



YOUTH LEADS UK

# TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024

Charity Registration Number (England and Wales) 1155789

# LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE DETAIL

## TRUSTEES

### **Mrs S Malji**

Mr A Toorawa

Mr K Malji

Miss C Bennett

Miss L German

Miss R Tite Ahern

Miss H Lawless

### **Chair of Trustees**

Vice Chair of Trustees

Treasurer

Trustee with safeguarding oversight

Trustee with digital oversight

Trustee (appointed 23/9/23)

Associate Trustee (appointed 23/9/23)

## EXECUTIVE

### **Mr S Atcha MBE DL**

Mr M Mokri

### **Chief Executive Officer**

Chief Operating Officer

## OFFICERS

Ms B Peel (resigned 01/03/24)

Ms L Dunkerley (resigned 30/11/23)

Ms J Ellis (appointed 01/07/23)

Mrs Z Khan

Ms A Abdul Aziz

Ms F Kayani (appointed 01/08/23)

Projects & Youth Engagement Coordinator

Projects & Youth Engagement Coordinator

Projects & Youth Engagement Coordinator

Governance and Funding Officer

Youth Engagement Officer

Marketing & Communications Officer

## REGISTERED OFFICE & INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

### **Principal Address**

Youth Leads UK

Arrive Blue

Blue

Media City

Salford

M50 2ST

### **Independent Examiner**

KM Accountants

1st Floor, Block C

The Wharf

Manchester Road

Burnley

BB11 1JG

## BANKERS

### **HSBC UK Plc**

Victoria Square

Bolton

BL1 1RJ

(Until 15/12/23)

### **Virgin Money Plc**

7 Gold Street

Northampton

NN1 1EN

(From 15/12/23)

### **CAF Bank Ltd**

25 Kings Hill Ave

Kings Hill, West Malling

Kent

ME19 4JQ

# CHAIR AND CEO WELCOME

This past year has been a remarkable period of growth and achievement for Youth Leads UK as we continue to amplify the voices of young people across Greater Manchester and beyond. Our mission to empower young people as leaders and changemakers has driven us to new heights and we are excited to share our progress.

As we move forward, the strength of our work and the ambition of our city-region provide us with significant opportunities. The growing demand for youth involvement in decision-making, coupled with our expanding partnerships and increased capacity, positions us to make an even greater impact. Our small but dedicated team, along with our committed board and the incredible young people we work with, fuel our success and drive our vision.

We stand out for our peer-led, youth-driven approach, which remains at the heart of everything we do. Our flexibility, responsiveness, and genuine commitment to handing control to young people set us apart in the sector. This year, we have also celebrated significant milestones, including finalising the Big Education Project Council initiative, launching a brand new Civic Leadership Programme and reconstituting our Youth Advisory Board, which are crucial steps in our ongoing journey.

However, like many organisations, we face challenges that we must address to reach our full potential. Ensuring funding security, sustainability, and managing staff capacity remain key areas of focus as we look to the future.

We are proud to call MediaCityUK our regional headquarters, sharing the ambition and opportunities of this vibrant hub with young people across the region. Our strong network of supporters, funders, and partners continues to be a vital source of strength, and we remain deeply committed to transforming the lives of underprivileged young people in the years to come.

This year, we are particularly proud of our youth leaders, who have taken on new and exciting challenges, such as driving policy recommendations, speaking on the national stage, and genuine intergenerational collaboration. Their dedication and passion are truly inspiring, and we look forward to building on these successes as we continue to grow and evolve.

Together, we are not just preparing young people for the future—they are leading the way today.

**Saimah Malji**  
Chair of Trustees

**Saeed Atcha MBE DL**  
Chief Executive Officer

# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## GOVERNING DOCUMENT

Youth Leads UK is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the registered number 1155789. We are governed by a constitution that establishes the objectives and powers of the organisation.

## OBJECTIVES

As stated in our constitution, Youth Leads UK acts as a resource for young people by providing advice and assistance and organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities as a means of:

- A. Advancing in life and helping young people by developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;
- B. Advancing education;
- C. Relieving unemployment;
- D. Providing recreational and leisure time activity in the interests of social welfare for people living in the areas of benefit who have need by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty, or social and economic circumstances with a view to improving the conditions of life of such persons.

We also develop and promote innovative non-formal education programmes for and by young people, working with them to develop their full potential. We act as a platform for young people to develop life skills applied practically through our publication, Xplode Magazine.

## APPOINTMENT OR RENEWAL OF TRUSTEES

Existing trustees elect new Trustees at any point in the year, and there are no restrictions on who can be nominated. New Trustees are supported through mentorship and an induction process that includes details of their responsibilities, Charity Commission publications, and the governing document. All Trustees are encouraged to meet Youth Leads UK's beneficiaries and staff on a regular basis.

All Trustees give their time freely and are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses. Trustees are encouraged to disclose all relevant interests, register them with the CEO, and withdraw for decisions where a conflict of interest may arise. Additional Trustees will be appointed in the financial year 2024-25, in line with our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy to ensure that we continue to represent the people we serve through all levels of the organisation.

## GOOD GOVERNANCE

Trustees recognise the importance of good governance as fundamental to the success of Youth Leads UK, promoting a culture where everyone works towards fulfilling the Charity's vision and supporting compliance with relevant laws and regulations. We are thankful to Brabners LLP for their support in bolstering our Trustee recruitment and appointment procedures.

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Board of Trustees meets at least four times per year and is responsible for the organisation's governance as set out in, but not limited to, the constitution. The CEO and Executive Leadership Team make decisions on the organisation's day-to-day running. The Board receives regular reports from the Executive. Decisions and matters with significant implications for the organisation are brought to the Board.

These include policy development, organisational priorities, service development, risk identification (management, mitigation and review) and public relations development.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Youth Leads UK has identified risks across all organisational areas. Where appropriate, systems and processes have been established to mitigate these risks.

Due to the nature of our work, safeguarding remains a risk that we monitor very closely. We will continue to prioritise safeguarding development. DBS checks are carried out for all management or delivery positions and those who regularly work with children and vulnerable adults. Our staff handbook contains a code of conduct relating to safeguarding, and Trustees discuss safeguarding at every board meeting. We have not had any major safeguarding concerns or serious incidents raised in the past year.

A principal risk in the previous Trustees Annual Report was cyber security. We undertook an audit of our systems and have refreshed our data protection policy and procedures. We thank Mishcon de Reya LLP and Entain LLP for their support.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations. All colleagues are advised to comply with media law to minimise risk within our publications.

Our risk register raises three principal risks: not enough staff, the loss of an existing major funder and/or delays to funds received, and inadequate performance reporting. Mitigation measures are in place for each of these. We prioritise recruitment-related funding, strengthen our funder stewardship function, and improve financial forecasting. We are working to raise funds to strengthen our performance reporting.

# WHO WE SUPPORT

We work with a lively mix of young people who are diverse in ethnicity and socioeconomic status. All of our young people are aged 12-25 years. Comparable figures from the previous year, they are in brackets.

74% (72%) of the young people live in the 30% most deprived areas in the country. An additional 9% (18%) of our beneficiaries reside in the next 20% most deprived areas, while the remaining 17% (10%) are spread across the 50% least deprived areas (UK Gov IMD).

## SOCIAL MOBILITY

We use the Social Mobility Commission employer's toolkit to measure certain criteria:

- 91% (77%) of programme participants attend state-run/state-funded schools.
- 2% (6%) of participants attend independent/fee-paying schools.
- 22% (23%) receive free school meals.
- 37% (32%) are from working-class households.

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We report on the following data to understand more about and further support the young people that we serve:

- 10% (5%) of participants report that they have learning differences.
- 19% (23%) of participants report that they have suffered mental health difficulties.
- 10% have a disability.
- 14% (2%) have been excluded from school.
- 42% of those over 18 are not in employment.
- 3% of participants identify as LGBTQIA+.

### ETHNICITY

<b>Black African</b>	32%
<b>White British</b>	17%
<b>Pakistani</b>	17%
<b>Indian</b>	12%
<b>Chinese</b>	6%
<b>Bangladeshi</b>	4%
<b>Arab</b>	3%
<b>Mixed</b>	3%
<b>British</b>	3%
<b>Other</b>	3%

### AGES

<b>12-15</b>	39% (38%)
<b>16-25</b>	61% (62%)

### GENDERS

<b>Male</b>	19% (30%)
<b>Female</b>	78% (70%)

# ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

## VISION

A country where youth leads – where young people feel listened to, part of their communities, and ready to make a difference through skills development opportunities.

## MISSION

Youth Leads UK supports young people aged 12-25 to enrich their skills, reach their potential, and influence change. We do this through peer-led programmes of volunteering, social action projects, and learning experiences, and by amplifying the voice of young people with key decision makers.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- **Skills Enrichment:** Immersing young people into new and challenging environments, to develop and enrich their skills through mentorship, training and industry insights.
- **Self-Empowering Potential:** Connecting young people to their community through increased responsibility, opportunities and recognition through youth-led projects, co-design and pathways to progress into senior roles.
- **Influencing Change:** Influencing decision-making across society through elevated youth voice opportunities. We work tirelessly to improve perceptions of young people, challenge decision-makers, and champion meaningful representation.
- **Organisational Development:** establish a sustainable, skilled and effective organisation.

## VALUES

- **Fun:** We provide energised activities, opportunities for social inclusion & support networks through new friendships.
- **Bold:** We're not afraid to take risks.
- **Community:** Working in partnership to inspire civic pride and support young people to develop as world-class citizens.
- **Empowering:** Facilitating opportunities – with beneficiaries at the heart of decision-making – to create lasting change through co-designed projects.
- **Aspirational:** Helping and supporting young people to be the best they can be.

The following pages outline our achievements and progress against the objectives above.



# SKILLS ENRICHMENT

Immersing young people into new and challenging environments, to develop and enrich their skills through mentorship, training and industry insights.

Our 'Skills Enrichment' strand is primarily delivered by our two core **Leadership Programmes**—an open-access programme and a specific programme for care-experienced young people. Both programmes culminate in the youth-led publication **Xplode Magazine** and a social action project. The programme consists of varied weekly in-person sessions, focusing on developing skills and raising the aspirations of around 25 young people per programme.

Between March 2023 and April 2024, **we delivered the Leadership Programme 10 times to over 200 young people** across all 10 towns and cities in Greater Manchester. Over **160 sessions** took place after school, during school holidays and weekends. Approximately 20% of the sessions took place online. The remaining sessions were held in several locations: our HQ at Media City UK, the University of Salford, the University of Bolton, the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, Beswick Library, Oldham Library, Bury Art Museum and Sculpture Centre, and the Octagon Theatre.

At any one time, we deliver up to three programmes. Each programme consists of 14 sessions broken down as follows: 6 employability skills workshops, 2 digital and media sessions, 2 social action sessions and 4 **industry insight sessions** delivered by expert practitioners such as Bauer Media, Global - Heart, Capital, LBC, Smooth & others, Bolton FM, Reform Radio, Hopscotch Consulting, Planisware, ITV, British Red Cross, Peel L&P, Dock 10, Manchester Metropolitan University, Bolton Council, Bury Council and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

Alongside these structured sessions, over **20 mentorship and '1-2-1' sessions** took place per programme. These sessions supported young people with applications to college and university, career networking, and personal development. Each session lasts approximately two hours.

Every programme culminates in a publication of Xplode - a youth-led magazine showcasing authentic youth voices. Xplode Magazine is the founding project of Youth Leads UK. The **three magazines published** in the past year reached approximately 65,000 people in print and online. In total, **120 pages of content** were created by 68 young people. These magazines were distributed in 26 high schools, 6 Asda stores, 2 Starbucks stores and 16 libraries across Greater Manchester. The magazine centres on mental health, music, education, conservation, and fashion. Young people in their portfolios are now using this work. We are championing youth voice and preparing the diverse and inclusive newsrooms of the future.



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- 100% of young people feel like the programme has made a positive impact on their personal development
- 100% of young people would recommend the programme to their friends
- 100% of young people feel like the programme has had a positive impact on their employability prospects
- 69% of young people are more confident about job interviews
- 65% of young people are more confident about applying for jobs
- 61% of young people say they have more belief in themselves
- 77% of young people felt listened to by others
- 57% of young people say they've had opportunities they've never had before
- 69% of young people say they are more confident to speak their minds

We use the 'Shooting Star' Outcomes Star, a validated method of measuring change in the young people we work with. We measure aspiration, contribution, confidence, learning, people & support and communication.

100% of participants progressed in at least one outcome area, 71% in at least two outcome areas, and 47% in at least three outcome areas.

## SELF-EMPOWERING POTENTIAL

Connecting young people to their community through increased responsibility, opportunities and recognition through youth-led projects, co-design and pathways to progress into senior roles.

## SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS

We believe in a society where the contributions of young people to their communities are valued, supported and recognised. **Young people taking practical action in the service of others** is central to their futures - it is linked to social mobility and supports the young people involved and the community around them. All of our programmes see young people design and deliver short-term, high-impact social action projects. Working with our cross-sector partners, they create real change in their communities and **develop various skills** from leadership and time management to planning and marketing.

### Racial Microaggressions

This project successfully engaged young people across Greater Manchester to raise awareness about racial microaggressions through interactive workshops and a dynamic social media campaign. The project fostered a more inclusive and supportive educational environment by exploring the impact of hurtful words, promoting fairness, and embracing diversity. There are plans to engage primary school students at the transition point to secondary school.

### **‘Right to Refuge’**

Our Spring/Summer Social Action Project raised awareness about the refugee crises and educated the public on supporting refugees and asylum seekers. Partnering with Safe Passage International, we tackled the stigma and prejudices they face using a social media campaign with informative posts, infographics, and a powerful video. The project successfully promoted a more compassionate narrative and inspired people to join Safe Passage International.

### **Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls**

We launched a social action project addressing gender-based violence, focusing on combating violence against women and girls. The initiative included a robust social media campaign, impactful articles in Xplode Magazine, and workshops providing crucial safety advice. The project aimed to raise awareness, educate, and empower individuals to take action against gender-based violence in their communities.

### **‘LUNCH WITH THE CEO’**

The ‘Lunch with the CEO’ initiative is designed to empower young people by connecting them directly with leadership at the highest level, offering a unique opportunity to engage with our CEO. This initiative fosters increased responsibility and provides a platform for young people to voice their ideas, participate in decision-making, and gain valuable insights into leadership pathways. 35 young people attended two of these events.

### **NEXT GEN CONFERENCE**

We took 10 young people to My Life My Say’s Next Gen Conference in London, where our young people had the extraordinary opportunity to meet the Mayor of London, speak on a panel, and connect with young activists and influencers. Only 17% of 16 to 24-year-olds believe that "political parties care about young people,". This trip was a powerful step in bridging the gap, and the experience not only introduced them to the nation's political hub but also empowered them to engage with and influence the very conversations shaping their future, challenging the status quo and amplifying their voices in spaces where they are often overlooked.

### **COST OF LIVING CRISIS - YOUTH-LED MEDIA**

Amid the height of the cost-of-living crisis, our Youth-Led Cost of Living Campaigns project in Bolton empowered young people, many of whom were de facto heads of household, with the tools and knowledge to navigate the challenging circumstances. In collaboration with Bolton Council, we engaged over 35 young people directly and reached many more through partnerships, creating a range of impactful media and campaigns tailored to care-experienced and vulnerable youth. The creativity and commitment of these young individuals were crucial in producing over 20 assets, including social media graphics, videos, and print materials, that collectively reached nearly 36,000 users across Instagram, TikTok, and Xplode magazine.

Throughout the campaign, participants honed valuable media creation, communication, and advocacy skills, equipping them with the tools to effectively address and navigate complex social challenges.

## WORK PLACEMENTS

We proudly welcomed six work placement students from Manchester Metropolitan University and The Sixth Form, Bolton, integrating them into our projects where they gained hands-on experience and developed practical skills. These placements provided invaluable real-world exposure, contributing fresh perspectives to our work while empowering the students to apply their knowledge in impactful ways.

## VISITING CIVIC LEADERS

Our Future Civic Leaders initiative gave young women from Bolton the incredible opportunity to visit the Mayor's Parlour, where they engaged in meaningful discussions about leadership, civic duty, and the impact of women in public life. This visit celebrated the achievements of local female leaders and inspired the next generation of young women to pursue leadership roles within their communities. The experience highlighted the importance of female representation in civic spaces and empowered participants to envision themselves as future leaders.

## GRADUATION EVENTS

Recognition is a cornerstone of our commitment to youth social action, and we proudly celebrate the achievements of our young participants through three graduation events each year. These events are powerful moments to acknowledge and honour the dedication, creativity, and impact of the young people who contribute to their communities through our programs. At each graduation, decision-makers, community leaders, and supporters come together to celebrate these young trailblazers' hard work and accomplishments, reinforcing the value of their contributions and inspiring them to continue their journey of social impact.

### **Addressing the audience, His Majesty the King's Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Mrs Diane Hawkins, said:**

*"Community is so important. For those who haven't got many people to support them, there are now plenty of people within Youth Leads UK who will help and support you. That's something the lieutenancy recognises; the Palace wants to know how our communities are reacting and acting together. I feel so proud, and I'm sure Youth Leads UK will continue to empower more young people."*

# INFLUENCING CHANGE

Influencing decision-making across society through elevated youth voice opportunities. We work tirelessly to improve perceptions of young people, challenge decision-makers, and champion meaningful representation.

## GREATER MANCHESTER YOUTH COMBINED AUTHORITY

Youth Leads UK is a member of the Mayor of Greater Manchester's Youth Combined Authority (GMYCA). The GMYCA brings together a diverse group of young people who live, work, and study in the region. They are responsible for critiquing, developing, and championing the Combined Authority's policies. Our young people have held elected leadership roles within the YCA and attend regular meetings to have their say. We report the GMYCA's activities through Xplode magazine and our social media channels.

## YOUTH HEALTHCARE TRANSFORMATION BOARD

The Bolton Youth Healthcare Transformation Board made up of 8 young people from across Bolton, was designed to discuss experiences of health services and, most importantly, challenge decision-makers to change things.

Over 12 months, the Board shared their experiences, positive and negative, with one another and put together a set of recommendations for Bolton NHS Foundation Trust.

Young people held leadership roles on the YHTB, speaking at events and for health-related campaign videos. Other outcomes included a youth-led research project on sexual health. The report can be found on our website.

## YOUTH-LED GOVERNANCE - YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

Youth Leads UK's Youth Advisory Board consists of 18 young people. The board provides a platform for members to share their insights and experiences on youth-facing issues to help move the charity forward.

The Board meets six times a year, working closely with the charity's youth engagement team and the Board of Trustees, guiding them in the right direction and ensuring that all future decisions are youth-led and youth-informed. The Board are currently working on rebuilding our programme curriculum.

## BIG EDUCATION CONVERSATION PROJECT COUNCIL

Youth Leads UK partnered with Big Change to support the youth-led Big Education Conversation's Project Council, which focused on reshaping the future of education. Over the past year, we worked closely with the Project Council members, helping them develop their skills and ignite their passion for change. These young leaders championed the voices of often overlooked groups, such as neurodivergent students and school leavers, ensuring their perspectives were central to discussions about education reform.

The Project Council members and Youth Leads UK Alumni contributed to a policy report titled 'Out of Kilter: How to Rebalance our School System', published by IPPR and supported by Big Change. Their input helped shape this influential report, which outlined critical shifts needed in education. The report was launched at a Big Education Conversation event in Blackpool, where Project Council members led discussions with key stakeholders, including the Shadow Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson MP. This event highlighted the powerful impact of youth-led advocacy in driving meaningful change in education.

## YOUTH-LED GRANTMAKING

Our youth-led grant-making initiatives empower young people to play a central role in shaping the distribution of funding within their communities.

Through our partnership with the KFC Foundation, young people have a direct say in determining where funding goes, ensuring that resources are allocated to projects that matter most to them.

In collaboration with Bolton CVS, we train young people as grant assessors, equipping them with the skills to evaluate funding applications. Once trained, they join an intergenerational panel, working alongside community members to make informed decisions about funding. They blend fresh perspectives with seasoned insights to drive impactful community projects.

## INSPIRING GOVERNANCE

We delivered an engaging webinar in partnership with Education and Employers' Inspiring Governance programme, aimed at empowering young people to explore the role of a school governor.

The session demystified the responsibilities and benefits of becoming a school governor, highlighting how this leadership position can significantly enhance personal growth and career prospects. Participants learned how to impact their local communities meaningfully by contributing to their school's leadership and supporting fellow students. This virtual session provided young people with the knowledge and inspiration to step into governance roles and drive positive change in education.

## CO-DESIGNING POLICY & STRATEGIES

In collaboration with Social Sense, we facilitated two key co-design projects with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, focusing on refreshing the 'Best Start to Life' strategy. One project engaged young people, while the other brought together practitioners, ensuring that the refreshed strategy was shaped by lived experiences and professional insights. Additionally, we played a pivotal role in supporting the creation of Bolton Council's first anti-poverty strategy, ensuring that the voices of young people were central to developing

policies and strategies that directly impact their lives and communities. These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to involving youth in co-designing policies that shape their futures.

## CIVIC YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

As part of Youth Leads UK's Civic Youth Leadership Programme, 26 young people collaborated with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, under the guidance of the Mayor of Greater Manchester, to begin developing a new toolkit designed to enhance civic education and engagement among their peers.

Through extensive research and consultations with decision-makers, educators, and youth groups, they identified a significant gap in awareness about civic roles among young people. Notably, 63% of young people surveyed in Greater Manchester expressed an interest in getting involved in civic roles, highlighting the importance and timeliness of this youth-driven initiative.

## OTHER INFLUENCING CHANGE WORK INCLUDED:

- Supporting and speaking at the launch of 'The Big Help Out,' an initiative marking the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III.
- Running social media campaigns addressing inequalities, National Youth Voter Registration Day, and mental health.
- Sharing expertise on youth involvement in governance at the Charity Governance Awards.
- Delivering workshops to Ormiston Families on facilitating sessions with vulnerable young people and amplifying youth voices.
- Contributing insights to a House of Lords Committee on the education system.
- Raising awareness and sharing the experiences of care-experienced young people at key conferences, including the North West and National Virtual School Heads conferences.
- Providing regular commentary on youth issues across local, regional, and national media.
- Our CEO delivered 26 speaking engagements, reaching over 9,500 people, to advocate for action and share the story of Youth Leads UK.

# ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our key aim is to establish a sustainable, skilled and effective organisation. Highlights from the year include:

## NEW TRUSTEES

We proudly appointed two new young Trustees to our Board, one of whom is a former programme participant. This strategic move strengthens our governance with fresh perspectives and firsthand experience and exemplifies our dedication to nurturing leadership from within our ranks. By elevating young voices to positions of influence, we ensure that our mission remains closely aligned with the needs and aspirations of the young people we serve.

## WESTON CHARITY AWARDS & PILOTLIGHT 360

As winners of the prestigious Weston Charity Award, we were honoured to participate in the Pilotlight 360 programme. This opportunity connected us with a team of skilled business leaders who provided tailored guidance and strategic support over a 10-month period.

Through Pilotlight 360, we strengthened our organisational capacity, refined our strategies, and enhanced our effectiveness in achieving our mission. The programme ends in the 2024-25 financial year, when we will report on our progress. We are thankful to Hagit Amsterdam (Pilotlight Project Manager) and Pilotlighters Amy Malik, Barry John, Kristian Horabin, and Louise Towse for their support, challenge, and encouragement.

## IMPROVING OUR OUTREACH

With funding from The Fore, we were able to appoint a marketing and communications expert, significantly enhancing our outreach efforts. This investment led to establishing our TikTok channel, securing in-kind support from Google Ads, and launching a street team initiative where our young people actively recruit peers in high-traffic areas and distribute Xplode magazine. Additionally, we produced a new recruitment film to be shown in schools and developed an innovative Spotify audio campaign. These efforts have greatly expanded our reach, engaging more young people and raising awareness of our programmes across multiple platforms. These efforts have seen demand for our programmes skyrocket.

## INTERNATIONAL LEARNING

This year, Youth Leads UK embarked on two international learning trips to the UAE and the USA, gaining valuable insights into youth empowerment and civic engagement strategies from two of the world's leading nations in these areas.

In the United States, our CEO and COO visited New York and Boston, where they met with key stakeholders, including the New York City Commissioner for Youth, and engaged with youth-led organisations and civic engagement initiatives. The trip highlighted innovative



approaches to youth participation, such as service learning and participatory budgeting, and underscored the importance of connecting young people directly with decision-makers.

In the UAE, we explored the country's advanced youth empowerment infrastructure. We visited the Dubai Youth Hub and learned about initiatives like the 'Done by Youth' programme and Youth Councils embedded within government and corporate sectors. These experiences have provided us with inspiration and practical ideas to enhance our own youth-led initiatives, including potential collaborations to further empower young people in the UK.

## THE FUTURE

As we look ahead, Youth Leads UK is poised to significantly strengthen our work in civic engagement and further solidify our organisational foundations. This year, we will launch our Civic Engagement Toolkit and build an online Civic Youth Hub, providing young people with the resources and opportunities to actively participate in their communities. We are also expanding shadowing opportunities through initiatives like a new Board Buddy Programme and facilitating hands-on experiences in magistrates' courts. We aim to ensure the toolkit is widely adopted in schools, empowering more young people to engage in civic life.

In parallel, we will be finalising our participation in the Pilotlight 360 programme, which has been instrumental in shaping our strategic direction. This includes a youth-led rebuild of our programme curriculum, ensuring that our offerings are relevant and impactful. We will also complete the development of a fully articulated theory of change, map and implement all operational model functions, and roll out a refreshed three-year strategy.

To support these initiatives, we will implement a new CRM system that enables precise impact tracking, measurement, and reporting. Our programmes are already in high demand, with fully booked sessions and a growing waiting list, reflecting the strong reputation we have built. Financially, we aim to bolster our sustainability by increasing service-generated income by 10%, achieving a 70%-30% ratio of earned income to grants. Additionally, we are on track to maintain three months of reserves, ensuring our financial stability.

Finally, we will establish an Advisory Council comprising corporate leaders and decision-makers to support our business development and sustainability and provide guidance in areas where we, as a youth-led organisation, seek additional expertise. This council will play a crucial role in guiding our strategic decisions, helping us grow and adapt to the evolving needs of the young people we serve.

We're excited to expand our impact while building a stronger, more resilient organisation ready to support more young people.

## PUBLIC BENEFIT

Youth Leads UK is committed to fulfilling its public benefit duty as outlined in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011. The trustees understand the importance of complying with the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and have diligently considered the organisation's aims, objectives, and activities in relation to the achievements and outcomes of our various programs.

The trustees can confirm that the charity has fulfilled the public benefit requirement and that this requirement is strongly embedded within the policies and procedures of the organisation, as evidenced throughout this report.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### PRINCIPAL FUNDING SOURCES

Our principal funding source remains as grant income, but the generated income and donations percentage has increased this year due to one-off projects.

In the financial year ending 31 March 2024, the following grant-making organisations have generously supported our work:

- The Manchester Guardian Society Trust
- We Love MCR Charity
- The Charity Service
- CareTech Foundation
- Bolton CVS
- BBC Children In Need
- Global's Make Some Noise
- The Henry Smith Charity
- The Shears Foundation
- Bolton Council
- Morrisons Foundation
- St. James's Place Charitable Foundation
- The Fore
- Greater Manchester Police
- The Phoenix Way
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- The National Lottery Community Fund

We would like to thank the following organisations for their in-kind support and donations:

- Tech - Google, Breathe HR
- Property - Peel L&P, MediaCity Arrive
- Consulting - Hopscotch, Pilotlight
- Legal - Brabners LLP, Mishcon de Reya LLP and Entain LLP
- Financial services - RSM UK
- Goods - In Kind Direct
- Partners - Big Change, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Social Sense, My Life My Say, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Bolton Together

## RESERVES POLICY

Reserves are needed to build Youth Leads UK's sustainability and viability, bridge the gap between income receipt and spending, cover unanticipated expenditures, and lessen the impact of any delays in receipt of committed income.

The Board of Trustees' examination of the charity's need for reserves concludes that a sum is needed to protect current activities, meet day-to-day responsibilities, and build sustainability and viability of Youth Leads UK.

The Trustees consider that the level of unrestricted reserves stood at £30,000 at the end of the 2023-24 financial year, up from £15,000 at the end of the previous financial year.

The Trustees are confident that the current reserves level of £ 30,000 is sufficient, covering committed annual costs and wind-down fees. The Trustees review the reserves policy every year.

## OTHER NOTES

5 Trustees received a total of £340.33 in out-of-pocket expenses in the year 2023-24. In the previous year (2022-23), 2 Trustees received a total of £50 in out-of-pocket expenses.

The average number of employees was 7 FTE in the year 2023-24 and 6 FTE last year (2022-23).

# STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity.

In preparing these reports, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed;
- Prepare the financial accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate;
- To presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are also responsible for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of internal control across the organisation. They are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at the time, the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements follow best practice. They are further responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and, hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute reassurance against material misstatement of loss. Internal control processes implemented by the Trustees include:

- Agreement of policy and service development;
- An annual budget approved by the Trustees;
- Regular consideration by the Trustees of financial results;
- Delegation of authority to appropriate levels of management;
- Identification and management of risk.

By order of the Trustees dated 9 November 2024



**Saimah Malji**  
Chair of Trustees

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Youth Leads UK for the year ended 31 March 2024.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

As the charity trustees of Youth Leads UK you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Youth Leads UK's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

Since Youth Leads UK'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 Charity Independent Examiners, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of Youth Leads UK as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.



**Mark Heaton FCCA FCIE**  
KM Chartered Accountants  
1st Floor, Block C  
The Wharf  
Manchester Road  
Burnley, BB11 1JG

**9 November 2024**

**Youth Leads UK**  
**(Registered Charity 1155789)**  
**Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations	2	43,410	284,519	327,929	14,338	201,682	216,020
Charitable activities	3	51,018	-	51,018	12,686	-	12,686
Investment income	4	51	-	51	24	-	24
Total income		<u>94,479</u>	<u>284,519</u>	<u>378,998</u>	<u>27,048</u>	<u>201,682</u>	<u>228,730</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Charitable activities		<u>(60,980)</u>	<u>(284,077)</u>	<u>(345,057)</u>	<u>(18,672)</u>	<u>(235,795)</u>	<u>(254,467)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(60,980)</u>	<u>(284,077)</u>	<u>(345,057)</u>	<u>(18,672)</u>	<u>(235,795)</u>	<u>(254,467)</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		33,499	442	33,941	8,376	(34,113)	(25,737)
Gross transfers between funds		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(18,000)</u>	<u>18,000</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		33,499	442	33,941	(9,624)	(16,113)	(25,737)
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>							
Total funds brought forward		<u>(2,922)</u>	<u>2,707</u>	<u>(215)</u>	<u>6,702</u>	<u>18,820</u>	<u>25,522</u>
Total funds carried forward	12	<u>30,577</u>	<u>3,149</u>	<u>33,726</u>	<u>(2,922)</u>	<u>2,707</u>	<u>(215)</u>

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The funds breakdown for 2023 is shown in note 12.

**Youth Leads UK**  
**(Registered Charity 1155789)**  
**Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	10	1,300	-
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>36,236</u>	<u>19,157</u>
		37,536	19,157
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	11	<u>(3,810)</u>	<u>(19,372)</u>
Net assets/(liabilities)		<u>33,726</u>	<u>(215)</u>
<b>Funds of the charity:</b>			
<b>Restricted income funds</b>			
Restricted funds		3,149	2,707
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>			
Unrestricted funds		<u>30,577</u>	<u>(2,922)</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	12	<u>33,726</u>	<u>(215)</u>

The financial statements on pages 21 to 28 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 9 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



K Malji  
Treasurer

The notes on the pages 21 to 28 form an integral part of these financial statements.



**Youth Leads UK**  
**(Registered Charity: 1155789)**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

## **1 Accounting policies**

### **Statement of compliance**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the second edition of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

### **Basis of preparation**

Youth Leads UK meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

### **Going concern**

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

### **Income**

Voluntary income including donations, gifts, legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

### **Expenditure**

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

### **Charitable activities**

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

### **Governance costs**

These include the costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and trustees meetings and reimbursed expenses.

### **Taxation**

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

**Youth Leads UK**  
**(Registered Charity: 1155789)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**

**Trade debtors**

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

**Fund structure**

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

**Pensions and other post retirement obligations**

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme which is a pension plan under which fixed contributions are paid into a pension fund and the charity has no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions even if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employees the benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when they are due. If contribution payments exceed the contribution due for service, the excess is recognised as a prepayment.

**2 Income from donations**

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Donations	28,410	-	28,410	3,338
Grants received	15,000	284,519	299,519	212,682
	<u>43,410</u>	<u>284,519</u>	<u>327,929</u>	<u>216,020</u>

**3 Income from charitable activities**

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Charitable activities	51,018	51,018	12,686

**Youth Leads UK**  
**(Registered Charity: 1155789)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**

**4 Investment income**

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Interest receivable and similar income	51	51	24

**5 Expenditure on charitable activities**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Charitable activities		60,980	92,013	152,993	111,599
Staff costs	7	-	191,214	191,214	141,368
Governance costs		-	850	850	1,500
		60,980	284,077	345,057	254,467

**6 Analysis of governance and support costs**

	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2024 £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>
Independent examiner fees			
Examination of the financial statements	850	850	1,500
	850	850	1,500

**Youth Leads UK**  
**(Registered Charity: 1155789)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**

**7 Staff costs**

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Staff costs during the year were:</b>		
Wages and salaries	173,984	127,151
Social security costs	14,304	11,579
Pension costs	<u>2,926</u>	<u>2,638</u>
	<u>191,214</u>	<u>141,368</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was as follows:

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
Charitable activities	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year

**8 Independent examiner's remuneration**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Examination of the financial statements</b>	<u>850</u>	<u>1,500</u>

**9 Taxation**

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

**10 Debtors**

	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>
Trade debtors	1,000
Other debtors	<u>300</u>
	<u>1,300</u>

**Youth Leads UK**  
**(Registered Charity: 1155789)**

**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**

**11 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Other taxation and social security	2,960	3,085
Other creditors	-	14,787
Accruals	850	1,500
	<u>3,810</u>	<u>19,372</u>

**12 Funds**

	<b>Balance at 1 April 2023</b>	<b>Incoming resources</b>	<b>Resources expended</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March 2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
General funds	(2,922)	94,479	(60,980)	30,577
<b>Restricted funds</b>				
Restricted funds	<u>2,707</u>	<u>284,519</u>	<u>(284,077)</u>	<u>3,149</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>(215)</u>	<u>378,998</u>	<u>(345,057)</u>	<u>33,726</u>

	<b>Balance at 1 April 2022</b>	<b>Incoming resources</b>	<b>Resources expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March 2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General funds	6,702	27,048	(18,672)	(18,000)	(2,922)
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Restricted funds	<u>18,820</u>	<u>201,682</u>	<u>(235,795)</u>	<u>18,000</u>	<u>2,707</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>25,522</u>	<u>228,730</u>	<u>(254,467)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(215)</u>

**Youth Leads UK**  
**(Registered Charity: 1155789)**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (continued)**

**13 Analysis of net assets between funds**

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total funds at 31 March 2024 £</b>
Current assets	34,387	3,149	37,536
Current liabilities	(3,810)	-	(3,810)
Total net assets	30,577	3,149	33,726

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total funds at 31 March 2023 £</b>
Current assets	16,450	2,707	19,157
Current liabilities	(19,372)	-	(19,372)
Total net assets	(2,922)	2,707	(215)