.

Funding for Barn Development and Outreach to develop activities and services post-covid was forthcoming from the Quartet Covid Recovery Fund – enabling this post to continue for a further 12 months.

We are thankful to The Roper Family Charitable Trust for providing us with unrestricted funds to support the work across of the Life Project.

We have several ongoing applications and continue to seek investment, trust and grant funding to support those projects which cannot generate their own income – namely Parent Carers and Springs as well as contribute to the core costs of the charity.

We would like to extend our gratitude to these funding bodies that have supported us this year.

6. FINANCIAL REVIEW

Over the year, the Charity received income of £90,878 with expenditure of £100,386, finishing with a deficit of £9,508.

The drop in income from the previous year was largely due to the having received significant Covid related grants in 2020/21 along with the final instalment of the Parent Carer grant from the St John's Foundation. Some of this drop in grant income was offset by increased fee income at the Barn as a result of greater uptake of places and offering a third day.

Expenditure increased as services resumed post Covid and due to the extra day at the Barn. However, some savings were made on equipment as in the previous year Covid had necessitated additional costs on PPE and IT.

At 31 March 2022, the Charity had net assets of £72,787 of which £16,264 were restricted funds and £56,522 unrestricted.

Whilst the charity finished the year with a deficit of some £10k, it should be noted that a large grant of £15k for core costs had been received at the end of the previous year, contributing to a surplus that year of £32k, but which was spent during 2021/22.

Following disruption to services the previous year due to Covid, services have recovered well with a third day being added to the Barn and by the end of the year there were sufficient makers to fill all three days. Following this steady improvement over the past year, the trustees are confident that the Charity is financially secure to deliver its programme of activities for 2022/23.

Looking ahead the level of unrestricted reserves carried forward will support preparatory work on restructuring projects to reduce the need for grant funding and to make them self-financing where possible. This may involve relocating projects to a single venue that would allow greater capacity and improved accessibility.

Investment Policy

The Life Project holds funds in an instant access Deposit Account and a 90-day notice Treasurer's Reserve Account so as to provide some interest. These savings have been placed with Triodos Bank, which has a strong ethical investment policy.

Reserves Policy

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in the light of the main risks to the organisation. As a result of this they aim to hold reserves equal to at least three months' unrestricted running costs. This is to ensure the continued running of the charity if unrestricted funding decreases, until new sources of funding can be found. At the year end unrestricted reserves were £56,522, providing adequate reserves whilst also supporting work on restructuring the projects.

7. FUTURE PLANS

The covid pandemic with its lock downs, limitations, and ensuing easing of restrictions has been a challenging time for all and could not have been predicted. The Life Project staff have been adaptable and professional, going above and beyond in a season of unpredictability and putting the needs of our service users first.

This season has also highlighted areas of vulnerability, with many small charities and businesses struggling to survive the financial ramifications of the pandemic and the subsequent increased costs of living and rising inflation. The Life Project is not immune to these fragilities and the trustees recognise their responsibilities to good governance will require addressing challenges and making difficult decisions.

The areas identified as core-business for include:

- Day Services
- Family Support
- Discipleship

We have appointed the new role of Day Services Coordinator to build on and expand the work of our outgoing Barn Coordinator. We are looking to maximise the use of the Old Acorn Barn (Englishcombe) and the Allotment (Monksdale Road, Bath).

Funding is being sought to maintain and develop our existing support for Parent Carers, to diversify (for example, to better meet the needs of male carers), and to expand (to open a second drop-in).

It is hoped that local churches and other Christian funders will get behind our vision to appoint a Discipleship Coordinator to support those who are running Springs and to expand our reach with churches – supporting them to become increasingly accessible to adults with learning disabilities.

We would like to improve the involvement of Service Users and Members through the development of meetings, committees, or forums as appropriate for our client group.

The initial contract for our CEO has been extended from an end of May 2022 to 31st December 2022 and is funding dependant, as are other positions related to grant funded projects.

The trustees have identified areas that potentially hinder opportunities for growth and will need to be addressed including transportation, accessibility, venue capacity, staff hours, ratios, outdated recording and reporting practices, and funding. As such a strategic review is scheduled for an Away Day in the first quarter of the next reporting period when the strategic objectives will be reviewed and agreed. Until then we continue with the following themes:

- To become a sustainable organisation
- To expand our reach and impact
- To nurture and grow the Life Project 'community' of families and individuals.

8. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

8.1. Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 22 March 2011. The company was registered as a charity on 17 June 2011.

The Life Project (Bath) was initiated by over a dozen Christian families, mainly from the Bath area but also including Keynsham, most of whom had children, teenagers or adults with a range of learning disabilities. The families involved represented a variety of different denominations, but all shared a vision and passion for enabling their children to play a full role in the life of the church and in the community. The Life Project (Bath) aims for the highest standards of care and professionalism but is not seeking to create a home(s) or meaningful occupation(s) that isolate or removes those with learning disabilities from the wider world.

8.2. Governance Roles

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law.

Role descriptions for the Chair of Board and for individual trustees were updated in 2017 and a Code of Conduct for Trustees and other guidance and induction documentation has been collated for use by new trustees.

8.3. Recruitment and Appointment of the Trustees

The trustees regularly review the skills and experience base of its board and new trustees are sought to reflect the needs of the organisation. A three-year term of office, with potential to renew, has been established. Based on a skills audit of trustees and identified skills gaps, potential trustees are approached. In order to be confirmed as a trustee DBS clearance is sought, a 'fit and proper persons' check carried out and candidates must sign up to all elements of the Confirmation of Appointment declaration.

Having reviewed roles we are now looking to separate the role of Treasurer and Bookkeeper. There has been no change to the trustees in this reporting year, but we are looking to recruit to these two roles in the year ahead.

8.4. Trustee Induction and Training

Induction is seen as a key element in retaining and supporting trustees. New trustees are given clear advice and support in relation to their obligations. A *Trustee Induction Checklist* is in use and all relevant documentation is made available, including details of resourcing, the current financial position as set out in the latest set of accounts and information about future plans and the strategic development of the charity. Other governance specific training available for trustees in the charity sector is notified to trustees.

We are members of the local third sector network [3SG](#) and access the training, support and guidance offered to trustees.

8.5. Day to Day Management

The charity was run to the end April of 2021 by its Operations Director, Sue Snell. In preparation for her retirement Rich Blake-Lobb was recruited and became the Chief Executive of the charity from June 2021. During 2021-22 seven other part-time staff were employed.

The office base 13 Church Street, Weston, Bath, BA1 4BU was not providing value for money and we closed the office on 31st March 2022 with the office staff becoming home-based.

9. SAFEGUARDING

The Life Project has continued to subscribe to *Thirtyone:eight* - an independent Christian safeguarding charity which helps individuals and organisations protect vulnerable people from abuse.

The Life Project use them as the umbrella organisation for the processing of Disclosure and Barring Service applications for volunteers and staff, support and guidance, and for the training of staff and volunteers.

There were no serious safeguarding incidents during the reporting year, but we have consulted with *Thirtyone:eight* experts for advice where we felt it necessary.

10. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Life Project maintains a *Risk Register* that captures the main events that might have a significant adverse impact on the Life Project's service delivery, service users or financial/reputational integrity.

Following a review of the *Risk Register* trustees agree to include named responsibility/oversight for each identified risk event.

The register has been amended to describe the event, causes/ factors that will contribute to the event, the potential consequences of an event, and the mitigations that should be in place (with a implementation date for any newly recognised mitigations).

Each Life Project session has its own Risk Assessment and these reviewed by the Project Coordinators with relevant team members and presented to the Chief Executive with relevant elements being included in the management level Risk Register.

Throughout the covid pandemic Ruth Taylor has been the trustee lead for the Life Project responses to the varying government guidance, restrictions and return to 'normal business'. The trustees and staff team are grateful to the wisdom and measured decisions that prioritised the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable service users. Coronavirus risk assessments have been carried out and adherence to

government guidance applied to all activities. Given the higher-than-average vulnerability to covid of our client base we have been particularly cautious when resuming face-to-face activity.

The risks associated with 'normal business' continued to be reported and assessed routinely at Trustee meetings throughout the year. The trustees have satisfied themselves that systems or procedures are established in order to manage those risks effectively.

11. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Name and Charity Number:

The Life Project (Bath)
Registered Charity Number: 1142459
Company Number: 07573284

Registered Office:

41 Charlton Road
Keynsham
BS31 2JG

Trustees:

Alison Tucker (Chair)
Ben Stokes
Clive Brooks
David Twine

Duncan Nash
Ruth Taylor
Tony Russell (Treasurer)

Independent Examiner:

Colin Goater
102 Freeview Road
Bath
BA2 1DZ

Banks:

The Co-operative Bank Plc
PO Box 250
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

Triodos Bank UK Ltd
Deanery Road
Bristol
BS1 5AS

12. TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The charity trustees (who are also the directors of The Life Project (Bath) for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of 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 the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and 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;
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to 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 the group and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

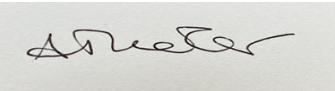
The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Statement as to disclosure to the Independent Examiner

In so far as the trustees are aware at the time of approving our trustees' annual report:

- there is no relevant audit information, being information needed by the Independent Examiner in connection with preparing their report, of which the charitable company's Independent Examiner is unaware; and
- the trustees, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the charity's Independent Examiner that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that they are obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Independent Examiner is aware of that information.

Approved by the Trustee Board on: 7th September 2022

and signed on its behalf by:  Alison Tucker (Chair)

13. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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

Name: 
Colin Goater

Date: 15/7/22

Address: **102 Freeview Road,
Bath
BA2 1DZ**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	Total Funds
		Funds	Funds	2022	2021
INCOME	Note	£	£	£	£
Donations		18,654	200	18,854	18,787
Gift aid on donations		1,539	0	1,539	1,427
Grants receivable		10,000	5,000	15,000	63,881
Contributions towards activities		39,402	581	39,983	24,029
Fundraising income		15,453	0	15,453	13,003
Interest on bank		48	0	48	94
TOTAL INCOME		85,097	5,781	90,878	121,220
EXPENDITURE					
Fundraising costs		437	0	437	1,277
Charitable Activities					
Activity costs		1,187	2,911	4,098	803
Allotment costs		0	111	111	212
Transport costs		240	0	240	156
IT costs		100	0	100	98
Staff travel and expenses		966	52	1,019	686
Equipment and tools		808	55	863	3,706
Volunteer gifts		56	115	171	325
Staff Costs	4	44,340	32,882	77,222	70,203
Telephone, stationery and postage		370	0	370	614
Administration costs		273	0	273	748
Premises rent and running costs		8,536	4,742	13,278	7,286
Professional fees		1,310	0	1,310	2,667
Insurance		645	0	645	459
Accountancy costs		250	0	250	250
		59,080	40,868	99,949	88,213
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		59,517	40,868	100,386	89,491
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	3	25,580	(35,087)	(9,508)	31,729
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April		30,943	51,352	82,295	50,565
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March		56,522	16,264	72,787	82,295

All of the charity's operations are classed as continuing.
The notes on pages 30 to 34 form part of these accounts.
See Note 2 for fund accounting comparative figures.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Current Assets			
Debtors – Gift Aid		1,539	1,427
Prepayments		1,219	1,077
Accrued income		2,866	273
Cash at bank		71,583	83,096
		77,207	85,873
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year			
Accruals and deferred income	5	4,420	3,578
		72,787	82,295
Net Current Assets			
Funds of the Charity			
Restricted	6	16,264	51,352
Unrestricted	7	56,522	30,943
		72,787	82,295
Total Charity Funds			

The Trustees are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

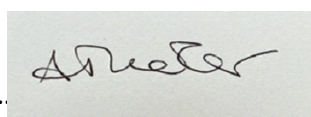
The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the company keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006. These accounts have been delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Trustees on 7th September 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Signed: ..



.. Alison Tucker (Chair)

Date: 07/09/2022.....

COMPANY NO. 07573284 The notes on pages 30 to 34 form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Note 1: Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. Life Project (Bath) meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees have considered the immediate future of the charity for the next 12 to 18 months and consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Grants and donations are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are receivable and are allocated to the appropriate fund.

Investment income is included when receivable.

Expenditure recognition and irrecoverable VAT

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis in the year in which the expenditure is incurred.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. As the charity has only one activity, all costs are allocated against the charitable activity. They include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the charity are:

- Unrestricted general funds – these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.
- Restricted funds – these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022 (continued)**

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Note 2: Prior Year Comparatives

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2021
	£	£	£
INCOME			
Donations	18,787	0	18,787
Gift aid on donations	1,427	0	1,427
Grants receivable	2,450	61,431	63,881
Contributions towards activities	24,011	18	24,029
Fundraising income	13,003	0	13,003
Interest on bank	94	0	94
TOTAL INCOME	59,772	61,449	121,220
EXPENDITURE			
Fundraising costs	1,277	0	1,277
Charitable Activities			
Activity costs	304	499	803
Allotment costs	0	212	212
Transport costs	156	0	156
IT costs	98	0	98
Staff travel and expenses	194	492	686
Equipment and tools	496	3,211	3,706
Volunteer gifts	244	81	325
Staff Costs	40,698	29,506	70,203
Telephone, stationery and postage	614	0	614
Administration costs	457	291	748
Premises rent and running costs	5,411	1,875	7,286
Professional fees	1,536	1,131	2,667
Insurance	459	0	459
Accountancy costs	250	0	250
	50,917	37,297	88,213
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	52,194	37,297	89,491
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	7,577	24,152	31,729

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022 (continued)**

Note 3: Net Income/(Expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:	2022	2021
	£	£
Independent examiner's remuneration	250	250

Note 4: Staff Costs and Related Party Transactions

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total	2021 Total
Gross wages and salaries	42,536	31,326	73,862	67,132
Pension contributions	1,804	1,556	3,360	3,071
	44,340	32,882	77,222	70,203

Note

None of the Trustees receive fees or reimbursed expenses in respect of their trusteeship. The value of waived expenses were not considered significant. There are no other related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts.

The aggregate value of donations received from Trustees and related parties was £1,013. (2021 - £1,275).

The Trustees considers its key management personnel is the Chief Executive who received total employment benefits of £24,969. No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000.

	2022 Number	2021 Number
The average number of persons employed as full-time or full-time equivalents by the charity during the year is detailed below.		
Management	1.2	1.0
Carers / other	1.7	1.7
	2.9	2.7

The average headcount during the year was 8 (2021 – 8).

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022 (continued)**

Note 5: Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Accruals	3,572	3,578
Deferred income	847	0
	<u>4,420</u>	<u>3,578</u>

Deferred income comprises sponsorship money for runners signed up for 2022 Bath Half Marathon, delayed until Autumn 2022.

Note 6: Restricted Funds

	Springs	Quartet Covid Recovery Fund	Barn outreach & development	Barn activities & allotment	Parent carer	Core Costs	Totals
b/f 1 April 2021	1,505	3,774	2,891	219	27,962	15,000	51,352
Income	200	0	0	0	5,581	0	5,781
Expenditure	317	3,774	2,891	166	18,720	15,000	40,868
c/f 31 Mar 2022	1,387	0	0	54	14,823	0	16,264

Purpose of Funds:

Springs - Springs caters for adults with learning disabilities which meets twice a month in the evening, supported by volunteers.

Quartet Covid Recovery Fund – Grant to fund a further year for Barn Outreach and Development worker to develop activities post Covid

Barn Outreach & Development – Grant for employment of an outreach worker to develop an additional day at the Barn.

Barn Activities and Allotment – Grant to allow additional activities to be provided for users of the Barn, such as Pilates and Wheels for All sessions, and to improve and develop the allotment.

Parent / Carers – Further funding to continue the Parent / Carer group.

Core Costs – Grants received specifically to cover core costs; one large grant was received towards the end of 2020/21 and spent in 2021/22.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022 (continued)**

Note 7: Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 1 April £ 2021	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March £ 2022
General Fund	30,943	85,097	59,517	56,522
Total	30,943	85,097	59,517	56,522

Note 8: Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Current assets	5,624	0	5,624
Cash at bank	54,478	17,105	71,583
Current liabilities	(3,580)	(840)	(4,420)
TOTAL	56,522	16,264	72,787

Note 9: Bank Balances 31 March 2022

	£
Petty Cash	98
Current Account	26,088
Deposit Account	15,087
Treasurer's Account	30,310
TOTAL	71,583

THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

England & Wales - Charity number 1142459

Accounts

**Trustees ANNUAL Report and Financial Statement for
2020/2021**



**The Life Project (Bath)
Registered Charity: 1142459
Company number: 07573284**

THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

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Trustees' Report

The trustees present their report for the year to 31 March 2021. Due to the trustees' status as directors under the Companies Act 2006 this report constitutes a directors' report as required by section 415 of the Companies Act 2006.

1. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The overall objective of the charity is to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of people with learning difficulties or other mental or physical disabilities in Bath.

The Life Project is committed to:

- Providing a home(s) for life, rooted in Christian principles and ethos, with opportunities for spiritual growth, leisure, learning, training, education and employment for people with disabilities, primarily learning disabilities, reflecting their individual needs; to fulfil their potential in community together, living lives that have purpose, security and dignity.
- Enabling each of these vulnerable people to live a vibrant and abundant life, expressing their God-given gifts/talents and positively impacting the community around them. Also offering the church and wider community an insight into the significance and power of inclusive and intentional Christian community.
- Providing an environment where these individuals can grow and mature in their relationship with God and respond to His 'call' on their lives.

The trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities we should undertake and confirm that all our activities are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

We set down three key objectives for the year 2020-2021 and our performance against these are reported in detail in Section 2 of this report. In this Covid pandemic year significant adjustments had to be made to our mode of delivery and expectations needed to be managed. However, in summary the following activities were successfully achieved:

- Creative and purposeful activities in the Old Acorn Barn, meeting three times weekly in a socially distanced format where possible (mainly Autumn 2020);
- on-line social and creative sessions for Makers during lockdowns, and in situations where our users were too vulnerable to meet;
- one-to-one socially distanced walks where possible to maintain social contact;
- maintaining an allotment, allowing visitors occasional visits where possible according to lockdowns and social distancing measures;
- a weekly parent carer 'drop in' group with play area for pre-school children in a socially distanced format utilizing a bookable appointment system and café style arrangements (mainly Autumn 2020);

- peer support for parent-carer group members through WhatsApp, plus occasional online activity sessions, during lockdowns;
- online evening fellowship group meetings for adults in the Springs and K-Team groups, meeting twice monthly;
- new pastoral and prayer support initiated by the Life Project Chaplain.

Unfortunately, meetings of the Mini-Springs group and our scheduled programme of social activities for the year were suspended due to the Covid pandemic.

Most Life Project staff, volunteers and families are members of Christian churches and congregations around Bath and NE Somerset and are committed to the Christian ethos of the organisation. They strive to reflect these Christian values in the way they contribute their efforts to Life Project work and activities.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Overview

Following a review of strategic goals, new approaches and timelines were ratified in March 2020. However, as the new reporting year opened in April 2020 it was apparent that pre-set goals, aspirations and activities would need to change in the short term due to the Covid-19 crisis. Projects and activities abruptly ceased to take place in face-to face format and a 'crisis team' of trustees and the Operations Director was convened on a weekly basis to address the critical operational and financial implications of the pandemic.

2.1. Achievement against objectives

Our stated strategic framework for the financial year from April 2020 to March 2021 concentrated on three key strands namely:-

- To become a sustainable organisation
- To expand our reach and impact
- To nurture and grow the Life Project 'community' of families, individuals and housemate groups

Progress made in achieving key goals within each of these strands is reported below. However, in many cases outcomes were necessarily delayed and expectations adjusted during the year.

Strategic Theme 1 - To become a sustainable organisation

a) To establish a balanced portfolio of fundraising activities in order to diversify our income streams (e.g. to include community fundraising, personal giving, grant funding).

Despite having to move community fundraising activities online and accept that some of our planned activities, such as the Bath Half Marathon, could not go ahead we demonstrated creativity and flexibility in adjusting our programme to maximise fundraising potential and still achieved approx. 66% of our target. Grant funding remained challenging, although we benefitted from Covid emergency funding from some sources.

Committed regular giving by individuals remains relatively low, though we are constantly surprised by ad hoc donations from those who want to support our work.

b) *To maximise the use of the Barn by increasing activity days to at least three days per week and thereby its contribution towards central costs*

Whilst the launch of a third day at the Barn was delayed, it became a reality in September 2020 when our Outreach Worker launched activities on Tuesdays. This had to be run according to strict social distancing rules as were the pre-existing days. Whilst sign-up for this group was still low (several new contacts were not able to start at such a difficult time due to self-isolating)

other Makers and members of our community were able to spread their attendance over three days rather than two. The majority of our Makers maintained their payment of fees despite the change in delivery and content, for which we were very grateful.



c) *To increase the contribution made via trading, e.g. products or commissioned services.*

Developing diverse business related income was impossible to implement during the Covid year though remains a target for growth in the future. Whilst Makers were not able to attend the Barn, workshop and allotment, it was impossible to make products for sale. Also the closely guided activities (e.g. jam-making in the kitchen and wire and soldering work in the workshop) are difficult to accomplish safely. This will remain the case for some time though new activities related to outside wood working may shortly provide new opportunities for saleable products.

Commissioning opportunities to create reliable and sustainable income was not possible to pursue, though remain a priority in the coming year.

d) *To expand the volunteer base to support and sustain existing and future services.*

Volunteers, like staff and our users, were also impacted by the need to keep safe during the Covid year. Whilst face-to-face activities were suspended volunteers were not needed to physically support the work, though they enthusiastically took part in Zoom sessions and maintained their contact with the organisation. During the Autumn 2020 new volunteer drivers and escorts were appointed to drive the minibus to the Barn on Tuesdays and this may be developed in the future. During the year we identified a volunteer to assist in the office once restrictions have been lifted. Opportunities for volunteers to assist other aspects of our work, in particular to support events and fundraising activities, will be promoted when all restrictions are lifted.

Strategic Theme 2 – To expand our reach and impact

a) *To sustain and further develop the Outreach Worker role for the development of new initiatives and activities catering for the currently unmet needs of our learning disabled (LD) community.*

As the practical development and piloting of new activities had to be abruptly put on hold during the reporting year there was no lack of ideas coming forward for the future. Our Development and Outreach Worker is still concentrating on gaining a full complement of Makers for Tuesdays at the Barn, though he has also prepared for implementing new creative pursuits either at the Barn or elsewhere. Whilst project funds may be required to pilot specific activities, we were pleased to gain funding to extend his contract by one year which will hopefully enable him to carry out these prospective developments. A particular focus of his plans include creating more opportunities attractive to men with LD, outdoor activities and also to meet the wellbeing agenda.

b) To develop our profile with the churches in Bath, demonstrating that the Life Project offers credible Christian outreach and is the organisation that can assist them to support those within their congregations with learning disabilities.

It was difficult to make positive steps forward by visiting and speaking at churches in Bath, but we maintained progress towards building links with specific churches and church leaders during the year. This has meant presenting or challenging church members during zoom or streamed services where church ministers are already 'on board' with our message about making church accessible to those with LD. Several churches have specifically included us in their regular prayer diaries. In early 2020 we commissioned a video specifically aimed at churches to raise awareness and support. This will remain a tool to use in the coming one-two years though we continue to rely on Life Project family members to advocate for us within their own Christian circles.

c) To increase our presence and profile across our local area through social media and networking.

Our updated website, monthly newsletters and social media posts have all been maintained with the objective of letting everyone know, and be encouraged by, news and pictures of our activities, users and the issues facing those who have learning disabilities and those who care for them. It was disappointing not to have additional opportunities of promoting our cause during the reporting year, in particular at the school and college fairs which normally provide a positive opportunity to meet potential users of our services. Staff continued to network with particular interest groups online and benefitted from sharing the challenges facing many in the charity sector through active networks such as the Bath Third Sector Group.

d) To actively develop our relationships with potential partners e.g. Liveability, B&NES/Virgin Care, Golden Lane and other smaller local organisations.

Capacity and opportunity to develop future partnerships was limited during 2020-21 as coping with developing safe ways of delivering and resourcing our services was clearly a priority. The desire to develop partnership working with small local organisations and suppliers in developing Barn related or other activities continued to be pursued during lockdown by our Development and Outreach Worker – the realisation of which is hoped to take shape during 2021-22.

Strategic Theme 3 - To nurture and grow the Life Project 'community' of families, individuals and housemate groups.

a) To promote the sense of belonging to a Life Project community amongst all those associated with our work and mission.

We continue to promote the Life Project as a family of all those connected or supported by us, plus their friends and families. Prospective plans for an open day, the socials programme, the AGM, cream tea and other occasions which we had hoped would promote the sense of family were necessarily either cancelled or carried out online. Whilst this meant we were able to maintain contact with people we also recognise that this is second best to meeting as a community face-to-face. Life Project 'membership' has not progressed since its launch in 2019.

b) To continue working with the HAS Trust to establish our first Life Project home in Bath.

Progress has been made over the reporting year as the Life Project has worked on the project alongside the members of the HAS Trust, Golden Lane Housing (the proposed managing agent for the home when residents are in place) and Kathryn and Peter Spackman representing the prospective house-mate group who may take up residence. Plans for the physical adaptations to the house in Bloomfield Park were drawn up during the year, discussed and agreed. HAS commissioned a builder to start work in May 2021 with a view to completing renovations by July. Legal aspects are yet to be finalised but the Life Project continues to act as support and facilitator to this project.



c) To develop proposals for purchasing our own house(s).

This remains a long-term objective – to pursue reasonable possibilities for owning a house. It has become evident that the first project in association with the HAS Trust needs to be realised before considering an additional housing project. There has been much to learn during the current project which will hopefully inform future initiatives.

d) To develop a Chaplaincy service for the households we support and to provide prayerful support for the whole organisation including staff, volunteers, groups and project teams.

As the pandemic started we were in the process of recruiting our first Life Project Chaplain. We appointed Marian Marlow who was already a volunteer at the Barn. She has previous chaplaincy experience and during this year has supported individuals with prayer including establishing a weekly zoom prayer meeting. She has also offered pastoral support at the Parent Carer group, contributed brief Christian encouragements to our monthly newsletters and, when asked, for other events. Whilst the Home is yet to be a reality for our first housemate group, she is aware of establishing chaplaincy support when it becomes a reality.

Summary

We are thankful for God's ongoing faithfulness and provision to the work of the Life Project. We rejoice in the creativity and adaptability of our staff who have enabled the maximum amount of input to support our users during difficult times. We have also been humbled by God's protection of our Makers, group members, staff and volunteers during this difficult year though we know that many have suffered personal losses.

3. LIFE PROJECT ACTIVITIES (detail provided by project coordinators)

3.1. The Old Acorn Barn

Pre-pandemic, activities at The Old Acorn Barn would operate on the established basis of two days a week during term time. We had capacity for seven Makers attending each day and from September 2019 they made a contribution of £45. For a further £7 a day the activity leaders provide transport from central Bath addresses.

Activities at The Barn continue to have three main aims:

- to provide opportunities for learning and training in skills necessary for producing quality items and increased independence in daily living;
- to create an environment which nurtures healthy relationships, whilst celebrating uniqueness and encouraging personal growth;
- to generate ways in which we can positively impact the wider community.

Most days start with time at the allotment, then later making plant supports, art and craft, cooking and time to enjoy the beautiful countryside around The Barn. After a freshly cooked lunch, drama and music sessions fill the afternoon sessions. Three paid staff lead the activities each day, aided by several volunteers and Personal Assistants who support our Makers during sessions.

March 2020 to March 2021 was a year like no other. As a team we worked hard to respond creatively and positively to each change in restrictions and guidelines to maintain contact with all our makers and continue to provide some kind of structure to the week and enjoyable and purposeful ways to engage. This included Zoom sessions, preparing activity packs to be completed at home, walks, allotment sessions, picnics and, for the autumn term, to a return to days at the barn, albeit half days for half the group at a time. We were very appreciative of hard work by Ruth, Sue and Dinah for their support and guidance in helping us return safely.

Despite the many challenges of the year, we have also shared some very special and positive developments that are worth marking:

- after much hard work by Tom we started a third day, Tuesdays, at the Barn in September 2020. We have had 2 new makers join us and 1 return after a few years at college. (3 other new makers were due to join but were then offered the opportunity to

re-take their final years at college). It's great to have Tom on the barn Team. We now have a total of 12 makers.

- We had a very positive focus at the barn in the autumn with a theme of 'All Good Gifts' and worked to create a group creative installation of many things we feel grateful for. In the spring term we spent a very inspiring few months thinking about bees. They inspired our music, dancing, drama, craft and thoughts for the day.
- Two particular highlights were an open air art workshop at the allotment with artist Natalie Bedford and the day Danny the donkey came to the barn. It was so special to see our makers take this gentle animal for walks around the village.
- Most makers adapted incredibly well to Zoom meetings. In Jieun's drama sessions a very beautiful, immersive format evolved which included music and signing re-telling the Easter story in that manner had many of us in tears. Very special.

In closing, it would be wrong not to acknowledge the difficulties of the year. It has been a hard time for many parents and carers without the usual structure, supports and times of respite. We have missed volunteers who needed to shield for health reasons, and staff on furlough at certain times. The greatest sadness was the death of dear Claire Chambers, a maker who had had to leave barn activities just before the first lockdown and then passed away in March 2021. She enriched our times in so many ways and we still miss her.

~ Sarah Couchman

3.2. Barn Development and Outreach

In spite of the considerable challenges of this past year, I am pleased to report that some good progress has been made in terms of development and reaching out.

Barn developments: In particular, a new day at the Barn (Tuesday) was started as planned in September and we were able to continue this in spite of lockdowns, providing much needed meaningful contact and activities with a combination of Zoom and socially distanced walks and outdoor activities at the Barn and Allotment when face-to-face indoor sessions weren't possible.

For one maker, who had no means of joining us online, we arranged for the loan of a computer and mobile wi-fi connector so they could join us on Zoom. While we did have four new people lined up to start, three of these opted to re-do their last year at college because of all they had missed with the lockdowns. However, two more people then asked to sign up (one a completely new contact) so the day was able to start as planned and we currently have an established group of three on which we hope to build in the new year.



One of these makers signed up for Thursdays as well, and another would like to do another day when more space comes available.

Sadly, due to the ill health of one of our dear makers a space became available on Wed and Thurs shortly before the first Lockdown in March 2020. This was filled by a member of our Springs Group who was quite isolated during lockdown and who we had been meeting for walks. He has benefited hugely from now being part of these groups and is a real asset to the Barn.

The net effect of all these changes represents approximately a **30 per cent increase** in take-up for the Barn compared to the previous year.

To enable all the Barn sessions to go ahead, we were able to organize the use of a local community minibus large enough to transport small groups of makers to the Barn in a socially distanced Covid-safe way, following detailed risk assessments. We also recruited three excellent new volunteers to help with transport and with the Barn activities, for whom we are so grateful (as is the case with all our faithful volunteers).

Once again we had a presence at the local SEND Transitions Fair (which this year was virtual). It was a shame not to be able to meet young people and their parent/carers face to face, but we did have some positive enquiries who have expressed an interest in signing up to activities at the Barn for 2022. Other progress has been made in building links with the team of local social prescribers who have started to refer people to us in the hope we can help.

In terms of new projects, we have been exploring a partnership with the Urban Garden, a CIC based in Victoria Park, to run a City & Guilds horticulture training for a group of 6 people. We have also had discussions with Manvers Street Baptist Church café about starting a wellbeing or games café. Planning for both of these had to be put on hold due to Covid, but we hope they will be possible in the future. The purchase of a new 3 x 6m gazebo for the Barn affords us more flexibility and much needed shelter to enable our outdoor activities to continue whatever the weather. And further to building a fruitful relationship with a local tree surgeon, we used a grant to purchase some equipment to enable the makers to safely produce kindling which they will be able to sell to the local community in the Autumn and Winter months.

While it has been a challenging year, we are so grateful and thankful for the way Makers, volunteers and staff have been kept safe throughout this time and for all that has been achieved and learned. We look forward to building positively and creatively on this in the year ahead, to extend the benefits of the wonderful community of people that is the Life Project.

~ Tom Riley

3.3. Allotment Project

This project is based at the Monksdale Road Allotments where we have a large allotment plot, with six high raised beds, four ground level raised beds and a further level patch with a circular paved area. The Makers from the Barn usually start each day here. During harvest time, crops are shared and taken back to the Barn to cook for lunch.

We are fortunate to have such a lovely large plot and it has been a great blessing to the space to use during the pandemic. Over the summer term it was hard to keep on top of the weeds

without our regular sessions and it became a bit of a jungle but then Josh Brooks and his PAs came to the rescue and by the end of the year it had never looked so good!

We are also extremely grateful to Steve and Jenny Herring who continue to be so generous with their time and gardening expertise.

~ Sarah Couchman



3.4. Parent Carer 'Drop-in' Group

Just prior to the first national lockdown in March 2020 we held a parent carer retreat, had it been scheduled for a week later it would have been cancelled. The retreats are a much needed and appreciated part of our work, giving parents a time to breathe. Feedback received included:

"It was once again such a well planned and lovely day. We all walk a similar path and have good days and bad days. This was particularly bad for me and thank you all for being there and lifting me up again."

"Thanks so much for such a lovely day. Much needed. So lucky to have this group."

"Much appreciated!!! A real treat....much gratitude for been treated so beautifully."

It was good to know our parent-carers had some renewing time for themselves before our worlds turned upside down and they had even more stresses and strains and demands put on them.

Rachel and I were only able to support the parent carers through our WhatsApp group as we were furloughed and had home schooling to do with our own children, navigating them through a tricky and unpredictable time. The WhatsApp group proved to be good peer support and the group are very good at encouraging one another.

Upon return from furlough we still could not open the drop-in and telephone support was able to be offered one-to-one with each parent who required this. Starting with the ones for whom there was most concern but calling everyone and often providing a follow-up call after an average 40 minutes long conversation each.

It was amazing to be able to open the drop in up again in September and we did find a way to operate in Covid-secure manner with social distancing, face coverings, and other protocols in place. We continued to make it feel warm and welcoming.

Some things have worked really well and we may well maintain these after all restrictions have lifted, such as table service rather than the parent carers coming to the hatch. Even with children being off school for self-isolation and a mixture of other things, God covered us and we were able to stay open for the whole term. When the second school closure occurred in January, we could have legally remained open as support groups were allowed, however the practicalities of this whilst parents, carers, staff and volunteers were all involved in home schooling, prevented our doing so. Once again the WhatsApp group was a support to everyone.

Opening again after Easter has worked well and we have a steady stream of new parent carers join the group. We are so delighted that we will be able to offer Pilates again in the coming weeks, and can prepare for a long awaited retreat as the restrictions lift further.

Rachel and I could not manage to offer the care and support to the parent carers without our hard working volunteers, Amazingly we have had 3 start within the last 12 months even with all the restrictions.

~ Fiona Day

3.5.Springs Group

Springs, our group for adults with learning disabilities meets twice monthly in the evening for fellowship, worship, sharing, Bible study and prayer. The group has now around 21 regular members and 15 committed volunteers. Members come from across Bath and from a variety of churches, or none. The group would usually meet at the Weston Hub, but has moved over to meet via Zoom for this period. This format does not work for everyone (and we miss those not present) but generally feel thrilled to have a group of 20-30 attending each meeting. We are also pleased to have been joined by the Keynsham K-Team for this season.

Since the autumn we have been looking at the Fruit of the Spirit and tried to be as interactive and accessible as possible; inviting members to wear or bring items relating to the theme, using breakout rooms has been valuable for sharing news and concerns and Makaton signing has been a great way to worship when singing is challenging! As ever, prayer means so much to our Springs members and they have really valued being able to pray through this difficult year.

Some members have been experiencing some very difficult personal challenges and where possible we have tried to support and partner with professional agencies involved.

Huge thanks to the committed and faithful volunteers who bring so much to the group.

~ Sarah Couchman

3.6. Mini-Springs Groups

Due to the age range and nature of the Mini-Springs group it has not been possible to facilitate this group during 2020-2021. The aim of the group has been to see families who have children with additional needs and their siblings be able to access and engage with age-appropriate Biblical input and fellowship time within a safe and fun environment. This aim remains important to us but before making decisions about reopening as restrictions lift we are choosing to review, with the Project Leaders, how we might best serve families and the local church.

3.7. Social Programme

The aim of the Life Project socials has been to build a time when everyone involved or associated with the Life Project can come together, where friendships and trust is built and people gain a deeper knowledge of one another, thus bridging the gap between the different projects.

Due to the Covid pandemic decisions were required to prioritise the work in which we engaged and which would be practical for the Life Project to deliver. Unfortunately, as we continued to evaluate, during the year, what work in terms of activity and frequency we acknowledged that transport, in particular, is a key factor in enabling everyone to participate. The programme of social activities was therefore sadly suspended but we are looking forward to their return as the covid restrictions continue to lift and opportunities to meet in person become increasingly practical.



4. SAFEGUARDING

The Life Project has continued to subscribe to *Thirtyone:eight* (previously known as the *Churches Child Protection Advisory Service*) and to use them as the umbrella organisation for the processing of Disclosure and Barring Service applications for volunteers and staff.

There were no serious safeguarding incidents during the reporting year, but we have consulted with *Thirtyone:eight* experts for occasional advice where we felt it necessary.

Our Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and updated in September 2020 with the specific additional of more specific guidance on working with service users online.

5. FUNDRAISING

5.1. Community Fundraising

Following the success of the new community fundraising strategy in 2018-19 ambitious targets are set each year. A variety of creative challenges and events continue to be organised and adjusting these to new and virtual formats during 2020-21 was challenging though considerable results were achieved.

Highlights of the fundraising calendar for 2020-21 included our annual Cream Tea being run virtually for the first time with active participants joining from Bath to South America! Whilst the Bath Christmas Market and other local fairs were cancelled we were able to quickly put in place sales of Christmas cards at a city centre church and a highly successful 'Bath to Bethlehem' campaign whereby people were sponsored to run, jog, cycle miles towards the nearly 3000-mile journey. Unfortunately, we were unable to sign up for the rescheduled Bath Half Marathon in 2021, which dented our annual target, but we look forward to participating in 2022.

We continued to pursue raising the number of regular givers to the Life Project and have created a video to promote this to church congregations in and around Bath. We continued to be recipients of one-off and regular financial support from a number of local churches, including All Saints Weston, Holy Trinity Combe Down and St Michaels Without.

5.2. Grant Funding

The identification and sourcing of dedicated funding to support the work of the Life Project has continued to be a time consuming and sometimes frustrating task, though assisted by some pro bono support by a professionally qualified charity fundraiser.

From April 2020 and with the consequent threat to our financial stability due to Covid we energetically sought out Covid-related emergency and recovery funds, achieving success in obtaining two grants through the Quartet Community Foundation and one from the National Lottery Community Fund. These funds went a long way to help us resource our online delivery of activities, PPE and other equipment, and to fund additional hours of staff needed to facilitate new ways of working.

The Government's Job Retention Scheme offset much of our salary costs for those of our staff who were placed on either full or part-time furlough at certain times of the year. The final of three years' grant funding of the Parent Carer Group was received from the St John's Foundation.

Whilst projects and their development were restricted during the Covid pandemic we continued to seek funding for up to three years for core costs to underpin our future

sustainability and potential growth. In March 2021 we were successful in obtaining some funding in this regard from the Garfield Weston Foundation and were awaiting the results of several further applications.

We would therefore like to extend our gratitude to the following funding bodies that have supported us this year:

- St John's Foundation
- Co-op Community Fund
- Quartet Community Foundation
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Garfield Weston Foundation.



6. FINANCIAL REVIEW

Over the year, the Charity received income of £121,220, with expenditure of £89,491, and finished with a surplus of £31,729. Income was up by 29% on the previous year, reflecting an increase in donations and some significant grants received, notwithstanding a drop in fee and fundraising income due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Overall expenditure was similar to the previous year, however the distribution of this had some marked differences largely due to the impact of Covid-19: less was spent on running activities and premises, whilst staff costs increased and additional costs were incurred for PPE and hygiene.

At 31 March 2021, the Charity had net assets of £82,295 of which £51,352 were restricted funds and £30,943 unrestricted.

The activities of the Charity were severely hit by the lockdowns and other restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic and to address this trustees established a small Crisis Team at the start of the year enabling decisions to be made promptly in response to the developing situation, which later became a Recovery Team. As detailed elsewhere, many of the activities were adapted for on line delivery and where safe some limited face to face provision was maintained. The Charity benefited from a number of Covid-19 related grants to support the

adaptation of services and recovery (totalling nearly £24k) and most fees for the Barn continued to be paid. These, along with a major grant of £15k received at the end of the year, enabled the trustees to be confident that the Charity was financially secure to deliver its established programme of activities for 2021/22.

Looking further ahead, the Life Project will need to continue to secure funding for its core costs and to support the preparatory work for setting up new programmes. The final instalment of the Parent Carer grant was received in December, so new funding will need to be sought to maintain that work. The trustees are continuing their efforts to broaden the range of income sources to become less dependent on grants and have established a Strategic Finance Group to explore longer term funding opportunities.

Investment policy

The Life Project holds funds in an instant access Deposit Account and a 90 day notice Treasurer's Reserve Account so as to provide some interest. These savings have been placed with Triodos Bank, which has a strong ethical investment policy.

Reserves policy

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in the light of the main risks to the organisation. As a result of this they aim to hold reserves equal to at least three months' unrestricted running costs. This is to ensure the continued running of the charity if unrestricted funding decreases, until new sources of funding can be found. At the year end unrestricted reserves were £30,943, amounting to over six months' unrestricted running costs.

7. FUTURE PLANS



The 12 months, April 2020 to March 2021, have been some of the most challenging due to the global covid19 pandemic, national and local lockdowns, and the changing rules and guidance regarding permitted activities versus organisational risk assessments. Looking back over the year it is a success in and of itself to have survived and to be considering a future for The Life Project.

The immediate future remains uncertain as the national restrictions begin to ease, with target dates in the coming months when the government will assess progress and consider which restrictions will lift and any related

protocols. Our primary concern is the welfare of our Makers, volunteers, and staff, although we look forward to returning to in-person gatherings at The Old Acorn Barn, Parent Carer Support and Springs/ K-Team this is not something that will be rushed.

As the government's so-called road map unfolds it is envisaged that Old Acorn Barn and Parent Carer Support will return over the course of the summer term with Springs and K-Team re-gathering in the autumn.

The three strategic themes of the Life Project have remained our aspiration, however, as we emerge from the global pandemic the political, economic, social and technological (PEST) landscape has altered considerably. The year ahead will see our first Chief Executive take up their role in June 2021 and in collaboration with the trustees it is going to be important to review the strategies and objectives for the post-pandemic world.

Due to the unknowns presented by the covid-pandemic and the forthcoming change in leadership meeting the following themes and objectives remains our aspiration, whilst recognising the timeframe in which they can be met may be protracted. In addition our need for support through grant funding will be a priority in the coming year in order to meet the needs of community in the emerging post pandemic landscape.

Strategic Theme 1 - To become a sustainable organisation

- e) To establish a balanced portfolio of fundraising activities in order to diversify our income streams (e.g. to include community fundraising, personal giving, grant funding);
- f) To maximise the use of the Barn by increasing activity days to at least three days per week and thereby its contribution towards central costs;
- g) To increase the contribution made via trading, e.g. products or commissioned services;
- h) To expand the volunteer base to support and sustain existing and future services.

Strategic Theme 2 – To expand our reach and impact

- e) To sustain and further develop the Outreach Worker role for the development of new initiatives and activities catering for the currently unmet needs of our learning disabled (LD) community;
- f) To develop our profile with the churches in Bath, demonstrating that the Life Project offers credible Christian outreach and is the organisation that can assist them to support those within their congregations with learning disabilities;
- g) To increase our presence and profile across our local area through social media and networking;
- h) To actively develop our relationships with potential partners e.g. Liveability, B&NES/Virgin Care, Golden Lane and other smaller local organisations.

Strategic Theme 3 - To nurture and grow the Life Project 'community' of families, individuals and housemate groups

- e) To promote the sense of belonging to a Life Project community amongst all those associated with our work and mission;
- f) To continue working with HAS to establish our first Life Project home in Bath;
- g) To develop proposals for purchasing our own house(s);
- h) To develop a Chaplaincy service for the households we support and to provide prayerful support for the whole organisation including staff, volunteers, groups and project teams.



8. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

8.1. Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. The company was incorporated on 22 March 2011. The company was registered as a charity on 17 June 2011.

The Life Project (Bath) was initiated by over a dozen Christian families, mainly from the Bath area but also including Keynsham, most of whom had children, teenagers or adults with a range of learning disabilities. The families involved represented a variety of different denominations, but all shared a vision and passion for enabling their children to play a full role in the life of the church and in the community. The Life Project (Bath) aims for the highest standards of care and professionalism but is not seeking to create a home(s) or meaningful occupation(s) that isolate or removes those with learning disabilities from the wider world.

8.2. Governance Roles

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law.

Role descriptions for the Chair of Board and for individual trustees were updated in 2017 and a Code of Conduct for Trustees and other guidance and induction documentation has been collated for use by new trustees.

8.3. Recruitment and Appointment of the Trustees

The trustees regularly review the skills and experience base of its board and new trustees are sought to reflect the needs of the organisation. A three-year term of office, with potential to renew, has been established. Based on a skills audit of trustees and identified skills gaps, potential trustees are approached. In order to be confirmed as a trustee DBS clearance is sought, a 'fit and proper persons' check carried out and candidates must sign up to all elements

of the Confirmation of Appointment declaration. Two new trustees were formally appointed to the board at the 2020 AGM year and one trustee resigned.

8.4.Trustee Induction and Training

Induction is seen as a key element in retaining and supporting trustees. New trustees are given clear advice and support in relation to their obligations. A Trustee Induction Checklist is in use and all relevant documentation is made available, including details of resourcing, the current financial position as set out in the latest set of accounts and information about future plans and the strategic development of the charity. Other governance specific training available for trustees in the charity sector is notified to trustees.

8.5.Day to Day Management

The charity was run during 2020 to the end April of 2021 by its Operations Director, Sue Snell. In preparation for her retirement Rich Blake-Lobb was recruited and will become the Chief Executive of the charity from June 2021. During 2020-21 seven other part-time staff were employed.

The office base is based at 13 Church Street, Weston, Bath, BA1 4BU.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Life Project maintains a risk register that captures the main events that might have a significant adverse impact on the Life Project's service delivery, service users or financial/reputational integrity. The register describes the event, the impact of the event being realised and the probability of it happening and whether the risk can be treated or tolerated. Each Life Project activity has its own Risk Assessment and these are regularly reviewed between the Project Coordinators and the Operations Director (Chief Executive) with relevant elements being included in the management level risk register.



At the start of the first Covid related lockdown an EGM was held by Trustees on the 26 March 2020 to assess the risks to the charity of the Covid pandemic and its effect on its activities and financial implications. A business continuity plan was drawn up and weekly Crisis Team meetings between the Operations Director and a core group of trustees ensued. This group took any urgent decisions required, constantly risk assessing the safety of staff and users as well as consequent actions such as furloughing staff and other remedial financial measures. From June 2020 these meetings were renamed Recovery Team meetings as circumstances improved over the summer.

At each stage of national or local lockdown, Coronavirus risk assessments have been carried out and adherence to Government guidance applied to all activities. Given the higher than average vulnerability to Covid of our client base we have been particularly cautious when resuming face-to-face activities, whilst aiming to maintain social contact through online sessions and delivering usable activity packs to mitigate isolation in these vulnerable groups.

The risks associated with normal business continued to be reported and assessed routinely at Trustee meetings throughout the year. The trustees have satisfied themselves that systems or procedures are established in order to manage those risks effectively.

10. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Name and Charity Number:

The Life Project (Bath)
Registered Charity Number: 1142459
Company Number: 07573284

Registered Office:

41 Charlton Road
Keynsham
BS31 2JG

Trustees:

Clive Brooks
Colin McSherry (resigned Oct 2020)
Duncan Nash
Tony Russell

Ben Stokes (appointed Oct 2020)
Ruth Taylor
Alison Tucker (appointed Oct 2020, appointed Chair Feb 2021)
David Twine

Independent Examiner:

Colin Goater
102 Freeview Road
Bath
BA2 1DZ

Bankers:

The Co-operative Bank Plc
PO Box 250
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

Triodos Bank UK Ltd
Deanery Road
Bristol
BS1 5AS

11. TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The charity trustees (who are also the directors of The Life Project (Bath) for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of 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 the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and 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;
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to 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 the group and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

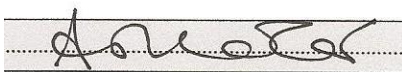
Statement as to disclosure to the Independent Examiner

In so far as the trustees are aware at the time of approving our trustees' annual report:

- there is no relevant audit information, being information needed by the Independent Examiner in connection with preparing their report, of which the charitable company's Independent Examiner is unaware; and
- the trustees, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the charity's Independent Examiner that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that they are obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Independent Examiner is aware of that information.

Approved by the Trustee Board on: 15th September 2021

and signed on its behalf by:



Alison Tucker (Chair)

12. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LIFE PROJECT (BATH)

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

Name: Colin Goater
Colin Goater

Date: 2nd July 2021

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

Address: **102 Freeview Road,
Bath
BA2 1DZ**

13. STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020
	Note	£	£	£	£
INCOME					
Donations		18,787	0	18,787	8,929
Gift aid on donations		1,427	0	1,427	1,778
Grants receivable		2,450	61,431	63,881	35,694
Contributions towards activities		24,011	18	24,029	28,606
Fundraising income		13,003	0	13,003	18,694
Interest on bank		94	0	94	210
TOTAL INCOME		59,772	61,449	121,220	93,910
EXPENDITURE					
Fundraising costs		1,277	0	1,277	1,654
Charitable Activities					
Activity costs		304	499	803	5,170
Allotment costs		0	212	212	110
Transport costs		156	0	156	553
IT costs		98	0	98	116
Staff travel and expenses		194	492	686	2,620
Equipment and tools		496	3,211	3,706	1,022
Volunteer gifts		244	81	325	272
Staff Costs	4	40,698	29,506	70,203	62,637
Telephone, stationery and postage		614	0	614	599
Administration costs		457	291	748	354
Premises rent and running costs		5,411	1,875	7,286	11,857
Professional fees		1,536	1,131	2,667	1,957
Insurance		459	0	459	592
Accountancy costs		250	0	250	200
		50,917	37,297	88,213	88,056
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		52,194	37,297	89,491	89,710
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	3	7,577	24,152	31,729	4,200
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April		23,365	27,200	50,565	46,366
Fund balances carried forward at 31 March		30,943	51,352	82,295	50,565

All of the charity's operations are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 25 to 30 form part of these accounts.
See Note 2 for fund accounting comparative figures.

14. BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Current Assets			
Debtors – Gift Aid		1,427	1,778
Prepayments		1,077	841
Accrued income		273	2,869
Cash at bank		83,096	47,709
		<u>85,873</u>	<u>53,197</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year			
Accruals and deferred income	5	3,578	2,632
		<u>82,295</u>	<u>50,565</u>
Net Current Assets			
Funds of the Charity			
Restricted	6	51,352	27,200
Unrestricted	7	30,943	23,365
		<u>82,295</u>	<u>50,565</u>
Total Charity Funds			

The Trustees are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the company keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006. These accounts have been delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the Trustees on 15th September 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Name: Alison Tucker

Date: 15th September 2021

COMPANY NO. 07573284 The notes on pages 25 to 30 form part of these accounts.

15. NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Note 1: Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. Life Project (Bath) meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees have considered the immediate future of the charity for the next 12 to 18 months and consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income recognition

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Income is deferred only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it or where the donor has specified that the income is to be expended in a future period.

Grants and donations are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are receivable and are allocated to the appropriate fund.

Investment income is included when receivable.

Expenditure recognition and irrecoverable VAT

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. As the charity has only one activity, all costs are allocated against the charitable activity. They include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the charity are:

- Unrestricted general funds – these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.
- Restricted funds – these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (continued)**

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Note 2: Prior Year Comparatives

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2020
	£	£	£
INCOME			
Donations	8,929	0	8,929
Gift aid on donations	1,778	0	1,778
Grants receivable	694	35,000	35,694
Contributions towards activities	27,378	1,228	28,606
Fundraising income	18,694	0	18,694
Interest on bank	210	0	210
TOTAL INCOME	57,682	36,228	93,910
EXPENDITURE			
Fundraising costs	1,654	0	1,654
Charitable Activities			
Activity costs	1,034	4,136	5,170
Allotment costs	0	110	110
Transport costs	553	0	553
IT costs	116	0	116
Staff travel and expenses	2,078	542	2,620
Equipment and tools	966	56	1,022
Volunteer gifts	214	58	272
Staff Costs	40,895	21,742	62,637
Telephone, stationery and postage	599	0	599
Administration costs	354	0	354
Premises rent and running costs	9,385	2,472	11,857
Professional fees	488	1,468	1,957
Insurance	592	0	592
Accountancy costs	200	0	200
	57,472	30,584	88,056
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	59,126	30,584	89,710
Net (expenditure)/income for the year	(1,444)	5,644	4,200

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (continued)**

Note 3: Net Income/(Expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:	2021	2020
	£	£
Independent examiner's remuneration	250	200

Note 4: Staff Costs and Related Party Transactions

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total	2020 Total
Gross wages and salaries	38,182	28,950	67,132	60,468
Pension contributions	2,515	556	3,071	2,168
	40,698	29,506	70,203	62,637

Note

None of the Trustees receive fees or reimbursed expenses in respect of their trusteeship. The value of waived expenses were not considered significant. There are no other related party transactions that require disclosure in the accounts.

The aggregate value of donations received from Trustees and related parties was £1,275. (2020 - £780).

The Trustees considers its key management personnel is the Operations Director who received total employment benefits of £24,642. No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000.

	2021 Number	2020 Number
The average number of persons employed as full-time or full-time equivalents by the charity during the year is detailed below.		
Management	1.0	1.0
Carers / other	1.7	1.6
	2.7	2.6

The average headcount during the year was 8 (2020 – 7.5).

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (continued)**

Note 5: Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accruals	3,578	2,632
Deferred income	0	0
	<u>3,578</u>	<u>2,632</u>

Note 6: Restricted Funds

	Springs	Barn outreach & development	Website	Barn activities & allotment	Parent carer	Core Costs
b/f 1 April 2020	1,362	4,672	1,452	1,020	18,693	0
Income	200	0	0	0	22,353	15,000
Expenditure	58	1,781	1,452	800	13,084	0
c/f 31 Mar 2021	1,505	2,891	0	219	27,962	15,000

	Job Retention Scheme	Quartet Covid-19 Grant	NLCF Covid-19 Grant	DCMS Covid-19 Grant	Quartet Covid Recovery Fund	Totals
b/f 1 April 2020	0	0	0	0	0	27,200
Income	5,721	4,431	4,814	165	8,765	61,449
Expenditure	5,721	4,431	4,814	165	4,991	37,297
c/f 31 Mar 2021	0	0	0	0	3,774	51,352

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (continued)

Purpose of Funds:

Springs and Mini-Springs - Springs caters for adults with learning disabilities which meets twice a month in the evening, supported by volunteers. Mini-Springs, which meets monthly, is open to families with children who have any type of additional needs. Face to face activities have ceased during Covid, with Springs meeting on line.

Barn Outreach & Development – Grant received for employment of an outreach worker to develop an additional day at the Barn.

Website – Grant received for redevelopment of the Life Project website.

Barn Activities and Allotment – A grant was received to allow additional activities to be provided for users of the Barn, such as Pilates and Wheels for All sessions, and to improve and develop the allotment.

Parent / Carers – Further funding to continue the Parent / Carer group.

Core Costs – Grants received specifically to cover core costs; one large grant was received towards the end of the year.

COVID-19 Related Grants

Job Retention Scheme – Grant for staff placed on furlough

Quartet Covid-19 – Grant covering salaries and other costs associated with developing on line service delivery during first three months of Barn closure

NLCF Covid-19 – Grant towards additional costs associated with resuming activities at Barn from September, as restrictions allowed, including extra staff time and hygiene, PPE etc

DCMS Covid-19 – Grant towards equipment for new Barn activities post Covid

Quartet Covid Recovery Fund – Grant to fund a further year for Barn Outreach and Development worker to develop activities post Covid

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (continued)**

Note 7: Unrestricted Funds

	Balance at 1 April £ 2020	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March £ 2021
General Fund	23,366	59,772	52,194	30,943
Total	23,366	59,772	52,194	30,943

Note 8: Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Current assets	2,777	0	2,777
Cash at bank	30,171	52,925	83,096
Current liabilities	(2,005)	(1,573)	(3,578)
TOTAL	30,943	51,352	82,295

Note 9: Bank Balances 31 March 2021

	£
Petty Cash	30
Current Account	25,721
Deposit Account	22,078
Treasurer's Account	35,268
TOTAL	83,096