

THE RIVER MANCHESTER
A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
(CHARITY No. 1153700)
Annual Report & Accounts
For the year ending MARCH 2024

THE RIVER MANCHESTER
SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION

Registered Name

Charity Incorporated Organisation
The River Manchester
Registration no. 1153700

Trustees

Terence Carthy, Chairman stepped down 9th December 2023
Deborah Fuller, became Chair on 9th December 2023
Sefadzi Kofi Amesu, Treasurer
Ernest Edifor joined 9th December 2023

Registered Office

3 Pepperhill Road
Moss Side
Manchester M16 7PD

Independent Examiners

Rana & Co
P O Box 145
Manchester M19 1UY

Bankers

The Co-operative Bank
Delf House, Southway,
Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 6NY

**The River Manchester
Trustees Annual Report
YEAR ENDED 31ST March 2023**

Charity Incorporated Organisation registered with The Charity Commission on 6th September 2013.

The Trustees, present their report and the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2024.

The Trustees throughout the Year and to the date of this report and their advisors are set out on the accompanying Information Page.

Structure, Governance and Management

The management and administration is carried out by the Chief Executive, Mrs Lydia Chan who reports to the board of trustees on a quarterly basis. She is assisted in the day to day operation by 2 core staff members Project Co-ordinator, Donna Barber and Café & Charity Shop Manager, Carol Dalton, the part-time driver and a core of 10 volunteers. The volunteers have a daily briefing to keep them updated with the developments and health and safety matters in the charity. The CEO meets individually and jointly with staff members for supervision as well as team meetings and feedback sessions with volunteers to share insights and concerns.

The board of Trustees meet quarterly, also regularly at other times to review progress, and to plan for the future development of the Charity. At present they are actively seeking to recruit additional trustees.

Trustees Statement - Public benefit

Our objectives, as outlined below, have been designed with the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in mind. Throughout this year we have pursued these objectives as we have reviewed our activities both informally and in our official trustees meetings. At all times we have had regard to the Commissions guidance on the public benefit requirement.

Risk Management

The Trustees are responsible for the management of the risks faced by the charity as they provide controls that provide reasonable although not absolute assurance against material misstatement, loss or exposure to risk. Risk reviews are undertaken regularly to ensure internal risks are minimised through the implementation of policy and procedure. One of the risks presented was the renewal of the lease of the building which could mean a higher rental or the

owners could decide to sell off the building. In respect of this, the trustees have proceeded on getting a development report to apply funding to secure the building at risk.

Objectives and Activities

The Charity has the following objectives which are:

The relief and support of persons who have suffered or are in danger or suffering, from social and emotional difficulties, whether fleeing domestic violence from sex related violence or abuse, their children and dependants by the provision of food, clothing, furniture, friendship, training and other assistance.

Activities

Fundamental to the work of the charity is our faith in Jesus Christ; our Christian faith brings hope and change where we demonstrate our faith in practical ways in being able to offer a safe place for connections to be made, a place where practical provision of food, clothing, furniture and practical training is made available to help people move on in their lives and most importantly prayer is offered.

Activities in the year

Fundraising/Income generation

Our income strategy has 3 strands of income generation which are:

- the charity shop income
- donations from personal donors/corporate donors
- grant applications

We understand the risk on being too dependent from one income stream and this is especially critical this year when there was a drop in grants. The overall income was £156 589 compared to previous year of £183 637, a decrease of 15%. The National Lottery Cost of Living grants played a crucial role as it helped us provide funding to cover the rise in energy cost and living cost suffered by our clients without which we would have to reduce our services. The grants also enabled us to employ short term temporary staff, and we secured paid posts for service users to give them the opportunity to rebuild their confidence and become employable. We continued to sustain 2 part-time staff till the end of May 2023.

The income generated helped us to further develop the charity's intervention programme providing 1-2-1 emotional wrap around support when referrals for moves to safety were made, as well as increase the provision in mental health workshops.

Retail and cafe:

The charity operates two enterprises i.e. the charity shop and a cafe. The café

which included a trial food club was created to generate an income as well as giving the opportunity for training and empowerment for our women to gain skills and employment. The café also helped us provide a warm hub and free meals which were funded by the National Lottery for our clientele. By the end of May 2023, we lost our charity shop manager due to loss of funding and the strategy was to cover these positions with a future budget allocation for 2024/2025. In the meantime, the CEO and Project Co-ordinator with the help of volunteers stepped into this role. Those who were involved in the café underwent Food Safety Level 2 training to provide a safe delivery of food in our café and a warm hub serving 30 clients during the winter months in December 2023-March 2024. It is a concern that it would cost us more in our energy bill to keep our facility warm and cook food for our clients. The charity shop continues to serve our purpose by enabling us to donate a resettlement package to our clients as well as serving the local community in East Manchester.

Removal service

With a dedicated team of volunteers via our volunteer/paid drivers and 2 assistants, we were able to provide an emergency moving service. We were able to secure funding to provide this as a low cost/free service to direct referrals for women and children.

Training and skills

Our project co-ordinator (who is also our specialist domestic abuser worker) was able to deliver 1-2-1 emotional support and recruited 56 trainees to train in our retail areas. The counselling support has grown in reputation as there is a short waiting list of 6 weeks compared to statutory waiting times. Our 3 counsellors are registered with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy. Staff and volunteers also attended a 6 weeks course on Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and trauma training to become a trauma informed to support our clients who have suffered trauma.

Training courses

The following courses were delivered to support those with mental health as mental health and trauma is a consequence of domestic abuse:

Several workshops were delivered at The River Manchester:

- **Living life to the full x 2 (cbt) course 6 weeks sessions.** This course helps with mental health and looks at mood, emotions and behaviours and having a healthy routine. Clients were given an option of having an extra session 2 weeks after we had finished to check in and see how they were doing which supported their mental health and reduced feelings of isolation.

- **Domestic abuse awareness in the Recovery tool kit, 2x6 week sessions.** This looks at different types of abuse, the power and control wheel, leaving the perpetrator, the effects of abuse on mother and child and healthy relationships.

Events organised by us during the year:

- The International Women's day celebrating different cultures with collaborative work with the local communities/agencies.
- craft activities, painting, card making sessions over Christmas
- On December 10, we organised in house for the 2nd year a 16 days of action against gender violence themed on "bridges that the River provide" with over 70 persons in attendance to commemorate those who were killed due to domestic abuse.
- We had 2 open days during the month of August 2023; we invited 10 organisations to inform them the services we offer and how to make a referral.
- Winter hub for people struggling by creating a warm hub and meals for 30 clients.

Volunteers

This year 56 volunteers were recruited of which 18 of them managed to find paid work with the nurturing that we provide at the River, the coaching, boosting of self-esteem, and confidence building really helps our volunteers have a good grounding for the real world of work places. We also pride ourselves on providing a family at The River and helping create social networks for people who would be otherwise isolated. The volunteers help each other, as they know how it feels to be new and welcome each person with enthusiasm. We took our volunteers to Blackpool pleasure beach as a treat for all their hard work. This really boosted the morale of the volunteers. We have a volunteers policy which is available on request.

Impact and achievements

The pandemic from March 2020-2021 highlighted the need for our frontline key services and gave a validation for our services. Our objectives to tackle food, furniture and financial poverty and supporting those who have fled domestic abuse had the following impact:

1. Provision of emergency food parcels. In 2023 there was 1435 referrals. Over all referrals including food parcels and all our services is 1,247.
2. We also gifted 993 emergency food parcels to clients, including a refuge with 7 single women in weekly in Chorlton where we drop off the food for them. The food parcels come in through referrals and sometimes walk-ins off the street.
3. Counselling hours overall were 135 hours.
4. We were able to tackle furniture poverty by gifting over £5140 worth of

furniture from our charity shop.

5. Move to safety –supporting 43 moves for single mothers and their children to move on to a safe place of tenancy.
6. There were also 490 referrals for other services which include domestic abuse workshops, 121 support, emotional counselling, advice, and signposting.

We continue to have an impact supporting people to recover from their wounds into people who are safe, connected, and confident to become independent people who can realise their dreams, move into jobs, feel secure and improved well-being. Beneficiaries felt connected, found 1-2-1 support, were confident, happier and found their own voice and improved outcomes in mental health and job aspirations. Our referrals are mainly from high-risk beneficiaries referred from Women's Aid, Independent Domestic Advisors, Early Help, Children's Services, Social Services and WAST.

Testimonies from clients:

"I find myself struggling to find the right words to express the depth of my gratitude for everything you have done for me. During one of the darkest and most challenging periods of my life, battling anxiety and depression amidst family struggles, domestic violence, and the aftermath of a terrible car accident. You were the light that guided me back to hope and healing. Through your unwavering support, encouragement and kindness, you helped me rebuild not just my confidence but my ability to connect with the world around me. The sense of community you offered gave me the strength to step out of my comfort zone and develop the communication skills I thought I had lost forever.

Your belief in me reminded me of my own inner strength and for that, I am eternally grateful. You didn't just help me recovery you empowered me to rediscover the joy and possibility in life. Thank you for being such an integral part of my journey, for standing by me when I felt lost, and for showing me that I was never alone. With all my heart thank you."

"The River are like a family to me, they helped me build my confidence to have a voice, helped me with my inner voice to stop over thinking they taught me that I am not alone in a world and to deal with situations I would normally hide away from I am truly grateful."

"The River has helped me with domestic violence. Bringing back hope in my life and you are the only ones that seem to have really listened and understood me" you are my family".

Building space:

The charity operates from a 2 shop floor unit with 2 rooms upstairs. The limited space confines our ability to grow in terms of having more staff, resources and capacity to grow our services. During the year, we managed to refurbish the building's lights to energy saving lights to cut the high cost of energy and we changed the old, tattered flooring with grants and support from the corporate sector.

Plans for the future and challenges

The charity's plan is to continue empowering people through its services and build stronger relationships with other referral agencies and recruit more trainees to participate in our training programme. We continue working and collaboration with Openshaw Community Organisations, Gorton Hub, Women's Aid, IDVAs, Manchester City Council social services and other agencies for referrals and signposting. The charity continues to operate from a limited space and would like to refurbish the upstairs stock room and training room.

Key areas of focus for year will be to generate more income from the food club and shop, improve overall IT and Digital Inclusion for The River, update info on website, improve marketing and promotional needs with the support from our trustee, Edem Edifor.

Financial review

We are as with many charities, dependent on income from voluntary donations and our charity shop, so we remain dependent on the generosity of our donors and grant givers to continue in operation. Any reduction in donation income will impact on our ability to maintain operations and in the worst-case scenario, could result in us ceasing to operate. The charity currently has been able to build a 6 months reserve (£60,000) to cover 6 months operating costs, objectives and risks that The Charity may face as well as plans for growth and expansion. The charity has also set aside £20,000 for plans to purchase a van through the carbon emission strategy implementation in the city of Manchester. Our current fundraising strategies and reserves policy provide adequate protection against this eventuality. We are now exploring the possibility of purchasing the building we are occupying, and a valuation and development plan has been undertaken to proceed with this.

Independent Examiner

Rana & Co has been appointed as independent examiner for the year.



Deborah Fuller
Chair of Trustees

THE RIVER MANCHESTER
A Charitable Incorporated Organisation
(CHARITY No. 1153700)

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS

for the year ending 31/03/2024

THE RIVER MANCHESTER

Statement of financial activities
for the year ended 31 March 2024

		2024	2024	2024		2023
	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total funds	Prior Period
		Fund	Fund	Fund	Total funds	Total funds
		£	£		£	£
Income and Endowments from:	3					
Donations and Legacies	3.1	26030	55925	0	81955	121561
Other Trading Activities	3.2	74634	0	0	74634	62076
Total		100664	55925	0	156589	183637
Expenditure On:	4					
Charitable Activities	4.1 & 4.2	85301	73137	0	158438	170127
Other	4.3	996	0	0	996	814
Total		86297	73137	0	159434	170941
Net Gains/(losses) on Investments		0	0	0	0	0
Net Income (expenditure)		14368	-17212		-2844	12697
Transfers between funds		0	0	0	0	0
Net Movement in Funds		14368	-17212	0	-2844	12697
Reconciliation of Funds						
Total funds brought forward		99052	28944		127996	
Total Funds carried forward		113420	11732		125152	

THE RIVER MANCHESTER

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 Total	2023 Total
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Assets	5.1	5,710	3,256
Total Fixed Assets		<u>5,710</u>	<u>3,256</u>
Currents Assets			
Debtors	5.2	3,900	2,600
Cash at bank and in hand		120,437	126,122
Total Current Assets		<u>124,337</u>	<u>128,722</u>
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amount falling due	5.3	4,895	3,982
within one year			
Net Current Asset/(liabilities)		<u>119,441</u>	<u>124,740</u>
Total Net Assets or Liabilities		<u>125,152</u>	<u>127,996</u>
The Funds of the Charity	5.4		
Restricted Income funds		11,732	28,944
Unrestricted Fund		113,420	99,052
Total Funds		<u>125,152</u>	<u>127,996</u>

THE RIVER MANCHESTER

Notes to financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historic cost in accordance with:

* Accounting and reporting by Charities - statement of Recommended Practice (SORP 2015);

* and with*

--

 accounting standards;
or

--

 Financial Reporting Standards for Smaller Enterprises (FRSSE);

* and with the Charities Act.

1.2 Change in basis of accounting

This set of accounts represent The River Manchester 11th year financial reporting.

2. Accounting policies

This standard list of accounting policies has been applied by the charity except for those deleted. Where a difference or additional policy has been adopted then this is detailed in the box below.

INCOMING RESOURCES

Recognition of Incoming resources	These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (Sofa) When: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* the charity becomes entitled to the resources;* the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and* the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.
Incoming resources with related expenditure	Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising or contract income) the incoming resources and related expenditure are reported gross in the SOFA.
Grants and donations	Grants and donations are only included in the SOFA at the same time as the gift to which they relate.
Gifts in kind	Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their value to the charity or the amount actually realised. Gifts in kind for sale or distribution are included in the accounts as gifts only when sold or distributed by the charity. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the SOFA as incoming resources when receivable.
Donated services and facilities	These are only included in incoming resources (with an equivalent amount in resources expended) where the benefit to the charity is reasonably quantifiable, measurable and material. The value placed on these resources is the estimated value to the charity of the service or facility received.
Volunteer help	The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.
Investment Income	This is included in the accounts when receivable.
Expenditure and Liabilities Liability recognition	Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.
Governance costs	Include costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings and cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.
Support Costs	Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources.
Assets	These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least a thousand pounds. They are valued at cost

3. Analysis of Incoming resources

3.1 Voluntary Income	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£
Donation from Sponsors/ individuals	17513	6313
Gift Aid Tax Claimed	7317	-
Grants Received	57125	115248
	<u>81956</u>	<u>121561</u>
3.2 Activities for generating funds	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	£	£
Sponsorship -HMRC 80% Job Retention Grant	-	-
Sales of Donated Goods	74634	62076
	<u>74634</u>	<u>62076</u>
3.3 Investment Income	funds	funds
	£	£
Bank Interest Received	-	-
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
3.4 Charitable Activities Income	funds	funds
Van Donation Received	-	-
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

4. Analysis of resources expended

4.1 Cost of Charitable activities	2024	2023
	Total	Total
	£	£
Salaries and wages	78901	90486
PAYE/Employer & Employee NI	14579	21046
Pension Contribution	3804	5358
Staff Training Cost	82	663
Volunteers Training Cost	107	1369
Vehicle Repair/Hire Cost	1158	834
Vehicle Petrol Expenses	1251	1309
Volunteer Travel Expenses	1110	2000
Volunteer Expenses	2570	1657
Project Cost	6484	4571
Heat & Light	10776	8991
Rent	12992	12840
Business/Water Rates	1116	970
Insurances	2121	1999
Caretaking	660	654
Repairs & Maintenance	6437	1250
Postage & Stationery/printing	346	849
Phone & Internet	632	799
Publicity Cost/Website	1034	-
IT Cost	210	678
Equipment Purchase	757	845
Cafeteria Purchase	2781	1666
Cafeteria Equipment	320	1022
	150229	161858
4.2 Governance Cost	£	£
Audit & Accountancy Cost	6750	6150
Trustee Meeting Expenses	101	112
Bank Charges	881	997
Fees Paid	477	1010
	8209	8269
4.3 Other Resources Cost		
Depreciation Fixture & Fittings	345	-
Depreciation Motor Vehicle	651	814
	996	814
Gains and Losses		
Asset Write off Van	-	-
Total	159434	170941

5. Notes to accounts Balance Sheet

5.1 Tangible Fixed Assets

	YH63FML		
	Motor Van	Fixture/ Fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Cost	7200		7200
Cost-Stairlift (19/10/2023)		3,450	3450
Depreciation			
Balance b/f	3944		3944
Charge for the period	651	345	996
20% reducing			
	4595	345	4940
Net Book Value			
as at 31 March 2024	2605	3,105	5710
As at 31 March 2023	3256	-	3256

5.2 Debtors

	£
Rent Prepayment	2,600
Staff Wages advanced	1,300
	3,900

5.3 Accruals

	£
Accountancy & Audit	1150
HMRC- PAYE & NI	1679
Staff Pension Auto Enrolment	637
Repairs & maintenance	1200
IT Cost	230
	4895

5.4 Charity Funds

	01-Apr-23	Income	Expenditure	31-Mar-24
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds	99052	100,664	86297	113,420
Restricted Funds	28944	55925	73137	11732
Total Charity Funds				125,152

Independent Examiner's Report on the Trustees of The River Manchester

I wish to report of the accounts of the River Manchester for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 1 to 6

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner:

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity
commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Charities Act;

to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting
requirements of the 2011 Charities Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the
accounts to be reached.

Rana & Co



Independent Examiner
190- 200 Platt Lane
Manchester
M14 7DE