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**CHARITY COMMISSION**  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

# **Westway Open Arms**

(Charity registration number: 1153919)

## **Trustees' Annual Report**

1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 - 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024

# Welcome from the Chair of Trustees

*Welcome to our Annual Report for 2024.*

Welcome to Westway Open Arms' review of the past year.

I hope this leaflet offers you a glimpse into the valuable work taking place here. There have been many highlights over the past year, including a wide range of new activities and the arrival of new faces on the team. It's been a joy to welcome new volunteers, groups, and individuals using the centre. This year, we said goodbye to Ro and Dave Oliver, who are leaving after 13 years. They'll be greatly missed! We also welcomed Steve and Kate Tate as Trustees, and bid farewell to Midge Burton, our Secretary to the Trustees. Midge will be succeeded by Kayes Boyes. I'm truly grateful for each of them and the dedicated service they've given. Special thanks, too, to Bernie Brown, who continues to manage the day-to-day running of the centre with great skill and care. Westway Open Arms is so blessed to have such a wonderful team.

It's time for me to say goodbye, too. I've had an amazing 15 years in Eastfield and have been with the charity since its very beginning. It has been a privilege to serve as Director and to meet so many of you over the years. You will always have a special place in my heart and prayers. I want to take this opportunity to thank all our Trustees, whose work often happens behind the scenes. Westway Open Arms simply wouldn't function without the dedication and support of our incredible volunteers, who give so generously of their time and skills - thank you! A huge thank you as well to the individuals, churches, organisations, and businesses who support us financially and through your ongoing encouragement. Your partnership means so much. As we look to the future, may I commend Westway Open Arms to you once again, thank all our supporters in 2024/2025, and warmly invite you to get involved.

*God bless*

*Sam*

*Revd Canon Samantha Taylor - Director of the Charity*

## About our organisation

This charity's main focus and mission from the start has been to make a real difference in Eastfield, aiming for the prevention or relief of poverty, and the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or

other disadvantage; by operating a Social Action Centre in the heart of the community, providing critical support and interventions to local and vulnerable people in need or crisis in this Area of High Deprivation of Eastfield, Scarborough.

Westway Open Arms has Christian ethos and values, supporting and giving hope to all, regardless of age, gender or religion. We operate within and for the benefit of, and with the involvement of, the Community of Eastfield, Scarborough.

The main work of the charity is the operation of a Social Action Centre, providing often critical interventions for people within the community, on four days a week offering community services and support through:

- Drop-In Services & Support: drop in for tea, coffee, to warm up in the winter months and to simply have a listening ear. Craft and Gardening Clubs. Volunteer Training - basic domestic abuse training, First Aid. Free weekly lunch.
- Debt Advice & Support; assisting people with budgeting and managing finances.
- Client Support: advice, support, accessing grants assistance; sign-posting and referrals to other agencies; essential household items, baby clothing provided; support for clients in crisis and difficult circumstances; emergency gas and electric assistance.
- Foodbank: providing vital Emergency Food parcels for people in crisis.
- Christian Faith & Spirituality: Prayers; Listening ear. Events and services for those who wish to take part.

## **Activities & Achievements in 2024**

New groups have evolved, there is a weekly lunch club, a monthly choir, soup and social, craft and gardening group continue to be popular. Senses (a toddler group for children with additional needs), IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Service) and the North Yorkshire Refugee Council have all joined the family at Westway.

## **Food Bank**

The foodbank is an integral and vital part of the service we offer.

It is designed to help in a crisis and is not a way of sustaining someone indefinitely who has ongoing financial problems. We continue to be grateful to Morrisons and Proudfoots, We are also indebted to all those who donate food on a regular basis. Thank you to Warburtons who supply bread, teacakes and crumpets fortnightly. Special thanks to Richard for the regular donation of fresh eggs. Our grateful thanks are also due to Scarborough Lions, and local churches who have helped us with generous donations over the past year. During the twelve months January to December 2024 we have issued in excess of 5000 food parcels which also include the provision for babies if required. As a Christian organisation we continue to offer to pray with people after we have interviewed them. There is no pressure and not everyone accepts, but those who do accept value what we offer.

## **School Lunches**

Throughout the year we have provided lunch packs during the school holidays

We have distributed 750 packs this year.

A big thank you to NFU for your support it has been invaluable.

This service continues through 2024.

## **Client Advice & Support**

We continue to be a service entirely provided by volunteers and there have been some changes in personnel during the year. The service is available daily, Monday to Thursday between the hours of 10.00am and 1.00pm, subject to the availability of volunteers. All client records are kept in strictest confidence. Everyone presenting for help is interviewed by one of our trained volunteers and an assessment of need identified. We are keen to signpost clients to the appropriate statutory / non-statutory agency. Over the year we have helped with a wide range of issues including eviction orders, benefit problems, applying for white goods with the support of SALT. We work closely with our colleagues in Rainbow Money and once a debt issue has been identified we signpost the client to Rainbow Money. Over the year we have built up relationships with various statutory and non-statutory agencies locally and in the town

centre. Collaborating with partners is imperative ensuring our clients get the full person centred experience.

## **Debt Advice**

The Debt Advice at WOA is run as a satellite office of Rainbow Money at the Rainbow Centre in Scarborough. We are a part of Community Money Advice who provide systems and training and support to debt advisors. We are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Some statistics from 2024; We saw 15 clients in the year - some once or twice some many times. We were open for 35 weeks. We closed for snow, holidays and occasions, training on our Catalyst system, admin and centre repair work. We made 88 appointments and had 32 cancelled or where there was "no show". For most appointments we send text reminders. We helped 4 clients get their debts cleared by Debt Relief Order. This had previously required a £90 fee which has now been removed along with an increase in the maximum total debt. We are trying to get to see 2 clients on Thursday mornings and doing the follow-up after the appointments. It can take several appointments with a client to reach a suitable debt solution by gathering documentation, contacting those who own the debts and understanding a person's financial lifestyle. Sheila continues to take the lead in the casework with John providing assistance with admin and IT. We have received thanks for helping clients to get an opportunity to reset their debt situations. We have met up with the team at the Rainbow Centre and give thanks for the life of Victoria Onyekwelu - Rainbow Money Administrator. We had a major release of the Catalyst software and raised questions on how we were supposed to remember what to do. A new laptop was purchased for Sheila as there was a real possibility that we would grind to a halt. John uses the 2nd oldest laptop by switching it on at dawn. Whilst we are always concerned about our clients we do remember to keep positive and share moments for smiling (and laughing) and giving thanks to our Lord.

## **Centre Manager Report**

Westway Open Arms has enjoyed another busy and successful year. We have continued supporting the community not only with food, client support and debt advice but also with an array of activities. This year we added a well-being singing group, The Westway Warblers, this has been a huge success and at present we have over thirty members. So far, the group has sung at the Christmas Carols by candlelight service and alongside the Thornton-Le-Dale Ukuleles at a Westway Open Arms fundraising evening. As the groups develop new volunteers have come on board. Without wonderful, dedicated volunteers we would not have these services. Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to our supporters who help fund Westway Open Arms. The generosity of your donations allows the centre to grow and our clients the opportunity to move forward.

## **Christian Faith & Spirituality**

The very reason Westway Open Arms operates effectively is because it is a Christian Charity with values of love, acceptance of ALL people, and a non-judgmental approach which we believe is at the heart of Christianity. We are part of Holy Nativity Church (next door to the centre). We work with people of faith, different faiths and no faiths.

## **ACTS 435**

Acts 435 is a charity website available nation wide that allows people to give money directly to others. Managed through a network of churches their goal is to get 100% of donated funds quickly to those in need.

If you would like to know more about the support Acts 435 is currently sponsoring or you would like to donate please contact Westway Open Arms.

## **Contributions made by Volunteers**

Volunteering time is a very special gift, and all our volunteers are greatly valued. Thanks to our Volunteers for the continuing time and support we have received from them in this challenging couple of years.

During 2024 we had a team of approximately 38 volunteers actively covering our available services and support, with some volunteers committing to more than one role. Our volunteers, who come from all walks of life, ages and abilities, are the important foundation and mainstay of our workforce, and they operate within the high level of confidentiality required of the skilled roles they provide.

The charity is governed and strategically planned and managed by the voluntary team of professionally qualified and experienced trustees.

## **Our Impact**

This past couple of years has demonstrated just how vital the services of this charity in the centre of the community are, and that this is frequently to where the people of this community, and partner agencies, turn for critical help.

Our Impact has significantly increased with the increased and often different needs and demands.

Westway Open Arms has provided a tremendous and sustained effort under the cost of living crisis, managing the pressures well with emergency measures in the face of great change and need.

## **About us**

This charity's main focus and mission is to make a real difference in Eastfield, aiming for the prevention or relief of poverty, and the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage; by operating a Social Action Centre in the heart of the community, providing critical support and interventions to local and vulnerable people in need or crisis in this Area of High Deprivation of Eastfield, Scarborough.

Westway Open Arms has Christian ethos and values, supporting and giving hope to all, regardless of age, gender or religion. We operate within and for the benefit of, and with the involvement of, the Community of Eastfield, Scarborough.

Our main work is the operation of a Social Action Centre within the community, providing often critical interventions for people. In normal times we provide, over four days a week:

- Drop-In Services & Support
- Debt Advice & Support
- Client Support
- Foodbank
- Christian Faith & Spirituality

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

Westway Open Arms is a well-respected and successful independent charity, being founded in July 2013, registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 23.9.2013, Registration number 1153919.

We are funded mainly through various grants, donations and fundraising. Our costs are kept low because most of our work is done on a voluntary basis, our premises are provided by the Church of England, and we are prudent in our use of funds, closely monitoring our finances on a quarterly basis at the Board of Trustees meeting.

#### **Names of the charity trustees who managed the charity in 2024:**

|                |                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Revd. S Taylor | Chair                           |
| Canon R Brewer | Vice Chair                      |
| Mr I Johnston  | Treasurer (not a Trustee)       |
| Mrs M Burton   | Board Secretary (not a Trustee) |
| Mrs J Wells    |                                 |
| Mrs R Brewer   |                                 |
| Mr G White     |                                 |
| Dr G Hayes     |                                 |
| Mrs K Hayes    |                                 |
| Mr Tate        |                                 |
| Mrs K Tate     |                                 |

The recruitment and appointment of new Trustees is carried out solely by the Trustees of Westway Open Arms. Selection method chosen is based, as relevant, on seeking either to fill skills/experience gaps in the Trustee team, and/or to include key people who are significantly involved in the development and delivery of the charity's objectives; allowing for due consideration of good practice principles and equal opportunities.

### **Financial Review – Year Ending 31 December 2024**

2023 was an exceptional year, with some very large individual donations and, as expected our income in 2024 to be rather less. Nevertheless, the year has seen both the continued support from the many companies, organisations and individuals who have been so generous over the years and from new donors. We are very grateful for this support and the confidence placed in the work and activities of Westway. We have incurred a very small deficit in the year, but our policy of ensuring we have reserves set aside has enabled us to continue with all activities and indeed add to them. The assistance of our army of volunteers has allowed us to provide many services at minimum cost and excluding the cost of activities we have actually reduced our spending.

#### **Reserves Policy**

The charity has set a policy of ensuring balances equivalent to approximately six



months basic costs will be retained. At 31 December 2022 this is set at £14,000 unrestricted balances. Unrestricted funds at bank were £52,896 held in a current account and a linked savings account..

### Thanks

There are many who have provided goods and services which aren't shown in our accounts. We thank all who have given to Westway Open Arms over 2024 helping the centre to help those in need in Eastfield.

### Independent Examiner of Accounts 2024:

Valerie Hall (Rural Accounting) FIAB  
Raven Cottage, Silpho, Scarborough, YO13 OJP

### Declarations:

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

|                                     |  |              |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Signature(s)                        | S. Taylor                              | G. White     |
| Full name(s)                        | Revd. Samantha Taylor                  | Graham White |
| Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc) | Charity Director and Chair of Trustees | Trustee      |

Date

17<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Charity's principal address:

Westway House, Westway, Eastfield, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO11 3EE