



FIGHTING TO ERADICATE POVERTY FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The  
**Matthew  
Tree  
Project**<sup>®</sup>

Supporting  
vulnerable  
households  
in Bristol  
since 2010

Helping over  
14,000 people escape  
a life of poverty and  
rebuild a healthier,  
wealthier and happier  
future

Registered charity number: 1146401



*Mark Goodway MBE, on behalf of everyone at The Matthew Tree Project, proudly accepts the trophy for winner of Crisis Support NPO of the Year 2023/24 in the South West of England Prestige Awards.*

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## OFFICERS AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

TRUSTEES who have served during the year and up until the date of signing the report are:  
Nigel Goodway, Roger Wooldridge, Jonathan Evans, Colin Sainsbury.

New appointed trustees are:

Susan Brooks appointed on 26 October 2023; Tina Hammond appointed on 26 October 2023.

### INDEPENDENT MANAGEMENT ADVISOR

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### BANKERS

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### INSURERS

Zurich Insurance plc  
The Zurich Centre  
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Whiteley, Fareham PO15 7JZ

### PRINCIPAL & REGISTERED OFFICE OF THE CHARITY

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### ADMIN & TRAINING CENTRE

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### IMPACT MONITORING ADVISORS

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Harbertonford  
Totnes TQ9 7TA

 CASE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Fully integrated bespoke case management and impact monitoring system designed on the APRICOT® software platform and underpinned by The Matthew Tree Project 'Theory of Change Framework'.

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees present their annual report and the independently examined financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023. These are prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the Charity's Trust Deed, the Charities Act 2011 and 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) and Financial Reporting Standard 102 and the Companies Act 2006.

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Mathew Tree Project was established in July 2010 and is a registered charity, number 1146401. The charitable Trust is registered as a company limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006. The governing document is its Memorandum and Articles of Association and is registered in England (company number 7324296).

The Charitable Company has no share capital, but under the terms of the Memorandum of Association, every member is liable to contribute a sum not exceeding £10 in the event of the Charitable Company being wound up.

The principal objects of the Charitable Company are:

"To prevent homelessness and help hard to reach vulnerable households escape poverty and rebuild a happier, healthier, and wealthier future.

The charity is fighting to eradicate poverty from the UK, one of the richest countries in the world. We have more wealth; more resources; more knowledge; more understanding than at any time in history. Yet still too many children grow up familiar with hunger, a cold home and exclusion from the norm of their peers. We are giving children a troubled start to life and wonder why we end up with troubled communities that cost us a fortune in social and health care public services. Bristol is a prosperous city; but this prosperity is not shared by all. Poverty leads to health inequalities and results in a shameful 9-year gap in life expectancy between those living in the richest and poorest wards.

We believe no-one's life expectancy and life chances should be curtailed by poverty. The work of the charity contributes towards this goal. Since 2010 we have helped over 14,000 people escape a life of poverty whilst simultaneously improving their mental and physical wellbeing. We use the knowledge gained by working on the frontline to engage with national policymakers to effect systemic change where the system is failing."

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees confirm that they regularly review the significant risks facing the Trust and have systems and procedures in place to mitigate those risks. The risk policy has adopted a risk mapping methodology that is applied to each identified risk, assessing the likelihood of it occurring and the severity of the impact of occurrence on the Trust.

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission when exercising their powers and duties.

## **RESULTS FOR THE YEAR**

The charity received income for the year of £310,045 (2022: £307,717), including £45,841 (2022: £186,659) of food gifts and £367.95 in hardship grants distributed to those in need. Expenditure for the year was £272,981 (2022: £392,363).

## **RESERVES POLICY**

The trustees aim to hold no more than £50,000 of free reserves. Any funds over this level are reinvested in the development of client services. At the end of the year, free reserves were £25,998, and at the end of 2022 free reserves were £16,108.

## **GOING CONCERN**

After making enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Trust has adequate resources to continue its objectives and activities for the public benefit for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and financial statements.

Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis are in note 1 'Accounting Policies' in the financial statements.

## ORGANISATION OVERVIEW, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The Matthew Tree Project's long-term vision is two-fold:

- Working holistically, to empower disadvantaged people to take control and live dignified, fulfilling, and self-sufficient lives.
- Engage with policy makers, locally and nationally, to effect systemic change and create a fairer and more equal society for the benefit of all, whereby poverty is eradicated from the United Kingdom once and for all.

The Matthew Tree Project, a Bristol based charity, was established in 2010 to help hard to reach vulnerable households escape poverty and rebuild a happier, healthier, and wealthier future.

The charity is fighting to eradicate poverty from the UK, one of the richest countries in the world. We have more wealth; more resources; more knowledge; more understanding than at any time in history. Yet still too many children grow up familiar with hunger, a cold home and exclusion from the norm of their peers. We are giving children a troubled start to life and wonder why we end up with troubled communities that cost us a fortune in social and health care public services.

Bristol is a prosperous city; but this prosperity is not shared by all. Poverty leads to health inequalities and results in a shameful 9-year gap in life expectancy between those living in the richest and poorest wards. We believe no-one's life expectancy and life chances should be curtailed by poverty. The work of the charity contributes towards this goal. **Since 2010 we have helped over 14,000 people escape a life of poverty whilst simultaneously improving their mental and physical wellbeing.** We use the knowledge gained by working on the frontline to engage with national policymakers to effect systemic change where the system is failing.

“

*The health of any society is not measured by how many millionaires or billionaires it has. The health of a society is measured by the number of people living in poverty. The bottom line is... in the UK too many people are suffering, trapped and condemned to a life of poverty. This should change. This needs to change. And we have the means as a society to make it change.”*

**Mark Goodway MBE**  
**FOUNDER – THE MATTHEW TREE PROJECT**



## SERVICE DELIVERY SUMMARY



The main activity of the charity is in the delivery of its unique award winning **Holistic Crisis Support Programme - Rebuilding Lives**. The programme has been continuously developed into a 'gold standard' service over the last 14 years, consisting of a central 'main programme' fully and seamlessly integrated with separately funded specialised services that together provide a wide range of ***expertly joined-up service elements together to create a unique and personally tailored 'full support package'*** around each vulnerable household in the programme. Identifying challenges people may be experiencing and agree with them, how to find a

way to overcome the issues they have.

The Rebuilding Lives Crisis Support Programme provides immediate relief, substantive change and transformational change. The **key element** of the programme is investing the time needed to build trust and relationships that are maintained throughout the client's journey through the programme. Clients are supported for as long as there is a need and close their own case when they no longer need our support. On average clients are supported for 3-9 months.

In addition to providing community engagement and holistic crisis support, the charity reduces isolation by bringing people together in a safe and socially vibrant environment, to help themselves, each other, and engage positively within the wider community where they live.

Services are shaped by the people we serve. Since conception, we have been working hard, with the critical assistance of our **'Citizen Voice Panel'**, open to all current and ex-clients of the charity, to enhance the crisis support provided to help people better address the underlying causes of their crisis and rebuild a sustainable and better future for themselves. The **Holistic Crisis Support Programme - Rebuilding Lives**, reflects the feedback of this panel. Service support is constantly evolving as we live in a fast-changing world and the value to the charity of this group is that we learn about new challenges people are facing at the earliest possible time and act to put the activities and support people need in place quickly.

The Rebuilding Lives Programme is open to all. No-one is excluded. Referral criteria is that there is not enough income to cover essential bills such as food, fuel, and rent. Over 60% of referrals are at risk of becoming homeless. Our initial focus is to stabilise the immediate crisis and then to explore ways to maximise income and minimise expenditure. We take a 'whole person' holistic approach.

***The lack of food or fuel is a signal that there are deeper problems. Rebuilding Lives is an early intervention programme, preventing homelessness by engaging with the vulnerably housed before it is too late.*** It is a Truly Holistic Tripartite Crisis Support Service addressing the multiple and complex underlying causes as well as the effects of poverty, ***characterized by the treatment of the whole person, considering 1) mental, 2) physical, and 3) social factors, rather than just the symptoms.***



## CASE STUDY: HOMELESSNESS

Referred by	Self-referral
Reason for referral	Homeless / Sofa Surfing
Situation	<p>'D' is a 47-year-old man, who had no fixed abode and was sofa surfing at his sister's home and sleeping on the sofa. This was very challenging because his sister has two young children, and her eldest child has Downs Syndrome with behavioural problems, is very disruptive and does not sleep, and is up for a lot of time during the night. As 'D' is on the sofa this is extremely detrimental to his health, and he does not sleep.</p> <p>'D' first signed up for HomeChoice 15 years ago when his relationship broke down and he parted from his son's mother, and he had to leave the family home, leaving him homeless. Before finding a home of his own he entered a new relationship and moved in with his partner. This relationship broke down in 2023 and 'D' became very distressed and suffered a heart attack and is now on medication for life. He has been diagnosed with acute coronary syndrome, vascular respiratory disease, COPD and anxiety detachment.</p> <p>'D's son suffers with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, (ADHD) and autistic Tourette's. His son is very unhappy living with his mother and her new partner and has expressed he wants to live with his father who he feels more comfortable with.</p> <p>'D' initially asked Citizens Advice for help but did not get anywhere and then came to us in February 2024 upon the advice of a friend who was aware of The Matthew Tree Project.</p>
What they needed	To find a home; emotional support; essential household items
What we did for them	Updated his home choice application, arranged an appointment with the homelessness prevention team at Bristol City Council. Liaised with BCC to further his application to assist with a quicker outcome. We also helped with form filling and a BCC application form for a flat. Liaised with Credit Union and set up an application for a deposit

	<p>scheme. Sourced household items and delivered them to D's new home as it was completely empty.</p>
Outcome	<p>D was successful in obtaining a credit union deposit scheme and a flat with BCC. D picked up the keys and moved in on 10 June 2024.</p> <p>'D' is now going to be able to have his son to stay with him for long periods of time, with the long-term plan being, his son will live with him full time.</p>
CLIENT QUOTE	<p><i>"When I first came to the Matthew Tree I was struggling with my health, unable to get a full night's sleep as I was on my sister's sofa which was exacerbating my anxiety, and I needed to use my GTN medication spray more frequently than I should and therefore needed to visit healthcare professionals often. My hospital consultant advised avoiding stressful situations as it was making my condition so much worse, which was impossible where I was living. I came to Matthew Tree for help with my housing situation, phone calls, applications and paperwork. I would like to thank them all for the AMAZING help I have received over the past few months from them.</i></p> <p><i>I would and will recommend this supporting agency to family and friends. When I came first, I felt I was on a ladder going down and down, since coming I now for the first time in my life feel like I am going up the ladder. Thank you, Ladies, for all you have done for me. I will never forget you. D"</i></p>

## KEY ATTRIBUTES OF THE REBUILDING LIVES CRISIS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The attributes of the Holistic Crisis Support Programme - **Rebuilding Lives**, are:

### HOLISTIC

**Holistic Tripartite:** The foundation of the charity is the unique **Rebuilding Lives** programme. A Truly Holistic Tripartite Crisis Support Programme addressing the multiple and complex underlying causes as well as the symptoms of poverty, characterised by the treatment of the whole person, considering 1) mental, 2) physical, and 3) social factors.

### IN-DEPTH

**In-depth programme:** where long-term relationships are cultivated. Not a helpline, one-off activities, drop-in only, or signposting to other services. Building trust, and in addition to stabilising the initial crisis, provide the next stage in longer-term support, with a plan which helps people to positively move on out of poverty.

### PERSON CENTRED

**Person-centred service:** Recognising that as a single charity it is not possible to meet all the needs of the people we support; working hard to build trusted strategic partnerships with providers or agencies who can help people to overcome the challenges they face and meet their basic needs. Referring clients for support, whilst continuing to track progress, ensuring their needs are being addressed.

### GOALS

**Empowering people to develop and achieve Personal Plans:** Working together to understand the challenges people are experiencing and agreeing with them how to find a way to overcome the issues they have. Keeping electronic records and case files of each person supported, noting progress against activities and being able to demonstrate the difference being made through these records.

### CO-PRODUCED

**Shaped by the people it serves:** At the heart of this *innovative award-winning multi-agency social mobility change model*, are the people it supports, empowered and in control of their unique journey. Rebuilding Lives positively impacts self-confidence, self-worth, self-esteem and converts hopelessness into hope and belief that a healthier, happier, wealthier future is possible and worth fighting for.

### PERSONALLY TAILORED

**Personally tailored 'full support package':** The Rebuilding Lives programme works hard to bring a wide range of *expertly joined-up service elements together to create a unique and personally tailored 'full support package'* around each vulnerable household in the programme. Identifying challenges people may be experiencing and agree with them, how to find a way to overcome the issues they have.

### MONDAY TO FRIDAY

**Open Monday-Friday:** The Rebuilding Lives Programme is delivered from the charity's *Community Support Hub in Filwood*, one of the UK's top 1.5% deprived wards. Reducing isolation by bringing people together in a safe and socially vibrant environment, to help themselves, each other, and engage positively within the wider community where they live.

## REMOTE SUPPORT

**Remote support available:** Remote support by phoneline is provided for those who are housebound or unable to travel to the Holistic Crisis Support Hub in Filwood. This makes the Rebuilding Lives programme available and accessible to anyone in need regardless of post code, creating a city-wide service.

## ALL INCLUSIVE

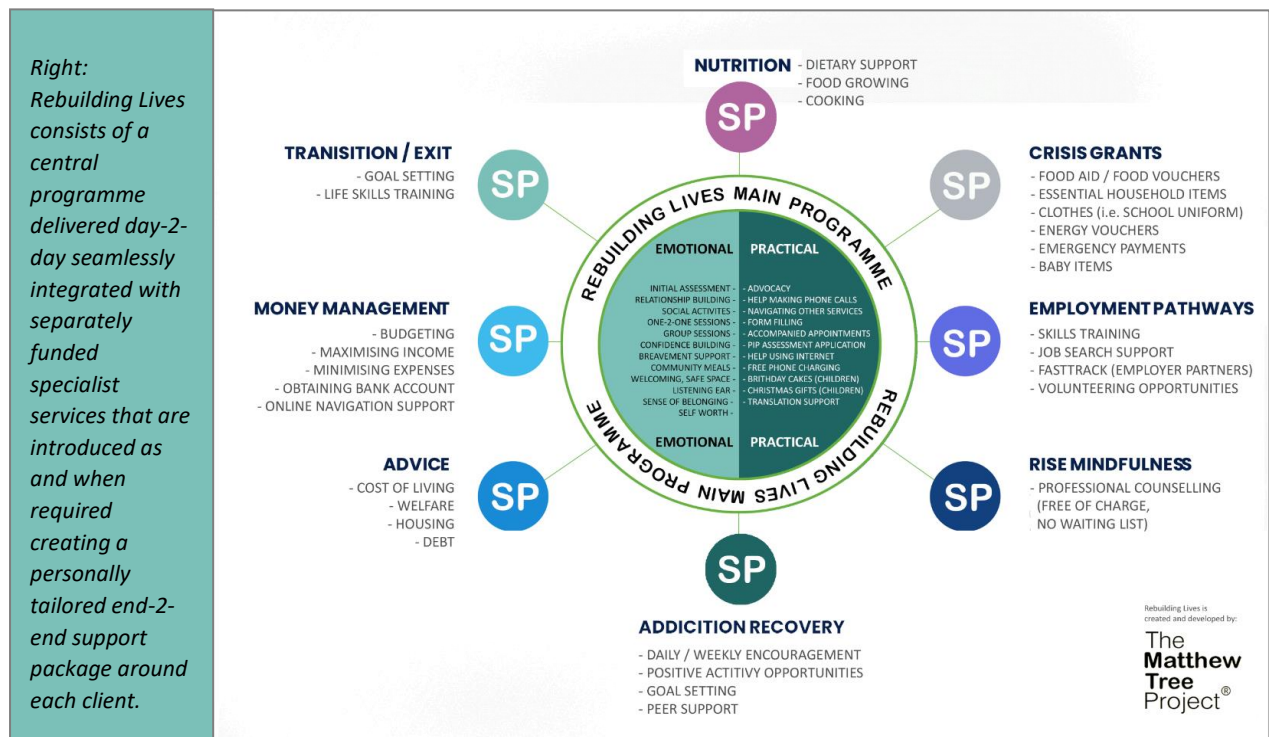
**Open to all:** no one is excluded from access to the Rebuilding Lives programme regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, post code, disability, religious belief, or sexual orientation. Anyone in crisis will receive the help they need. This affords the charity a unique insight into the poverty drivers across the board spectrum of society as we do not only support one category of people or issue.


## IMMEDIATE RELIEF, SUBSTANTIVE & TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

**Immediate relief** includes stabilising crisis, i.e., avoiding becoming homeless, stop missing meals, keep house warm. **Substantive change** includes resolving debt and managing money better; maximising income and reducing expenditure; staying in addiction recovery; eating better; feeling better about self; have more control over life choices; learning new skills; not isolated; engaging more in the wider community. **Transformational change** includes higher aspirations; self-belief; positive change of worldview; caring more about others; better quality of life.

## GIVING PEOPLE HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE

At the heart of this *innovative award-winning multi-agency social mobility change model*, are the people it supports, empowered and in control of their unique journey. Rebuilding Lives positively impacts self-confidence, self-worth, self-esteem and converts hopelessness into hope and belief that a healthier, happier, wealthier future is possible and worth fighting for. The Rebuilding Lives Programme builds resilience and is transformational.





## CASE STUDY: AT RISK OF LOSING JOB & HEALTH

Referred by	Self-Referral – his work colleague, at Bristol City Council, recommended he come to The Matthew Tree Project.
Reason for referral	Support for his PIP (personal independence payment) court appeal hearing before a judge, GP and DWP employee
Situation	<p>M, a 49-year-old man, lives with his wife and teenage daughter who works in an outdoor role for Bristol City Council maintaining the parks and open spaces. M enjoys his job and working outdoors is very important for his mental health conditions. He is struggling with ill health, both physically and mentally. He has osteoarthritis, musculoskeletal connective tissue disorder, poor mental health - mixed anxiety, depression and Tourette's.</p> <p>M was doing all he could to help himself. He was struggling to hold down his job working for BCC local authority due to his conditions even though, upon his request, his employer had granted him light duties, but even this was now proving too much for him. He struggled to get to work and was taking more and more sick days and annual leave to try to cover his absences. He had no life outside work, his wife was now preparing all his meals, helping him to bathe and trying to keep the house running because M couldn't do anything when he returned home from work, and he often just went straight to bed due to chronic fatigue and the pain he was suffering. In addition to his poor physical health, he was also battling poor mental health but wanted to try to remain in employment for his family, his dignity and his overall wellbeing. His wife had to accompany him to all his medical appointments because his anxiety and poor cognitive memory function meant he could not retain anything health professionals said to him.</p> <p>M had made an application to the DWP for PIP so he could stay in employment at reduced hours. M's initial PIP application and mandatory reconsideration were both rejected with zero points, so M requested to appeal the decision in front of a judge in court. M needed help preparing for and attending the PIP appeal court hearing.</p> <p>M was at the end of his tether and didn't know where to turn. He had tried several places for help, including Citizens Advice Bureau, but no one could help him. He desperately needed the extra income from</p>

	<p>PIP to allow him to live a normal life. He was no longer capable to work full time.</p> <p>M had been waiting since April 2023 and finally a date for a telephone court appeal hearing was scheduled for the end of June 2024. He was very anxious about the appeal and needed considerable help preparing for and attending it.</p>
What they needed	Support and a need to feel that someone cared about his situation. Help preparing for the hearing, advocacy and support on the day of the PIP appeal court hearing.
What we did for them	<p>M came in every week with his wife in the lead up to his telephone court hearing for support and preparation of all his paperwork, we also worked through his application decision paperwork from DWP, as he disagreed with all their decisions. He frequently got quite anxious as he was very nervous about the PIP appeal phone call.</p> <p>We advocated and supported M during the PIP court appeal hearing. Present at the appeal hearing was a judge, and the doctor and DWP staff member who had made the original decision to deny M his PIP application. During the appeal hearing M experienced high levels of anxiety and required frequent breaks because of this. Our advocacy involvement enabled the judge to understand what was happening and ensured the hearing was not aborted.</p>
Outcome	<p>M won his appeal and will now receive <u>full</u> Personal Independence Payment (PIP). This will allow him to reduce his hours at work and buy up extra holiday if needed to allow further days off work to recover from days worked. This is a just decision that should have been made at the outset but due to the systemic failure of our welfare system process, often people are forced to go through gruelling experiences like this to receive what they are legally entitled to. Sadly, all too often, many people are unable to.</p> <p>This is just one example of the type of case evidence The Matthew Tree Project use to highlight systemic failure with governmental policy makers in the hope that others do not have to go through the same in justice.</p>
Client Quote	<p><i>"My wife and I are so grateful to you all, when I first came into The Matthew Tree Project, I didn't have anywhere else to turn, I had tried lots of organisations who said they couldn't help me. I was desperate and felt so alone and that no one cared, and I was very anxious about my PIP hearing. You immediately put me at ease, and I felt welcomed, safe and understood. Without you I wouldn't have made it through the hearing phone call, as it was, I had to keep leaving the room but having you by my side explaining to the judge I needed to take a breather was the reason I believe I was finally awarded PIP. Thank you all so much."</i></p>

## DAILY AND WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

### Community Support Hub, Filwood

The Rebuilding Lives Programme is delivered from the charity's **Community Support Hub located in the very heart of the Filwood community (BS4 1JN)**, open Monday to Friday (pictured right) is where the food aid is distributed, group sessions happen and one2one support sessions take place where next steps are agreed and required actions implemented. If someone is unable to come in person, because of sickness for example, then we provide telephone crisis support to discuss the pressing issues and next step actions.



In addition to providing community engagement and holistic crisis support, the programme reduces isolation by bringing people together in a safe and socially vibrant environment, to help themselves, each other, and engage positively within the wider community where they live.

Filwood, one of the country's most disadvantaged communities is in the top 1.5% of most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK, has one of the highest levels of obesity (60.1%), child poverty (25.3%), 58.3% are claiming unemployment related benefits and only 2.4% have above average mental wellbeing. Poverty results in major health and social issues that are damaging for our citizens, costly for government and create a negative cycle from generation to generation.

We receive referrals from a wide range of statutory and non-statutory organisations and accept self-referral. This often happens when an existing client or ex-client tells someone they know to be struggling of their positive experience within the programme.

The Rebuilding Lives Programme provides a range of activities, driven by client needs as determined by them:

#### One-2-One Weekly Support Package Elements:

- Diagnosis & understanding of underlying causes & barriers to progress.
- Advocacy
- Befriending
- Nutritional wellbeing (food & nutritional screening)
- Free internet access
- Free phone charging points
- Support filling out forms, understanding & replying to letters.
- Listening ear/emotional support
- Accompanied appointments, hearings, assessments.
- Volunteering opportunities (to build confidence and learn new skills)
- Activities in support of addiction recovery
- Social interaction/inclusion

- Provision of essential household items (white/brown goods) grants
- Provision of crisis grants to (a) pay off debt such as energy arrears; and (b) emergency payments to turn the gas/electric meter back on
- Christmas presents (client's children)
- Transition/exit to independence support

**Specialist Services, introduced as required include (funded separately):**

- Professional Counselling
- Advice
- Financial wellbeing
- Skills training
- Securing Employment
- Warm Homes Project
- Children's Essentials

**Group Activities:**

- Citizen Voice Group
- Food Growing
- Food Appeal Collections
- Community Engagement, i.e., Name the Bear, Easter Competition
- Children's Christmas Present Appeal
- Community Meal Celebrations

The Matthew Tree Project Holistic Crisis Support Hub is open Monday to Friday for clients to come depending upon their needs and circumstances. Every client is different, every client case is different and because of this a key feature of the Rebuilding Lives Programme is that it adapts to create a uniquely tailored package of end-to-end joined-up support around each vulnerable household.

**Urban food growing site (using organic principles)**

**Wednesday** is the food growing site volunteering and training day. The Matthew Tree Project run an urban food growing site in Brislington, Bristol (pictured below). The food grown is added to the food stocks of the charity to be distributed to vulnerable households who are unable to afford to eat properly. Food is grown using organic principles and clients receive food growing training, positive outdoor engagement with others (feeling part of a team and social interaction), and the sense of making a positive contribution towards the work of the charity.



## VITAL ROLE OF THE CITIZEN VOICE GROUP & CO-PRODUCTION



Thursday (Community Support Hub) is when the Citizen Voice Group come together to discuss what challenges people are facing and what changes, if any, should be made to the Rebuilding Lives Programme. This is open to all clients to be part of – no-one is excluded. It is also a ‘social’ time where lunch is served, and people mingle. Many new friendships derive out of the time people spend together and it is due to the Citizen Voice Group that for the coming year the Rebuilding Lives Programme has been enhanced to where more time and expertise is devoted into helping people address the underlying causes of their crisis and removal of barriers to progress.

Co-production is central to the development of the ‘Rebuilding Lives’ social change model: creating priorities, language, and approaches among all those involved.

People with lived experience (clients and ex-clients; some staff; and some volunteers) work alongside everyone else, those employed and the volunteers within The Matthew Tree Project to shape every aspect of the programme: bringing a wealth and diversity of empathy and experience to our planning, practical development, and external communications.

Co-production within the ‘Rebuilding Lives Support Programme’ works on two levels:

- micro-level in terms of the individually tailored support each client case receives.
- macro-level in terms of the organisation and the scope of services provided.

Examples of co-production within the ‘Rebuilding Lives’ programme:

- people who use services co-facilitating the programme’s service delivery to others
- everyone who use services are given multiple avenues, informal and formal, to input and shape services (for themselves and for others) at every point of engagement with the programme – at least once a week. These include but is not restricted to informal chit-chat in the social

communal spaces; anonymous 'Comment Book' publicly available at all times; formal interview; citizen voice group which runs every Thursday and is open to all current and ex-clients.

- creating change through the sharing of experiences with the 'community' created within the programme, which bring together a wide spectrum of diverse peoples, with wide and diverse experiences and knowledge, enabling anyone to contribute to making a real difference to their community by way of helping others to improve their well-being, their circumstances and live well.
- giving autonomy to the service delivery team to do whatever is required to meet the needs of each client case - needs as determined by the client themselves.
- all clients close their own case which means each client can receive support from the programme for as long as they feel they need it.
- all clients choose their own food.

The key characteristics of co-production within The Matthew Tree Project are:

- Ensuring everyone involved in the project understands what co-production is and why it is so important. It is at the heart and soul of the DNA of the organisation.
- Training all team members to 'capture' and 'record' all relevant client comment, no matter how informal as we have found it's the informal conversations that are the most valuable of all.
- Co-produce project goals to ensure that they represent the aspirations of our clients.
- Ensuring our goal setting is flexible to adapt and change over time. Work towards them determinedly but being flexible about the methods – co-production throws up more creative and inclusive solutions than cannot be predicted at the outset.
- Co-production is about creating new, more resourceful solutions, not just finding the middle ground. We strive for the 'best' and most 'effective' solutions and are not tempted by the 'path of least resistance' approach.
- The needs of our clients take priority over the needs of the organisation.
- Ensuring we have the right people involved. If specific skills, experience, or characteristics are needed, we are transparent about this.
- We recognise we will never achieve perfect co-production, but we strive for it anyway!

## OTHER REGULAR ACTIVITIES

**Food Appeal Collections** happen once a month in partnership with ASDA. This is where a team will ask shoppers, as they enter the store, to buy an extra item or two and pop it into our basket when they leave. This is a great source of food supplies and serves to publicly raise awareness of the issue of local poverty. Often conversations that take place during this activity can lead to new people volunteering or financially supporting the work of the charity.



**Children's Christmas Present Appeal** Every December the charity works in partnership with several large employers in Bristol to ensure all the children being supported by the programme receive at least one brand new gift to open on Christmas Day. We provide a list of our children to each partner employer with the age and sex of the child. Employees who choose to support the appeal pick one child and purchase a brand-new gift for that child for £10-£15 in value. Then, one evening in December we invite all those who have contributed by purchasing a gift to join the team for music and mince pies whilst wrapping all the gifts ready to be delivered to each vulnerable household before Christmas Day. Over 250 children benefited from this activity last Christmas.



**Community Meal Celebration** every December the charity works in partnership with one employer in Bristol to provide a Community Meal Celebration. Last December our partner for this event was AND Digital. This is always a wonderfully joyous occasion where many isolated and lonely people come together to enjoy, what for them will be their one and only festive feast of the Christmas season.



**Name the Bear Easter Competition.** At various points through the year, we organise community engagement events that are fun and encourage people to come together. In previous years we have put on Spring Fayre's and November 5<sup>th</sup> firework display and BBQ's. This year we ran a 'Name the Bear' Easter Competition that was aimed at the children in the community, many of whom walk past our Community Support Hub on their way to school. The Bear was displayed centre stage in our window and the children would come in to enter the name they choose for him/her. We then put on a buffet style food event to select the winning name, lucky dip style. Other prizes were donated by local businesses so that we were able to have multiple winners. The whole event was extremely popular.





## CASE STUDY: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Referred by	Self-Referral – son of single mum who was a client of TMTP
Reason for referral	School leaver unable to find employment
Situation	<p>TH first encountered The Matthew Tree Project when his single mum was a client of our Rebuilding Lives programme, struggling on low income and unable to cover household bills. TH had left school and was enrolled in a scheme based at Bristol City Football in which he was learning media studies. He then finished the scheme at BCFC and was feeling lost, unable to get a job and bored at home.</p>
What we did for them & outcome	<p>His mother was now volunteering with The Matthew Tree Project on a regular basis and asked if TH could volunteer as well. TH started volunteering aged 17 years old in 2019, at our supermarket food appeals which involved approaching shoppers as they entered the store and asking them for food donations. In 2020 when Covid hit, our services upscaled overnight and we needed all the help we could get at our food distribution warehouse. TH started to come on a regular basis and very quickly became an integral part of the food distribution team. He assisted the drivers and regularly went out on home deliveries to our clients; the drivers were always very happy when they were teamed with TH and often commented on what a hard worker he was. He also interacted well with clients on the deliveries and represented TMTP well. During this time, we noticed TH grew in confidence and skills set. In addition to drivers' mate, he also worked closely with the warehouse supervisor and assisted within the warehouse, putting client food orders together, loading and offloading vehicles, stacking shelves and cleaning. Then a paid cleaning job role became available, and he was successful in securing part time employment with us as the warehouse cleaner.</p> <p>As well as working part time for us he also continued volunteering daily. TH's confidence went from strength to strength and in 2021 he was successful in securing a full-time warehouse position in Avonmouth, which is on the other side of Bristol to where TH lives in Filwood. TH says it was due to the skills and confidence he gained whilst with TMTP that enabled him to get the job.</p>

TH has 4 siblings and lived with his single mother in one of the poorest wards in Bristol, where gaining employment is incredibly difficult. Securing his full-time position allowed him to be able to save money and he was able to move out of the family home and now lives independently, close to his new employment. He has also travelled abroad for the first time on his own and is loving life.

Client Quote

*"I worked and volunteered with The Matthew Tree Project for a few years and really enjoyed my time. I learnt skills like packing, unloading products, which helped me get into warehouse work when lockdown ended. I also had experience learning to work with and alongside others. The skills I learnt in this time helped me settle nicely into my new job as I already had all the experience gained that opened the door to new job opportunities. It was a good stepping stone for me and taught me skills I'd have to learn quickly in a warehouse environment and would have struggled if I had gone straight into warehouse work."*

## MONITORING, EVALUATION & IMPACT



Since 2017 we have been in the process of designing and implementing a bespoke case measurement and evaluation software system based on the industry sector leading platform 'Apricot'. Importantly the software is user friendly, customisable to our unique work and is designed to improve our data collection methodology, understanding of our work and improve our service support provision to our client group.

Apricot offers several 'sector firsts' in the way clients are supported.

### NO-ONE SLIPS THROUGH THE GAPS

All new clients are referred online via our highly secure, encrypted Apricot 'refer client' interface. For the first time we will have visibility of everyone who has been referred to the 'Rebuilding Lives' programme and at the end of each week, those who have been referred but have not turned up for support are being contacted to see if we can help them overcome whatever barriers may be holding them back from attending.

### REFERRAL ORGANISATIONS CAN CHECK THE CASE STATUS OF REFERRED CLIENTS

Each referral organisation has a unique log-in name and password which provides them with access to a list of all the clients they have referred to the programme and the current status of each case. For the first time referral organisations have access to impact information because of their referral, which will help in the accurate reporting of medium to long-term impact and outcomes to their funders and supporters.

Apricot offers a wide range of reporting options so the quality of information will be better. This is a very large and challenging piece of work and additional funding for the expertise required to fully implement and then manage the IT system network and software has been secured so that we are able to maximise Apricot's considerable potential.

We use quantitative and qualitative data to measure the effectiveness and impact of our work and get this information directly from our beneficiaries.

### EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

The Matthew Tree Project appointed Clarity Clear Solutions for Social Purpose Organisations (Clarity CIC), a registered Community Interest Company No 09147860 with their registered Office in Okehampton, Devon to undertake 'Theory of Change' evaluation of our work and make proposals for improvement.

Formed in 2014, Clarity Clear Solutions for Social Purpose Organisations CIC is a non-profit company limited by guarantee. Clarity provides a skilled resource for the sector, helping organisations solve everyday issues, building resources and adding capacity.

## THEORY OF CHANGE: CASE MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

As we work with clients, we record any positive or negative change they tell us about and place it within the context of our ***'Theory of Change & Social Impact Measurement Framework'*** which underpins the 'Rebuilding Lives Support Programme'.

If a client tells us, for example, that their benefits are now in payment we would record a positive outcome for the payments and also another for the fact their financial situation has improved. By classifying these two positive changes and mapping them to the Theory of Change outcome groups we arrive at a count of positive change outcomes which measures the impact of our work with each client.

So, the client's benefit payment success will count towards 'Reduced Material Deprivation' and also 'Increased feeling of being in control of money/budget' as well as some Theory of Change measures.

Some of the outcomes in the Theory of Change Framework can occur frequently, such as the client having a more positive outlook or feeling happier, others will mostly be one-time changes such as moving to better accommodation.

Over the course of the last 7 years the 'Rebuilding Lives Support Programme' have designed a bespoke online case management software system based on the Apricot platform. Impact data is being collected at every interaction the client has with the programme. The case management system enables us to understand and improve the level of support provided and report on the impact of the programme to stakeholders and policy makers.

### 6 higher level outcomes of the 'Rebuilding Lives' Programme':

- People feel safe and more secure.
- People have support networks and feel connected.
- People have new or improved skills.
- People have improved health and wellbeing.
- People have improved resilience.
- People have hope and a purpose.

## PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

Many of our clients are 'vulnerably housed' and at risk of homelessness. **Over 60%** of clients are at medium or high risk of homelessness at the time of their referral to The Matthew Tree Project. We are successful in over 90% of cases at preventing homelessness happening.

A key aspect of the 'Rebuilding Lives' programme is its effectiveness to stabilise the crisis and prevent it getting any worse, thus for many, avoiding the threat of homelessness becoming a reality.

A range of different factors are used to signify the degree of risk, such as: receipt of eviction notice; eviction court hearing date set; degree of rent arrears; being in dispute with landlord; habitability of the home (health and environmental issues); bedroom tax; change in circumstances, i.e. family breakdown, loss of job, significant reduction of income, etc.

## CASE STUDY: COST OF LIVING / CHILD POVERTY



Reason for referral	Cost of Living / Loss of Job
Referred by	Self-referral
Situation	<p>Family of 6; 2 adults and 4 children, aged, 9y, 10y, 14y, and 17y.</p> <p>'D' self-referred herself and her family to us in May 2023, she had lost her part time job, due to ill health. She is suffering from severe Chron's disease, anaemia, chronic fatigue and is under investigation for heart problems. Her husband is working on a self-employed basis, but on a very low income and has also had some health issues and had to take some weeks off work. He does not get paid when off work. Since 'D' left her job and with the cost-of-living crisis rising they found it very impossible to pay basic household bills and buy food and their debts were rising significantly.</p>
What they needed	<p>Food Aid, help with energy bills, PIP application, emotional support, advice and practical help with severe damp and mould in her property. Help with a large water debt of £984. Help writing letters to employer, applications and form filling.</p>
What we did for them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We supported 'D' with food aid and advocating with other organisations on her behalf.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed a PIP application and a DLA (disability living allowance) application for her 9yr old son who suffers with Tourette's syndrome.</li> <li>• Applied for energy vouchers.</li> <li>• Purchased a dehumidifier to help with the damp and mould to aid better health living conditions.</li> <li>• Purchased energy saving lightbulbs and radiator insulation to reduce energy bills.</li> <li>• Made application for 'Assist and Restart Scheme' with Bristol Water.</li> </ul>
Outcome	PIP awarded. Energy vouchers awarded, dehumidifier has completely improved the damp and mould in her home, and she said she has noticed a significant difference. Assist and Restart Scheme with Bristol Water put in place; she now has a plan with them, paying £1.00 a month for 2 years after which the debt will be written off.
Comment	<i>"I don't know what I would have done without The Matthew Tree Project, you have helped me so much with everything, I am very grateful for all your help, and the food has enabled me to make meals for my family. Having assistance with my debts, and applications has helped us so much, we were under so much stress before coming and didn't know where to turn. Thank you to all the team."</i>

## REBUILDING LIVES 2023 Factsheet

Measure	2023
Number of unique beneficiaries	
Adults	54.4%
Children	45.6%
Case load: Number of people being supported at 01/01/2023	144
Case load: Number of people being supported at 31/12/2023	196
Case load: Increase/(decrease) in demand	+36.1%
Single person households	53.6%
Families	46.4%
Number of unique people supported during the period (2023)	1123
Projected number of unique people supported for the year ahead (2024)	1390
Location of client households	
Number of households supported in the period - total (2023)	431
Number of households - BS1	4
Number of households - BS2	4
Number of households - BS3	8
Number of households - BS4	317
Number of households - BS5	18
Number of households - BS8	4
Number of households - BS10	4
Number of households - BS13	38
Number of households - BS14	18
Number of households - BS15	4
Number of households - BS16	8
Number of households - BS30	4
<i>NB: clients from outside of the immediate Filwood BS4 area tell us that they choose to travel to The Matthew Tree Project for support because they cannot find any other similar programme local to where they live</i>	
Average length of support provided (in weeks)	
Across all cases	30.5
Isolation	
Number of clients without any other form of support	61.6%

Measure	2023
Client age groups	
16 - 25	9.0%
26 - 40	40.6%
41 - 60	40.0%
61 +	10.4%
Unknown	0%
Client employment status	
Casual labour	0%
Employed full-time	0.7%
Employed part-time	3.3%
Employed zero-hour contract	1.2%
Unpaid Maternity leave	0%
Retired	3.1%
Self-employed	1.2%
Student	0.4%
Unable to work – childcare/carer	12.6%
Unable to work - health	47.9%
Unable to work – Asylum/Immigration status	4.2%
Unemployed	19.7%
Unknown	5.7%
Client risk of homelessness	
None	14.5%
Low (but possible)	26.1%
Medium/High	63.8%
<i>Note: of all the clients at risk of homelessness over 90% were kept in housing.</i>	
What clients tell us they need support with	
Mental Health	39%
Physical Health	28%
Addiction	17%
Benefit Issues	26%
Debt	57%
Legal issues	5%
Overall, how would you rate the support you received from TMTP? (% - 7 out of 10 or higher)	98.5%
Client Goals showing some progress or achieved	67.2%

## HIGHER LEVEL OUTCOMES & CHANGE INDICATORS

Sample size: 212 households (415 people) – who have been supported for over 6 weeks.

People feel safe and more secure	Reduced material deprivation	97.4%
	Reduced fear of homelessness	48.6%
	More able to move from insecure living spaces	17.7%
	Increased feeling of empowerment to protect personal safety	29.0%
	Increased feeling of being in control of money/budget	54.1%
	More trusting and open to help	77.3%
	Increased feeling of safety	32.9%
People have support networks and feel connected	Increased feeling of being connected to a network of supportive agencies and organisations	77.1%
	Increased awareness that there are people there to help	75.2%
	Feeling of being part of a community who know & care for you	42.1%
	Reduced feelings of social isolation	39.7%
	Broader social groups	27.0%
	Better links with family	10.9%
	Improved family relationship	14.8%
	More able to access specialist services	59.3%
	Take part in volunteering	19.5%
People have improved resilience	Understanding and acknowledgment of root cause/issues	53.1%
	Increased self-sufficiency	29.0%
	Increased level of engagement	55.9%
	Increased confidence	43.1%
	Improved control over own life choices	31.5%
	Less negative feelings (anger/resentment)	51.9%
People have new and improved skills	Increased skills in being work ready	22.5%
	Increased ability to grow own food and develop cooking skills	45.7%
	Better able at working as part of a team	19.1%
	Ability to budget	37.5%
	Develop new skills to be able to earn a living	18.1%
People have improved health and wellbeing	Increased access to healthy foods	98.1%
	Decreased malnutrition	96.2%
	Improved physical health	93.3%
	Improved healthy weight levels	33.8%
	Improved mental wellbeing	99.1%
	Improved sports skills/active lifestyle	35.5%
	Better able to access food and nutritional help	100.0%
	Better eating habits and diet	100.0%
	Enhanced and wider food experience	93.3%
People have hope and purpose	Increased aspirations	29.8%
	Better able to cope/stabilise crisis	66.3%
	Improved self-belief	32.5%
	Improved independence and resilience	38.2%

Our clients tell us they feel happier, calmer, manage stress better, have increased self-sufficiency, improved independence and resilience, increased aspirations, feel more confident, better able to build positive relationships. They say they engage more in the community where they live, parents say their children perform better at school, they manage money better, are better able to work as part of a team, stay in recovery, and are better able to secure and hold down a job.

## **SETTING AND ACHIEVING PERSONAL GOALS**

We encourage clients to set personal goals for themselves and then we provide support to enable the goals to be achieved. It is not for us to tell people what they should do or strive for, rather we work hard to empower each client to be in control of their journey through the programme and create the life they want. We know our intervention is successful by the change that occurs within each client's life. Avoiding eviction; resolving debt; getting and holding down a job; maximising benefit income; reducing household expenditure; improved and better relationships; better housing conditions; increased self-confidence and self-esteem; learning new life skills (managing money better; cooking from scratch at home; food growing; Improved English language; IT skills); eating better and more healthily; improved mental health; staying in recovery from addiction; 42% of clients with children say school performance of their children improves since being in the programme.

## CASE STUDY: DOMESTIC ABUSE / HOMELESSNESS



Reason for referral	Domestic violence Homeless
Referred by	Self-referral
Situation	<p>'E' fled domestic violence and was staying with her daughter, but due to continual arguments the relationship with her daughter broke down. She became scared for her safety and fled the daughters' home that caused her to become homeless. She is being treated for mental health conditions by Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust having been diagnosed with bipolar, PTSD, and extreme anxiety. 'A' was admitted into hospital after an episode caused by her situation. When she was discharged from hospital, she had no option but to live and sleep in her car. She went to BCC and was placed under the homeless prevention team. After spending the day at the council offices, she was sent in the evening to temporary accommodation, which was in extremely poor condition, and she must share the house with 4 other women. She was really scared and was left to get on with it which caused her mental health and anxiety to escalate to a very dangerous level.</p> <p>She contacted us and said she had no one else to help her. She also has a 16-year-old son, who she is not able to have with her at the temporary accommodation. 'A' needs accommodation suitable for them to live</p>

	together. She has been on the waiting list for over a month with Missing Link domestic abuse service but has still not been contacted.
What they needed	Emotional Support, food aid, form filling, liaising and advocating with other organisations. She had been trying to liaise with her housing officer who repeatedly did not respond to her.
What we are doing for them	Liaising with BCC regarding her temporary housing. Providing food aid, gifts for her child and grandchildren, household goods, pans, cutlery, bedding and clothes.
Outstanding	Continuing to liaise with BCC to help 'E' move to a permanent safe and secure home.
Outcome	'E' does not feel alone anymore which has helped her mental health condition. We are continuing to build a trusting relationship with E, she says she feels safe coming to us.
Comment	<i>"I don't think I would be here without your help; you are the ones that have done more for me than anyone else, I can't thank you enough, without you my son would not have his mother now. I do not go anywhere other than to come to you, as I feel so anxious to even leave the room. Thank you for offering me a safe and supporting place where I feel I can trust you and feel comfortable to come to, and for all the practical help as well, I didn't have any food, anything to cook in or eat with and you have helped so much with that and for your ongoing help with dealing with BCC. You are so wonderful" x</i>

## OTHER LOCATION(S)

In addition to the Community Support Hub in Filwood and the urban food growing site in Brislington, The Matthew Tree Project also occupy the ground floor and second floor of Beech House in Almondsbury.

Administration & Training Centre, Almondsbury, South Gloucestershire



Left: The Matthew Tree Project occupy the Ground and 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of Beech House, Almondsbury.

## RELATED PARTIES: RISE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

The reason The Matthew Tree Project was established in 2010 is to:

“To relieve financial hardship amongst all peoples of all ages in the local communities in accordance with a Christian ethos whilst contributing towards the eradication of poverty in the UK, once and for all.”

RISE Social Enterprise has been established in the furtherance of this objective.

The Matthew Tree Project wholly own Rise Social Enterprise Limited, a company limited by shares number 10740064. See [WWW.RISESOCIAENTERPRISE.CO.UK](http://WWW.RISESOCIAENTERPRISE.CO.UK) for more information.



RISE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE was established in 2017 and is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Matthew Tree Project ([www.the-matthew-tree-project.org](http://www.the-matthew-tree-project.org)), registered in England at Companies House, number 10740064.

RISE Social Enterprise objectives are to:

- Contribute towards the objects of The Matthew Tree Project by providing skills training and employment opportunities to clients of the charity.
- Contribute towards the objects of The Matthew Tree Project by improving physical and mental health of people on low incomes by making nutrient dense foods desirable and accessible.
- Contribute towards the overall objective of The Matthew Tree Project which is to eradicate poverty from the UK by using the evidence gathered from the frontline work of The Matthew Tree Project to affect systemic change through direct engagement with policymakers and other charities in the UK.
- Contribute towards the financial sustainability of The Matthew Tree Project by generating an annual surplus of funds to be given to the charity as a new income stream of unrestricted funding.



The concept behind RISE is to create a local not-for-profit food business model under our 'PURA' brand that teaches the critical importance of a nutrient dense diet for good physical and cognitive health and a longer life expectancy, and to make nutritionally dense foods accessible to those on the lowest incomes – the people who need it most. Importantly, the model will be good for the environment by promoting locally produced foods, reducing food miles and increasing food security, naturally grown fruits and vegetables without the use of pesticides, fertilizers, chemicals and responsibly reared animals without the use of growth hormones and excessive anti-biotics.

Nutrition science is changing the way humans eat. The discovery of nutrients, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants has completely changed our eating habits. Along with advances in the food industry and changes over the past 50 years, nutrition has become a major public health issue but also one that leaves most people confused.

As we know, the growing number of overweight people worldwide is a real problem. Fifty years ago, only 3% of the population was obese, and today, that percentage has risen to 15%. Obesity was a rare disease only 50 years ago, but today it is one of the major issues in modern society. The statistics are really exploding, not to mention the links between bad eating habits and metabolic diseases (such as diabetes, cholesterol, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, allergies, endocrine imbalance). There is now even talk of cases of non-alcoholic cirrhosis, a liver disease linked to an excessive rich diet. We should wonder how our diets have changed over the last 50 years to cause this shocking change.

Here is a list of the various changes between our dietary tendencies today and those of our parents and grandparents:

- The introduction of supermarkets and industrially processed products. High-processed and ultra-processed foods are accompanied by attractive packaging and advertising slogans that are appealing to consumers and highlight misleading hypothetical nutritional benefits to entice consumers to buy.
- The creation and expansion of fast-food restaurants.
- The emergence of the first dietary and nutritional recommendations led to a change in nutritional vocabulary. Since the introduction of nutritional science, it has been recommended to eat proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, etc., and no longer real foods.

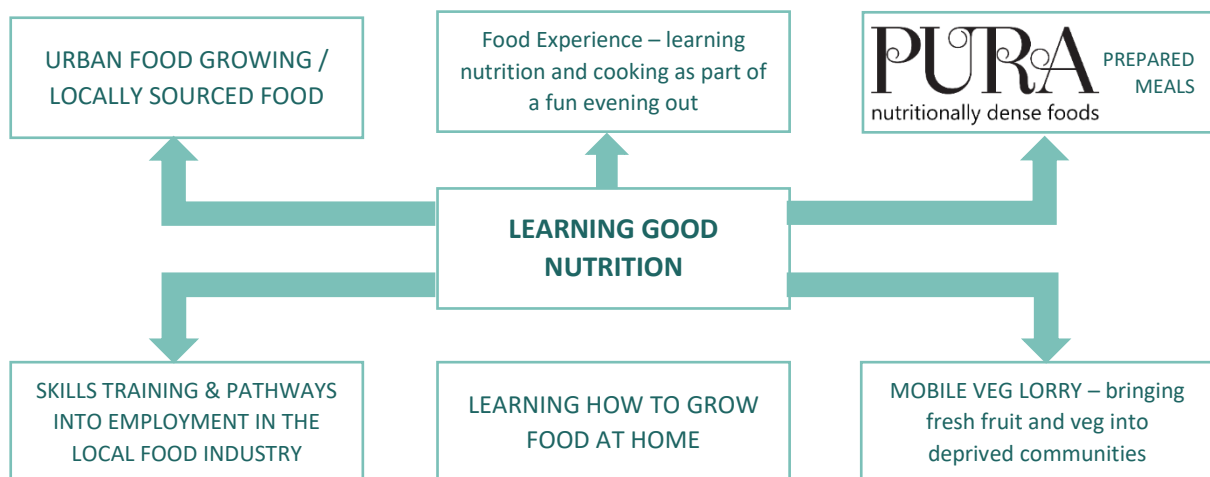
Given all these changes, it is easy to conclude that this type of diet is not suitable for humans. In addition, consumers are confused and don't understand what they need to do to eat well. As a result, healthy eating has become inaccessible for most people – especially those on the lowest incomes. People ask themselves questions such as: What should I eat? How much protein do I need per day? How many calories should I consume?

These questions are common today and are completely legitimate, as we have all been bombarded with conflicting information from the media, which makes it so unclear what we should or shouldn't do. In the past, our mothers passed on culinary knowledge and good eating habits. In recent decades, that role has been taken over by scientist, food manufacturers, and, to a lesser extent, the government, which enforces food guidelines, labelling rules, and dietary recommendations that nutritionists often criticize.

Today, we no longer eat what our grandparents ate. This is the first time in human history that such a monumental change has occurred so quickly and with so many implications on the way we eat.

We believe it is possible to make learning good eating habits logical and simple by talking about real, whole foods that are as unprocessed and as natural as possible. A healthy diet is simple, easy to implement, logical, and the objective of RISE Social Enterprise is to make it accessible to everyone.

The RISE business concept has learning the importance of good nutrition at its heart and from this foundation, providing connected services that enable and empower people to make consuming a good nutrient dense diet desirable and accessible.



*Above top left: fresh fruit & veg lorry. Above top right: urban food growing site. Above bottom left: training and small batch production kitchen. Above bottom right: refrigerated van*

We are partnering with UWE and the Cranfield Trust to establish a sustainable and successful business model for this social change concept.

### UWE Social Hackathon

We are hosting the UWE Social Hackathon in November 2024 which includes UWE staff and up to 25 students at our premises in Almondsbury, for the entire event (likely to run from 10am to 4pm). The Hackathon presents the students with the business/social change concept as a challenge to develop ideas towards practical implementation which the students present at the end of the day.

This then links neatly into UWE's [Student Consultancy Project](#) run by UWE Bristol Business School. **Group projects usually commence in late January and individual projects from April.** They run between eight and 16 weeks, dependent on which course the student is registered on. This may involve

undergraduate, post graduate or MBA students. Briefs for Business (group projects) are required by February 2025 and for Business (individual project) by January 2025. This provides time to consider and develop some of the ideas from the Social Hackathon in November to include in a brief for SCP.

## CRANFIELD TRUST SUPPORT

### Scope of Work:

The Matthew Tree Project (“TMTP”) has applied to Cranfield Trust for support in preparing a Business Plan specifically for their wholly owned RISE social enterprise which was established in 2017 but had to downsize dramatically due to covid.

The volunteer will help TMTP to produce a Business Plan which will result in surplus revenue which can be reinvested for growth and be used to subsidise the charity’s operations.

TMTP currently lacks the resources to carry out the Business Plan themselves, and although the charity has experienced consultants on their board and management teams, they would appreciate the perspective of an external consultant. A commercial plan is needed to provide a costed budget for a potential social enterprise which will provide a valuable service that competes with the private sector, whilst also contributing towards TMTP’s charitable objectives.

The volunteer will need to be able to scan the horizon for potential sources of funding and investment from foundations, philanthropists, and potential commercial partners. In the past, RISE has partnered with McDonalds and Boston Tea Party to provide training and employment opportunities but future partners for RISE do not need to be in the food / catering industry.

As well as having strategic development experience, the volunteer consultant would need to have experience of working with start-up companies or social enterprises. However, knowledge of the charity sector or charity fundraising is not necessary, or of homelessness. It is more important for TMTP for the volunteer to have strong business development skills in any sector, and to be driven by the prospect of exploring the possibilities with them for a successful social enterprise.

The charity would like to start the project as soon as the right volunteer consultant is available, and we anticipate that this will be in early 2024. The project is expected to take approximately 9-12 months but there is no fixed deadline – a long term and sustainable plan is more important than quick results. More details are per below at section 8 *Time commitment*.

Cranfield Trust usually aims to provide a local volunteer so that face to face meetings is possible, especially at the beginning of the project, however the project can also be delivered remotely or in a mixture of face to face and online meetings. In this case, the charity is keen for the volunteer to have the right mix of skills and experience so a volunteer based outside of Bristol or the South West would be no problem. The charity would be keen for a first meeting to be held face to face to establish the relationship. This meeting would be at Portbury in Somerset where the CEO and Chair currently hold a monthly face to face meeting. The charity has agreed to reimburse the reasonable expenses of the volunteer consultant, should expenses be incurred. Microsoft Teams works well for remote meetings as the CEO needs to be able to lipread.

There will be some “homework” for the charity between sessions to gather information and do some focused research, and the consultant will advise on the best approach at each session, but this is expected to consist of the following (actual dates and deliverables to be agreed between the volunteer consultant and the Key Project Contact):

- an initial introductory kick off call with the Key Project Contact and Project Sponsor and others as needed to discuss the work already done in this area, to agree an appropriate action plan for the project, to agree the process and timetable to completion, and the roles and responsibilities of staff, the board and the volunteer.
- approx. 1-2 sessions per month to progress the project.
- a draft outline of the Business Plan for review by the board at the next available board meeting (date TBC), and updates at subsequent meetings
- interim emails to discuss progress, provide any missing information and ensure the project is on track for completion by the agreed date.
- presentation of a draft Business Plan to the board for approval
- revisions and completion of the Plan
- a wrap up meeting to agree any next steps.

Should an additional standalone project result from the process, for example, a Marketing Plan, this will be treated as a new project and subject to availability, could be managed by the same volunteer or another volunteer if such a project requires different specialist skills.


The charity can share relevant information with the volunteer ahead of starting the project, and the volunteer can also review information in the charity’s latest annual report and on their website and social media accounts to understand the organisation’s ethos.

#### Expected Deliverables:

A Business Plan for RISE with options for the board to consider.

#### Overall Impact:

The success of RISE will add an extra dimension to the impact The Matthew Tree Project has on the community it serves. It will provide an additional income stream but also employment, training and skills opportunities which align with the objects of the charity.



## CASE STUDY: DEBT / HOUSING / / HEALTH / CHILD POVERTY

Reason for referral	Unmanageable debt / housing / child poverty
Referred by	Missing Link
Situation	<p>‘P’ is a mother to 2 small children: 5yr &amp; 6 yr old boys. She fled domestic violence in December (2022) and was housed in temporary accommodation for a year. This has now become a permanent home. The house is very damp with significant mould, broken doors, and lack of insulation. ‘P’ suffers with fibromyalgia and severe trauma and mental health due to the domestic violence. Her 6-year-old son is severely autistic and has been diagnosed with SLOS (Smith-Lemli-Opitz Syndrome). Even though Bristol City Council housed the family in a 3-bedroom property due to her son’s illness /condition, she has been forced to pay bedroom tax for one of the bedrooms since moving in.</p> <p>Her sons need separate bedrooms due to her 6-year-olds condition as this significantly disrupts her other son.</p> <p>Her sons DLA (disability living allowance) was stopped because ‘P’ was late with her renewal application due to her mental health/capacity. This is now being appealed against.</p> <p>In addition, her violent ex-partner took out a £6,000 loan and put ‘P’ as guarantor. The loan has not been paid and ‘P’ is now being chased by the debt collection agency.</p>

What is needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help with unmanageable debt.</li> <li>• Help to make the home accessible due to health and disability conditions.</li> </ul>
What we are doing for 'P'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contacted debt agency and are working with our partner, Step Change, regarding the outstanding loan debt.</li> <li>• Contact BCC to get adaptations and repairs completed to the property, including a walk-in shower, and ramp to the property to enable 'P' to use her mobility scooter. BCC has agreed to carry out the works, but to date have not completed. Continuing contact.</li> <li>• Regular food aid.</li> <li>• Provided radiator insulation (all radiators are situated on walls that are external), a dehumidifier to assist with the damp &amp; mould, door draught excluders and an electric blanket for 'P' to use to keep heating costs down.</li> </ul>
Comment	<p><i>"Thanks for helping us, I struggle to talk on the phone to the council as I don't think they care or want to listen. I do get angry and having you ring on my behalf I feel will really help with everything. The food is helping enormously and the things you have given me to help with energy and the home are helping so much. Thank you."</i></p>

## AWARDS



The work of the charity with its central and unique empowering 'Rebuilding Lives Crisis Support' model continues to win awards and receive national and international praise and recognition, which include:

- Innovation & Excellence Award Winner for '**Crisis Support NPO of the Year**' 2023
- AI Non-profit Organisation Award '**Most Empowering Crisis Support Programme**' 2023
- Corporate Live Wire **Global Award** for '**Crisis Support NPO of the Year**' 2023/24
- South West England Prestige Award for '**Crisis Support NPO of the Year**' 2023/24 (picture left)

## NATIONAL RECOGNITION

### **New: Approved Referrer to Children in Need Essentials Family Fund**

One of the recurring and most pressing 'needs' people have, is for a crisis grant and/or essential household items. **The Matthew Tree Project is now an approved referrer to the Children in Need Essentials Family Fund** which enables us to secure a range of essential items for households with children.



### **New: Strategic Partnership with Marmalade Restaurants, the Fishponds McDonald's franchise owner**

Helping people into employment has always been a key element of our work, and this year we have been successful in the **development of a key strategic partnership with large employer, McDonalds (Fishponds)** where clients looking for work, often many years unemployed, are 'given a chance' and are supported in their re-integration into the workplace by the employer and The Matthew Tree Project.



### **New: WARM HOMES PROJECT funded by the National Grid**

The Matthew Tree Project has been successful in securing funding that will enable the charity to deliver a comprehensive Warm Homes Support Service to vulnerable households. Launching in January 2024 the service will include

**Energy advice to clients:** provide advice and support to clients via drop-in sessions or appointments. Advice will include how to use heating systems properly, managing debt, energy saving and accessing benefits. How to obtain PPM vouchers and financial support for those paying by DD or quarterly is included. Home Visit Assessment and how to address damp and mould is offered together with 'Warm Home Packs'.



**International recognition has been achieved by way of THE CEO PUBLICATION, based in New York, USA, in their 25<sup>th</sup> edition featuring the 'Top 20 Dynamic CEOs of 2024', recognising our founder and CEO, Mark Goodway, as one of the top 20 dynamic CEOs from the UK based on his work with The Matthew Tree Project. This award will be announced in March 2024 and will highlight the unique work of The Matthew Tree Project (theceopublications.com).**



**National recognition has been achieved by way of an MBE** awarded to Mark Goodway, Founder & CEO of The Matthew Tree Project, in the Kings Birthday Honours List, June 2023 for Services to Charity and to Disadvantaged People. Mark accepted the honour on behalf of the hundreds of people who have been involved with, and have supported The Matthew Tree Project since 2010, without which none of this would have been possible.



**ITV News** Upon announcement of the honour, featuring Mark:

(<https://youtu.be/XEDDQ9w9sjI?feature=shared>),

**Bristol Post**, featuring Mark: (<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/marks-tireless-commitment-eradicating-poverty-8525997>)

## TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The trustees (who are also directors of The Matthew Tree Project for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report (incorporating the strategic report and directors' report) and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Trustees on .....5/09/2024.....and signed on their behalf by:



Colin Sainsbury CMC FIC – Trustee Chair  
5 September 2024

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

### Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Matthew Tree Project

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

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and 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

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the 'Association of Accounting Technicians', which is one of the listed bodies.

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:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. 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
4. 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.



Andy Forse FMAAT  
Causeway Accountancy Services  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Office  
788 Fishponds Road  
Bristol BS16 3TE

Date: .....4/09/2024.....

## FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS 2023

	NOTE	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations		45,582.77	45,841.83	91,424.60	221,089.63
Grants receivable		112,529.98	101,076.00	213,605.98	81,620.00
Charitable activities		0	0	0	0
Other sources		5,014.92	0	5,014.92	5,008.14
<b>Total income</b>		<b>163,127.67</b>	<b>146,917.83</b>	<b>310,045.50</b>	<b>307,717.77</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds		4,636.32	-	4,636.32	4,875.90
Charitable activities	2	63,137.70	205,207.50	268,345.20	387,487.70
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>67,774.02</b>	<b>205,207.50</b>	<b>272,981.52</b>	<b>392,363.60</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds</b>	3	95,353.65	(58,289.67)	37,063.98	(84,645.83)
<b>Total funds at 1 January 2023</b>	10	<b>173,326.31</b>	<b>90,590.22</b>	<b>263,916.53</b>	<b>348,562.36</b>
<b>Total funds at 31 December 2023</b>	10	<b>268,679.96</b>	<b>32,300.55</b>	<b>300,980.51</b>	<b>263,916.53</b>

There are no recognised gains or losses other than the results for the year as set out above.

All activities are classed as continuing.

Fund-accounting comparative transactions are shown in note 4.

	NOTE	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	6	20,147.64	26,863.52
Investments	7	<u>1.00</u>	<u>1.00</u>
		20,148.64	26,864.52
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	8	10.00	0
Food stocks		6,103.76	4,623.70
Rise loan account		222,775.98	245,586.76
Cash at bank		<u>79,885.67</u>	<u>16,108.47</u>
		308,775.41	266,318.93
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>			
	9	<u>-</u> 27,943.54	<u>-</u> 29,266.92
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>300,980.51</u>	<u>263,916.53</u>
Restricted and unrestricted funds			
Unrestricted funds	11	268,679.96	204,992.98
Restricted funds	11	32,300.55	58,923.55
<b>Total funds</b>		<u>300,980.51</u>	<u>263,916.08</u>

		2023	2022
<b>Net cash flow from operating activities</b>		63,777.20	(45,921.65)
<b>Non-operational cash flows:</b>			
<b>Investing activities</b>			
Investment income		0	0
Payments for tangible fixed assets		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Net cash inflow/(outflow) for the year</b>	<b>A</b>	<u><u>63,777.20</u></u>	<u><u>(45,921.65)</u></u>

#### Cashflow Restrictions

Charity law prohibits the use of net cash inflows on any endowed or other restricted fund to offset net cash outflows on any fund outside its own objects, except on special authority. In practice, this restriction has not had any effect on cash flows for the year.

<b>A</b>	<b>Analysis of changes in cash during the year</b>	2023 £	2022 £	Change £
	Cash at bank and in hand	<u>79,885.67</u>	<u>16,108.47</u>	<u>63,777.20</u>

#### **B Analysis of changes in net debt**

	At 01-Jan-23 £	Cash flows £	Non cash flows £	At 31-Dec-23 £
Cash and cash equivalents				
Cash	<u>16,108.47</u>	<u>63,777.20</u>		<u>79,885.67</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>16,108.47</u>	<u>63,777.20</u>		<u>79,885.67</u>

## 1 Accounting Policies

a) The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, Financial Reporting Standard FRS102, and the Charities' Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS102). Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102.

The trustees consider that the charity is able to continue as a going concern for at least the next twelve months.

Please refer to the trustees' consideration in the Trustees' Report.

b) Income from donations is included when it is receivable, except as follows:

I. When donors specify that donations given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods;

II. When donors impose conditions, which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred until the pre-conditions have been met.

c) Gifts in kind includes donated services and facilities which are recognised at a reasonable estimate of their gross value to the Charity. An equivalent amount has been included as expenditure under the appropriate heading in the Statement of Financial Activities.

d) Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure includes attributable VAT, which cannot be recovered.

e) Grants payable is charged in the year when the offer is conveyed to the recipient except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised when the conditions attaching are fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year-end are noted as a commitment, but not accrued as expenditure.

f) Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised and included at cost including any incidental expenses of acquisition.

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of an asset, less its estimated residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Equipment	5% per annum on a reducing balance basis
Office equipment, furniture and fixtures	5% per annum on a reducing balance basis
Motor vehicles	5% per annum on a reducing balance basis

g) Cash at bank includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a notice of withdrawal period of three months or less.

h) Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered.

Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

i) Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

j) Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the trustees.

l) Restricted funds 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. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund, together with a fair allocation of management and support costs. Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

## 2 Costs of activities in furtherance of charity's objectives

	<b>Total Funds 2023 £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2022 £</b>
<b>Direct costs</b>		
Food costs	44,361.77	216,677.79
Premises	16,118.21	1,585.13
Salaries	90,041.22	82,369.89
Other staff costs	3,649.94	370.61
Strategic partner grants	0	0
Hardship grants	367.95	0
	<hr/> 154,539.09	<hr/> 301,003.42
<b>Support costs</b>		
Salaries	34,183.02	69,967.02
Printing and stationery	859.73	589.42
Meeting costs	1,050.96	634.20
IT costs	1,881.21	1,226.46
Motor and travel expenses	3,287.26	6,208.15
Depreciation	6,715.88	7,218.44
Miscellaneous expenses	41.20	133.87
<b>Governance costs</b>		
Legal and professional fees	65,606.85	326.72
Accountancy & Independent examiner's fee	180.00	180.00
	<hr/> 113,806.11	<hr/> 86,484.28
	<hr/> <b>268,345.20</b>	<hr/> <b>387,487.70</b>

#### 4 Fund-accounting comparative figures

	General Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations	45,582.77	45,841.83	91,424.60
Grants receivable	112,529.98	101,076.00	213,605.98
Charitable activities	-	-	-
Other sources	5,014.92	-	5,014.92
<b>Total income</b>	<b>163,127.67</b>	<b>146,917.83</b>	<b>310,045.50</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Raising funds	4,636.32	-	4,636.32
Charitable activities	63,137.70	205,207.50	268,345.20
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>67,774.02</b>	<b>205,207.50</b>	<b>272,981.52</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds</b>	<b>95,353.65</b>	<b>(58,289.67)</b>	<b>37,063.98</b>
<b>Total funds at 1 January 2023</b>	<b>173,326.31</b>	<b>90,590.22</b>	<b>263,916.53</b>
<b>Total funds at 31 December 2023</b>	<b>268,679.96</b>	<b>32,300.55</b>	<b>300,980.51</b>

#### 5 Salaries

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries, National Insurance & Staff Pension	124,224.24	158,141.90
	<b>124,224.24</b>	<b>158,141.90</b>

## 6 Tangible Fixed Assets

	Equipment £	Office equipment, fixtures & fittings £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>				
At 1 January 2023	69,254.86	24,388.09	13,797.49	107,440.43
Additions				
At 31 December 2023	69,254.86	24,388.09	13,797.49	107,440.43
<b>Depreciation</b>				
At 1 January 2023	49,127.33	19,179.88	12,269.70	80,576.91
Charge for the year	5,031.89	1,302.05	381.95	6,715.88
At 31 December 2023	54,159.22	20,481.93	12,651.65	87,292.79
<b>Net book value</b>				
<b>At 31 December 2023</b>	<b>15,095.64</b>	<b>3,906.16</b>	<b>1,145.84</b>	<b>20,147.64</b>
At 31 December 2022	20,127.52	5,208.21	1,527.79	26,863.52

## 7 Investments

	2023 £	2022 £
100% holding in subsidiary	1	1

RISE Social Enterprise Ltd (company number 10740064) is a subsidiary of the charity. At the end of the year, the company owed The Matthew Tree Project £222,775.98 (2021: £245,586.76).

## 8 Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Rental deposits	0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

## 9 Creditors falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Creditors	1.00	1.00
PAYE and NI, salaries	<u>27,942.54</u>	<u>29,265.92</u>
	<u>27,943.54</u>	<u>29,266.92</u>

## 10 Movement in funds

	At 1 January 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 December 2023 £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Warmer Homes Project	-	9,953.00	2,488.25	-	7,464.75
Rebuilding Lives	31,666.67	157,000.00	169,934.63	-	18,732.04
Children Essentials Fund	-	10,000.00	10,000.00	-	-
Designated funds; Food stock funds	4,623.70	45,841.83	44,361.77	-	6,103.76
	<u>36,290.37</u>	<u>222,794.83</u>	<u>226,784.65</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>32,300.55</u>
Unrestricted general funds	227,626.16	87,250.67	46,196.87	-	268,679.96
Total funds	<u>263,916.53</u>	<u>310,045.50</u>	<u>272,981.52</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>300,980.51</u>

Unrestricted funds are available to be used at the discretion of the trustees in line with the charity's purposes.

Designated funds - The Food Stock fund represents gifts of food received during the year and food distributed to those in need. The balance at the end of the year is the value of food stocks held by the charity

## 11 Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

	<b>Tangible Fixed Assets £</b>	<b>Other Net Assets £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2023 £</b>
Restricted funds		32,300.55	32,300.55
Unrestricted funds	20,148.64	248,531.32	268,679.96
	<u>20,148.64</u>	<u>280,831.87</u>	<u>300,980.51</u>

<b>Prior Year</b>	<b>Tangible Fixed Assets £</b>	<b>Other Net Assets £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2022 £</b>
Restricted funds		36,290.37	36,290.37
Unrestricted funds	26,864.52	200,761.64	227,626.16
	<u>36,864.52</u>	<u>237,052.01</u>	<u>263,916.53</u>

## 12 Related parties

There were no related party transactions during this, or the prior year, other than those noted elsewhere in the accounts. No trustees received or waived expense payments during either the current, or previous year.