



Attic Project

Charity No. 1158300

Trustees' Report and Unaudited Accounts

31 March 2022

Attic Project

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Attic Project
Trustees Annual Report

The trustees present their report with the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2022.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity No. 1158300

Trustees

The following trustees served during the year:

C. Fargher
J. Roantree
D. Stopford
D. Turnbull
T. Turner
E. Wakudyanaye

Bankers

Co-Operative Bank
PO Box 250
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

Independant Examiner

Davenports Group Ltd
Preservation House
Badger Street
Bury
BL9 6AD

Trustee Annual Report - January 2023

Introduction

The Attic Project is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Charity Commission No 1158300. We have a board of committed Trustees who meet quarterly, and we hold an Annual General Meeting yearly.

Period 01/04/2021 – 31-03-2022

And 01/04/2022 - Date

Name of Trustees

David Stopford, Dawn Turnbull, Tracy Turner and Chris Fargher.

Service User Trustees: Joseph Roantree and Jimmy Wakudyanaye

Number of Volunteers

25

Aims and Objectives of the Charity

The Attic Project is located in the heart of Bury and is dedicated to helping those in need. With the dedication of our volunteers, staff members and partners, we strive to improve the lives of everyone who needs help within the community. We use a person-centred approach that is flexible and tailored to meet the individual needs of each person we support. At the time we approached the National Lottery, we could clearly demonstrate the positive impact our mental health support group was having on people and how we were successfully progressing people into volunteering. We also showcased positive partnerships with Bury Adult Learning through our work-club and how we had achieved a range of positive outcomes with various partners supporting us with debt and welfare advice and peer to peer mentoring. Our proposal was to build on this successful foundation and with your help, design a project responsive to the needs in our community.

Overview of Communities Funding

We were absolutely thrilled to get funding awards from The National Lottery and from The Tudor Trust. We were also very grateful for the advice and guidance that was given in terms of what they could fund and how this would be best utilised to meet our current needs and help shape the future delivery services of The Attic Project and benefit the wider community.

We have also managed to secure funding from a range of small local grants and are very proud of the unrestricted contributions we have received from local people and local businesses within our community. This has ensured we could keep helping the increasing numbers of struggling families and individuals within our communities. This has been needed more than ever as we moved from the Covid 19 pandemic, straight into the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

Our initial Aims and Objectives:

Empower our people and prevent further problems

To deliver weekly debt, benefit and welfare sessions at The Attic to provide a safe space for service users to get the help and support they need at the earliest opportunity and help prevent further problems. A person-centred approach is used to enable people, so they can take control of their situation, achieve personal growth and fulfil their full potential.

Outcomes

We have been able to set up this valuable debt and welfare service which has been very successful. This has been invaluable to our local community, who are unable to access any face-to-face provision Bury Citizens Advice and statutory front line services due to Covid. Sadly, Citizens Advice have now cut all debt and welfare services, right across Bury and Bolton due to funding cuts.

We are very proud we are now able to bridge this gap for local people and continue supporting growing numbers of people. We appreciate the importance of being able to access high quality support with debt, benefits and welfare issues. As we enter the current cost of living crisis, it is essential to support our most vulnerable and help those in genuine in order to prevent increasing problems and in order to protect our local economy.

Get Online and Access Opportunities.

We planned a weekly work club to get help those struggling to get online and support them in applying for jobs. This will ensure our more vulnerable customers are not digitally excluded and they are able to get the support they need to access new opportunities. Bury Adult Learning previously provided this weekly drop-in, but it was likely to stop in the near future. Getting this grant funding ensured we were able to take over the delivery of this provision and help build in peer support to ensure this is sustainable going forward. We know many people across the wider community are struggling and we wanted to raise awareness of this valuable service and ensure it is accessible for all.

Outcomes

During the pandemic all statutory services went digital by default and many will not be returning to face to face appointments and services. This left our most vulnerable and harder to reach groups, at serious risk of digital, financial and medical exclusion. Also, as predicted Bury Adult Education are no longer able to deliver their weekly work club at the Attic Project. Luckily, we now have trained staff and volunteers that have set up our own work club and this is supported by community digital buddies we have trained up. Our weekly work club is invaluable with increasing demands for people to access digital job search, the need to manage benefits online and the increased need to access health services online. It is essential we have support systems in place to help our wider community and we are very proud to be able to provide this, with increasing number of vulnerable people at risk.

Increased Confidence and Personal Growth

New mentoring sessions to help build confidence and self-esteem, to ensure our most vulnerable are enabled with new skills to help them reach their full potential. We have previously piloted a mentor programme with some customers from our mental health group, which they feel was very valuable for them and would benefit others.

Outcomes

With increasing mental health issues and ongoing cuts to support and statutory services, many people are struggling to cope. We felt it was important to put valuable community support in place, increase confidence and create coping strategies and help increasing numbers of people struggling. Our aim was to bridge the gap in declining mental health support and have upskill our teams to ensure we are well equipped to support the growing needs of our community. We have successfully achieved this and now have three team members who have completed train the trainer courses and are accredited to deliver a range of training within our community. We have created a small bank of peer mentors and we have also have a qualified counsellor, a trainee counsellor and a holistic therapist within our team.

Create Volunteer Opportunities - Gain New Skills, Increased Self Worth and Give Something Back

We had a clear focus on increasing skills and creating new volunteering opportunities. This will ensure progression for our service users and positively engage people from the wider community. By bringing people together and supporting volunteers both in The Attic and within the local community, we have increased skills, embraced new opportunities and created community ownership. This helps improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, supports our work at the Attic project, ensure longer term sustainability and helps strengthen our wider community.

Outcomes

We recognise the increased pressure on our more vulnerable people and the increased risks with them not having the skills and confidence to progress and improve their lives. We also know from experience that many people want to make a change, feel some fulfilment and get closer to the labour market but don't know how to achieve this. We have been able to deliver a very successful volunteer programme to ensure people progress, gain new skills and gain valuable experience to help them progress and reach their full potential. This has been so successful that many have progressed into paid employment.

Bring people together and build strong relationships in and across communities

Weekly social and skills sessions to bring people together, especially some of our harder to reach marginalised groups including those with physical and/or mental health issues, older people and people at risk of social isolation. These sessions customer led sessions allow the group will decide on what activities they want to do, empower them to arrange social outings and design a program of guest speakers/ workshops they can learn from.

We know from current service users how many people with mental or physical illnesses can easily become isolated and detached from society. This is also true of other marginalised groups we have worked with including people from ethnic minorities, older people and people from faith groups. We would like to build on a pilot peer led group we have started to engage and welcome other people at risk across our communities.

Outcomes

These valuable sessions have helped build relationships and integrate people from across all strands of our communities. Individuals can build social connections and deal with common themes. This was especially needed following long periods of lockdown and people getting very isolated and lonely. Building social connects helped people stay connected, increases confidence and helps reduce declining health issues.

Social Eating – Improving health, building relationships and reducing social isolation.

We planned to build on our social eating sessions, to bring people together in a lovely community space, build on life skills and help prevent social isolation. These sessions will be customer led and customers will be central to the design and delivery of how this grows.

Some of things current service users think would add value to these exciting new sessions would be: Healthy Eating, Cooking on a Budget and Cook and Eat together.

Having consulted with service users, spoken to people across the wider community and explored with local community groups, we know that many people have poor lifestyle eating habits and these lead to isolation and reduced confidence. People tell us they can't be bothered to cook for one, it is too expensive and creates feelings of loneliness too eat alone. The impacts of this leads to weight gain or loss, reduced self-esteem and social isolation.

Outcomes

Sadly, due to Covid we had to change our aims and use a new social eating project to bring about positive life-style changes, build relationships, increase social connections and reduce social isolation. This was all positively embraced, and service users have really enjoyed the new re-designed sessions. We have also been able to enjoy some wonderful mini trips out and internal social eating events as we moved from lock downs. This helped keep peoples spirits up, ensured they spent valuable social time with others and gave them something to look forward to.

Getting Active and Feeling Good

Getting active in the community with be new exercise/ wellbeing sessions, bringing people together, get more active, increased confidence and improve health and wellbeing.

These new sessions are co- designed with our customers in order to meet the needs of current service users and engage the wider community. We already had relationships with a range of community partners who we can help us deliver these.

Outcomes

Again, initial plans had to be re-designed due to Covid, but we have still been able to meet our aims and objectives. Our groups have enjoyed several wonderful outdoor walks and people who wouldn't normally participate in this type of activity have really enjoyed it. We were able to give people information on how to stay well at home, this included simple meals, easy chair-based exercises and creative activities to help keep them occupied. In addition, they have all participated in group sessions of Help Yourself to Wellbeing workshops. This was very valuable to help reduce stress, manage anxiety and help with a range of coping mechanisms. It was great to get our most vulnerable more active in the community and provide them with self-help and coping strategies to keep them keep safe and well.

Improve the places and spaces that matter to communities

When we applied for this grant, we had consulted with a network of community groups who form a local alliance 'Ambition for Moorside' on how we can improve the places and space that matter to the communities we all represent. Clean and tidy, safe spaces are all key priorities for local people; therefore, we planned we would work with others to organise

quarterly environmental clean-ups and help promote recycle/reduce/re-use awareness sessions.

Outcomes

We now play a very active role in our community and take a lead role within many of the Ambitions within Moorside. We work closely with other community groups and many of them now come to us for advice, guidance and support. We have been able to build on the skills and experiences of people and community groups within our locality, support and strengthen relationships and have a much greater positive impact on the people and places within our wider community.

We have also built on the success of our first Community Celebration Event and now hold these annually. It is a truly wonderful way to reward all our volunteers, thank all our local sponsors and show everyone what a positive difference they help us make within our community. We are so proud to be able to acknowledge the value of all our volunteers and reflect on all our achievements and the positive difference we have made in the lives of others.

Governance and Financial Management

In addition to the above, very ambitious aims and objectives, our funders also asked us to evidence how we will manage the large increase in annual income and explain the long-term sustainability plan in more depth.

Our Response

We initially conducted a Skills Audit of our Trustee Board and have recognised gaps in the skills that we need to manage the large increase in income and allow the Attic Project to grow and become more sustainable.

We recruited additional trustees with IT, Marketing and Finance experience to fill the skills gaps and help strengthen our board.

We have also successfully recruited an additional service user; this is to ensure our services users are fairly represented and have a strong voice in all we say and do at The Attic Project.

Employing additional staff has helped manage daily tasks, keep project plans to agreed timelines and ensure correct governance measures are adhered to.

Developing, delivering and embedding our new volunteer programme from the start of the project will ensure local people are in the lead of our exciting new project and provide us with the additional extra resources to grow the Attic and ensure long term sustainability.

Learning, sharing and long-term sustainability

Getting this grant funding at the onset of Covid-19 enabled us to reach out into the heart of our communities at the time they needed it the most and we very quickly became a lifeline for many of our most vulnerable people and marginalised groups. The increased resources enable us to bring in the specialised skills needed to deliver these valuable projects that instantly had a positively impact on the people, communities and environments we live in. By empowering our people, engaging and training a network of volunteers and working with

others to build community capacity, we are confident positive change and long term sustainably will be achieved.

We use the progress measures noted in the impacts and outcome sections above, to produce reports which are monitored and evaluated at monthly management meetings. This ensures we are achieving our aims, meeting our objectives and bringing about positive change. These are also used to produce regular reports to be scrutinised by our board of trustees.

In line with our Mission and Aims - Our work is about practical help for the most marginalised and hard to reach people that statutory providers are unable to engage in Bury and our neighbouring areas. We are passionate about equality and diversity and specifically target our most at risk and harder to reach groups. We are committed to making sure all current and future activities and projects, meet the varying needs of our diverse communities and are fully accessible to all.

Progress – Year 2

We were very grateful to achieve so much in such a short period of time, in March 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic hit and everybody's life was about to change. Luckily due to our grant funding we had already secured, The Attic Project was in a much stronger position.

When everyone around us began closing their doors, we were in the position to open our doors even wider. We very quickly adapted to embrace the challenges and support our community at the time they needed us the most.

Our Covid-19 – Our Emergency Response Continues.

How our learning from Covid continues to re-design our services.

With the risks of the virus remaining high for the foreseeable future – We felt it essential to take our learning from the Covid-19 emergency response group we put in place, to build in longer term support for our most vulnerable and support those most at risk within the wider community.

Following the first lockdown we asked all the people we had helped through our emergency Covid-19 response group to complete a feedback survey. This ensured we could capture any learning, re-design existing services and ensure any future services meet the changing needs of our community.

There were several ways people told us they need help and we have responded to this learning in the best way we could.

1. We needed to get our highest risk online and socially connected as quickly as possible. This is desperately needed in order to keep our most vulnerable safe and well and prevent significant negative impacts on their physical and mental health. People told us they were unable to access medical help or food shopping as they were not online.

Our Response – As soon as we were able to re-open safely, we utilised our partnership with Bury Adult Education to design and deliver some basic online training. These were delivered to small numbers of vulnerable people in a Covid safe environment. We also managed to secure a supply of tablets and Wi-Fi top up vouchers to be distributed to our members that were most in need.

2. We have continued to supply food and essential supplies to up to 75 - 200 families and individuals per week during periods of lockdown. People have been extremely grateful, they told us they couldn't have managed without our help and our most vulnerable said we had been an absolute lifeline for them. When we were out of the first lockdown, we assessed what was going on with Covid-19 nationally and could predict there would be a growing need for emergency food and individual support for the long term. With increasing numbers of people struggling as a result of lower income and losing their jobs and further restrictions and lockdowns highly likely. We needed to make sure both our building and our services could best meet the growing needs. We also identified how we could create safer spaces and food permanent storage.

Our Response – We looked at how we could continue being responsive to the changing needs of our community and best support people at the time they needed it the most. We managed to access a small pot of National Lottery Emergency Covid-19 funding and this through this enabled us to make some small renovations to a couple of our rooms. This ensured we were able to build on the emergency food lifeline we have put in place and create a permanent emergency foodbank / food pantry within our local area. The wider community have really supported a local emergency food bank and the people we have helped have been extremely grateful. We have also been able to create more safe office space so we can provide essential face to face debt and welfare support in a covid safe environment.

3. Our most vulnerable and highest risk tell us they have really struggled with lockdown, mental health issues have significantly increased, and people have become very lonely due to the long period of isolation. Once shielding restrictions were lifted, people were very keen to get out of their houses and safely connect with others, but they were also very scared and had completely lost all confidence. Many told us they were too worried to go to a supermarket and did not feel safe travelling on public transport.

Our Response - We completely understood the importance of reducing the stress and anxiety on our mental health and socially isolated members. We put plans in place to bring them back safely and in small numbers, as soon as possible. With most too worried to get on public transport and in the high risk of Covid-19 groups, putting safe transportation in place became a priority for us. Luckily throughout the pandemic have been supported by local minibus firm Harveys. All drivers are enhanced DBS checked, buses can all accommodate power chairs, which some of our members have and all are compliant with Covid-19 regulations. We managed to negotiate reduced rates with Harveys and were thrilled to fulfil the needs of our community and re-engage them safely and securely. We saw first-hand the significant positive impact this had on mental and physical health and well-being. In addition, it gave us a valuable opportunity to help upskill some of our most disadvantaged members. We were able to access valuable online devices which we could distribute to our members. We also worked closely with Bury Adult Learning

and based on what we had learned people needed most as a result of the impacts of Covid-19. We re-designed our work club and instead delivered some much-needed simple digital skills support sessions. This was to help people gain life changing skills and allow them to gain access the essential online services and build social contacts. We were also able to support the groups in ways to keep well at home and give them coping strategies should further lockdowns happen.

4. We also wanted to respond to the needs of what our most vulnerable have said will help them going forward. This includes starting some new groups, safely and in small numbers. Building social connections, creating peer to peer support and ensuring these new activities can be continued at home, as future risks of local lockdowns remained very high.

Our Response – As the predicted additional lock downs happened, we were in a much stronger position having utilised valuable learning from the first lockdown. We are very proud to have been able to respond to the needs of our vulnerable and wider community, re-design services in line with new regulations, create essential new life skills and help individuals build important coping mechanisms. In addition, we have created a range of things to do at home, been able to provide online devices where needed and progressed to start interacting online. In addition, we were fully prepared to continue with weekly welfare checks and essential food deliveries, work in partnership with others to provide weekly hot foods and deliver a virtual welfare support service.

5. As a result of Covid-19 we have had a lot of additional costs to comply with new Covid-19 regulations and ensure we fully compliant, delivering safe services and have Covid safe environment.

Our Response - We have completed robust Covid-19 risk assessments, adopted new Covid-19 safety measures and ensured we are fully compliant with social distancing. Staff and volunteers have also undergone Covid-19 safety training. Our responsive approach ensured we were able to safely reopen and provide the essential support local people need, at the time they needed it the most.

How Covid-19 has enabled us to engage, support and connect with the wider community.

Since successfully setting up our emergency Covid-19 response group in April 2020, we are thrilled how we have managed to engage the wider community. Local people were very quick to both refer vulnerable people who needed help to us, and our community have also been an amazing support by kindly helping us generate food donations. We have been able to engage some wonderful community volunteers, and these will be invaluable to us as we continue to grow. It has been really humbling the number of local people who have taken a lead role in collecting on behalf of their own neighbourhoods and it has provided a fantastic opportunity for us to continue building on these wonderful community resources. We have also had great community support from some small local businesses, who have helped us with donations, deliveries and even emergency transport when needed for people to attend hospital. We are so proud of how The Attic Project has been able to become the heart of our community, bring the community together and provide essential support to anybody who needs it going forward.

How Covid-19 has enabled us to engage, support and connect with community and statutory partners.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic and with no other food bank in Bury East, we have been working closely with the Bury Council, Bury CCG and other statutory agencies to provide additional support for the emergency community hubs they set up. We quickly joined up local provision by working closely with Burys main food provider Porch Boxes and other food banks across the borough. It quickly became clear that coronavirus would have significant impacts locally, nationally and worldwide for the foreseeable future. We formalised our local network of support in Bury and we are very proud to be a founder member of our new high-profile community led initiative "Bury Community Support Network". This brings together Charities and Community Groups and has senior members from key of services across Bury including Bury Council, Public Health and NHS. Our new community support network has had several guests attending meetings, including Andy Burnham, Mayor of Manchester. Andy was so impressed with what we have done in Bury, he has spotlighted our network as best practice and endorsed our joined-up approach to all the other boroughs across Greater Manchester. The plan going forward is to build on this valuable new support network to provide continued support to our most vulnerable and highest risk within our community, help re-design local strategic priorities, create funding opportunities and inform regional best practice going forward.

Communication Tools

Over the last year we have re-designed the way we communicate with people; we have been very successful in raising awareness about what we do, and we have been able to reach a much wider audience.

By setting up a new face book page and being very active online, our followers increased from having 50 at the start of the project to us now having almost than 1000. This has been an invaluable platform for us to engage our grass roots community, let people know how we can support them and showcase ways local people can get involved with The Attic Project and help us support our wider community.

Our website has been re-designed, this now reflects the valuable help and support available here at The Attic Project. With the new online contact form, people can easily engage with our services. In addition, it is a great way to showcase our valuable services and going forward to will be a great tool to attract potential funders.

All our marketing material has been redesigned and we have had new information leaflets designed and printed, to raise awareness of our services and promote volunteering opportunities. We also have a new referral form, which has been shared across front line statutory services and we now get regular referrals to help struggling families, from partners at NHS, DWP and Bury Council.

A lot of work has been done to raise the profile of The Attic Project and we are very lucky to have successfully engaged the wider community. We have recently had new signage put on the outside of the building, this is amazing to let people know where we are, and it has

really put us on the map locally. We were absolutely thrilled to get this designed and put up free of charge from an amazing local business who have really supported us over the last 9 months and really value and acknowledge all we do at The Attic Project.

Project Outcomes – Year 3 – Cost of Living Crisis

Empower our people and prevent further problems

Through our telephone advice line, we have helped more than 300 people, get the valuable advice they needed to support with debt, welfare and housing issues.

We delivered over 250 face-to-face appointments to support with benefits, debt and housing issues. This has maximised income for those struggling the most by around £75k, helped reduced personal debt by around £50k and we helped around 30 families or individuals access emergency housing.

We provide on average, 40 food parcels a week - These are for those in our community who are genuinely struggling and in emergency need. As a trusted partner of Bury Council, we have helped more than 400 people get extra help with emergency fuel vouchers of £100 each from Bury Support Fund – Generating £40k in extra fuel help for those most in need.

We have helped over 200 people get emergency new white goods at an average of £250 per item, amounting to £50k help with emergency white goods. By recycling used furniture we have helped over 1000 people obtain essential free furniture by matching with people gifting items.

The intensive help and wrap around support we provide, continuously helps keep our most vulnerable keep safe and well, helps increasing numbers from falling into poverty and provides an essential lifeline when those struggling, need it the most.

Get Online and Access Opportunities.

We have continued working with adult learning to deliver 3 digital skills courses, targeted at those not online and these have helped 22 digitally excluded individuals.

We have supported 20 people from our mental health support group, helped upskill them, enabled them by letting them have our devices to use from home and supported them access essential online health services.

We have trained 30 Community Digital Buddies as peer support within our communities.

In addition, we have provided face to face employment support to over 50 individuals, who were struggling to get online and access employment opportunities.

Increased Confidence and Personal Growth

All our advisers engaged in some valuable train the trainer Helping Yourself 2 Wellbeing training. This is an accredited course delivered by Bury Council and aimed at promoting the 5 steps to personal wellbeing and achieving personal growth.

We have safely delivered this valuable 6 session interactive course, in small groups to an additional 25 vulnerable people who were really struggling with their mental health. With so many people so stressed and worried by the Cost-of-Living Crisis and struggling to access adequate health and mental health provision, accessing our wellbeing sessions and sharing new coping mechanisms was very valuable for them.

Create Volunteer Opportunities - Gain New Skills, Increased Self Worth and Give Something Back

During the pandemic we were really fortunate in engaging volunteers and very grateful for the tremendous support we received. More than 50 people have volunteered with us here at The Attic Project, some just for a few weeks during our busy times and others are just on hand when we need them. We have a current small group of volunteers who are training to be digital mentors and we have regular volunteers who help prepare our food packs, support with our valuable sessions and some that help with cleaning and gardening. Our very valuable volunteer programme has been very successful, and we have helped more than 25 of our volunteers access paid employment.

Bring people together and build strong relationships in and across communities

This element of our project has been very different to how we managed delivering this over a year ago before the Covid-19 Pandemic hit.

Our Facebook page has been a critical tool in engaging people and local businesses across our wider community during the pandemic. At the start of the pandemic, we had 50 followers on our Facebook page which had been previously set up by a volunteer. We were unable to access, and the volunteer had dis-engaged from the project some time ago without leaving contact details. We set up a new page and started keeping people up to date on what we were doing. Through this we managed to engage many other people from right across our community and we now have almost 1500 followers. We have now managed to connect to large numbers of people right across our community, help support people where needed and gained some valuable support ourselves.

We now regularly host very successful community partnership meetings, local statutory consultations, Police and Communities Together meetings and local network meetings as part of Bury Community Support Network.

We are very passionate about working with others in the heart of our community and helping be a voice for our community, to ensure everybody is heard and we build a stronger more resilient community together.

Social Eating – Improving health, building relationships and reducing social isolation.

We really value the benefits of social eating and the importance this brings in helping people build connections and reduce isolation. Any social eating event would have been very difficult to deliver this past year. However, thanks to building some fantastic community partners we managed to flip this into weekly home cooked delivered to the homes of our most vulnerable. This ensured we could still have a weekly doorstep catch up, deal with any issues people were struggling with and everyone truly appreciated the lovely home cooked meal, provided to us from a fabulous local restaurant The Victoria. During the pandemic we are proud to report, we have delivered over 1500 weekly hot meals to our most vulnerable. This has been a very important part of keeping our most vulnerable safe and well and keeping us connected.

In the very dark days, between lockdown 2 and lockdown 3 – We also brought some much-needed sunshine and were able to deliver 3 social eating events in small numbers of 10 people per session. These events were held a few weeks before Christmas, we were able to bring our support groups and we all shared a wonderful Christmas Dinner, and some very much need Covid safe, social connection with others. The food was delivered to us by The Victoria, and we are very excited to be working with them going forward on some more wonderful social eating and community cooking sessions.

In-between lock downs we have also managed to design and deliver 3 external social eating activities and arrange a wonderful day out to Blackpool. These were enjoyed by 30 of our most vulnerable beneficiaries, all of whom have been locked down alone and all of whom haven't been out socially in a very long time.

We have used our learning from the pandemic and now have regular social eating events and at least an annual day out, although there are plans for more.

Getting Active and Feeling Good

Promoting people to keep active has also been an important part of us keeping our most vulnerable safe and well during the pandemic. We have checked up on everyone weekly, encouraged them to get out walking if they are able to do so and we have had volunteers go out on social distanced walks, with some of our most vulnerable. This has contributed to getting 12 vulnerable people walking, getting more active and enjoying the health benefits of socialising outdoors.

We have delivered monthly feel-good sessions online which have helped an additional 50 vulnerable people and provided keeping well at home advice and activities.

In addition, we have also trained one of our volunteers, so they are able to help with fitness and nutrition as soon as we are able to socialise again indoors in small numbers.

Improve the places and spaces that matter to communities

In our original proposal we had planned on delivering this strand of our project in association with a network of other local community groups that we worked closely with to form Ambition for Moorside. Sadly, once the pandemic hit, most of these groups closed their doors and stopped delivering their community initiatives. Luckily with our increased resources and a passion to make a difference, The Attic Project took a lead role in supporting all our wider community. We worked with other proactive Charities and Community Groups from right across the borough, to form Bury Community Support Network. Where we also have senior members from key of services across Bury including Bury Council, Public Health and NHS. Through this amazing network of support, we are able service the needs of all our communities right across the borough. As lead representatives for Bury East, we work closely with our community and local counsellors to improve the spaces we live in.

We have taken a lead in hosting 2 community volunteer initiatives in partnership with Bury Collage. During the summer event, we were joined by 15 college students who helped redesign and improve our community gardens and improve the public spaces around our building. In the winter one we were joined by 20 college students to help with our Christmas Appeal, they sourced valuable food donations, helped prepare around 50 essential Christmas Family Hampers and helped us wrap around 70 toys for our most vulnerable children.

We take an active role in recycling essential furniture and clothes by matching items being gifted with struggling families. This not only helps with recycling goods and reducing landfill, but it also really supports those most in the most genuine need to obtain essential items.

We have also managed to host our second wonderful Volunteer Celebration event and we help this as part of the fabulous Queens Platinum Jubilee. This enabled us to bring around 70 people together and included volunteers, local sponsors and service users. It was truly wonderful for everyone to meet and not only celebrate our wonderful Queens Platinum

Jubilee but to also acknowledge the value they all bring individually and reflect on the tremendous difference we have made within our communities together. This was an extra special day as we had arranged a very special VIP to attend as a surprise guest and we were bursting with pride as our Deputy Lieutenant for Greater Manchester proudly presented us with our amazing Queens Award for Voluntary Service.

Our Next Steps and Mitigating against The Cost-of-Living Crisis

We have designed our next steps based on what people want and what people need within our community. Thanks to the continued funding and the ongoing support of our wider community, we have had an amazing opportunity to maximise help and support within our community - At this very difficult time when people need this help the most. However, with fewer funding opportunities available and our own overhead costs increasing, it is essential we explore new opportunities and help build some longer-term sustainability in order to continue our essential services.

- We had never envisaged there would be such an emergency need for food and in supporting the needs of our community we would become a food bank. However, in the absence of any food provision in Bury East food parcels became an emergency need which we very successfully responded to. We know from our feedback forms this provided a valuable lifeline for many. Therefore, with darker days ahead as we are now struggling with the Cost-of-Living Crisis, we now have increasing numbers of families needing our help as they struggle to heat or eat. This acts as a lifeline to many and provides a safety to those we are supporting with debt, welfare and benefit issues and allows us to supply emergency food until the emergency need is removed and their issue is resolved. We are passionate about being a food provider to meet genuine needs but do not want to create any dependency culture which can result in traditional food banks. We have therefore explored ways of we can make emergency food provision sustainable and have managed to put some measures in place:
 - In partnership with Tesco Bury, we have set up a permanent local foodbank donation point and now get regular bulk donations every 5 weeks. are exploring a community food pantry model going forward.
 - We have a valuable network of local sponsors who kindly help with donations when we are very low on stock.
 - People within our local community kindly bring regular donations
 - We have created a very simple to use donation option on our website
 - We work closely with Bury Council and other community partners to monitor and review trends and threats.
- Building on the success of our essential debt, welfare and employment support is also a growing priority to meet the increasing number of people and families struggling through these challenging times. This has got so much worse since Covid-19 as so many face to face statutory and community services have not returned and sadly, now all debt and benefit advice provided by Citizens Advice has also been removed in Bury. We have applied for additional funding to continue with this much needed essential service, and we are continuing to progress with longer term funding applications to help secure this essential support.
- Upskilling those not online, by providing targeted but simple IT awareness and one to one support. This will be specifically tailored it to meet their individual needs and

build confidence. Getting some of our most vulnerable online will ensure those most at risk are not left socially and financially isolated and help prevent declining mental and physical health problems.

- We have built a pool of communication tools, which can be loaned out where needed to support those most at risk. We know many people struggling do not have the up-to-date devices they need to access online services and if we are able to loan them a device where needed, this will ensure we are able to upskill, build confidence and keep them connected.
- We continue creating new small groups, building social connections and delivering new activities, this includes our new weekly peer to peer support group and the launch of our new community library. These social interactions are essential to help reduce mental health issues and give our most vulnerable new ways of coping.
- Our weekly mother and toddlers' interactive sessions are invaluable to the toddlers to help build social skills and they also provide essential support to the parents and allow them to build valuable social connections.
- Considering so many are struggling with the Cost-of-Living Crisis we are also exploring becoming a warm hub and opening our doors 3 mornings a week to people struggling the wider community. This new and valuable initiative is in partnership with Bury Council and other community groups and charities across the borough, to help support struggling people within our community and help keep our most vulnerable safe.

Final Summary

When we received our 3-year funding just before the pandemic hit, none of us had any idea that the world as we knew it was about to completely change. Thanks to this amazing funding and belief in The Attic Project, we had the resources and expertise to support our wider community and provide an essential lifeline for so many. Without this valuable funding, we would have had no choice other than to sadly close our doors, like many other charities and community groups had to. Instead, we were able to respond to the immediate needs of our community, we have completely exceeded our expectations within this last year and have achieved so much more than we could have ever hoped for. Both the look and the feel of The Attic Project has changed so much in the couple of years, and it has been a real hive of positive activity within the heart of our community. We are truly grateful to each volunteer within the Attic Project, to every community volunteer who supports us and to every small local business who supports us. Every one of them have been truly amazing and we couldn't have done all we have without them. Together we have helped thousands of local people in genuine need, we have supported hundreds of our most vulnerable and we have provided an absolute lifeline for so many families and individuals. We are so proud of how we have brought our whole community together and become the absolute heartbeat of Moorside. We look forward to positively embracing our next challenges and continuing working together to support our communities through the struggles of this coming year.

We are very proud to have been nominated by local people in the "Pride of Moorside" and extremely touched to be presented this wonderful award.

We are also absolutely thrilled that all the hard work, passion, dedication and commitment of our amazing volunteers, management team and trustees has been

Attic Project
Trustees Annual Report

recognised at regional level and we were awarded the prestigious "Queens Honorary Award for Voluntary Service".

We are extremely proud of all we have achieved and the positive difference we continually make in the lives of others, this could have been done without the fantastic dedication and commitment of our team, our volunteers, our management board and trustees and all our amazingly kind sponsors and donators. We couldn't continue to provide all the essential help and support we provide to our local community, if it wasn't for the ongoing help and support, we receive from so many. We are truly grateful and very proud to be at the heart of our community and able to provide a lifeline to so many.

Financial review

The net receipts for the period were £18,764 (unrestricted £4,292, restricted £14,472). The charity aims to build its unrestricted reserves to cover 6 months running expenses.

Investment powers and policy

Aside from retaining a prudent amount in reserves each year, most of the charity's funds are to be spent in the short term so there are few funds for any long-term investment.

Risk Management

The trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and systems have been established to mitigate those risks.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations, and the provisions of the Trust deed. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

D. Turnbull
Trustee
30 January 2023



C. Fargher
Trustee
30 January 2023



Attic Project

Independent Examiners Report

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Attic Project

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Attic Project for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011('the Act'). The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under the Charities Act 2011, s.144(2) (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements 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

I have completed my examination. I can 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:

- the accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the financial statements set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the financial statements 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 financial statements to be reached.



Scott Davenport

Davenports Group Ltd
Preservation House
Badger Street
Bury

BL9 6AD
30 January 2023

Attic Project
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2022

		Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
	Notes				
Receipts:					
Charitable activities	2	30,534	76,843	107,377	104,484
Total		30,534	76,843	107,377	104,484
Payments on:					
Charitable activities	3	18,673	4,327	23,000	19,017
Other	4	7,570	58,044	65,613	68,133
Total		26,242	62,371	88,613	87,150
Net gains on investments		-	-	-	-
Net income		4,292	14,472	18,764	17,334
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net income before other gains/(losses)		4,292	14,472	18,764	17,334
Other gains and losses					
Net movement in funds		4,292	14,472	18,764	17,334
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		21,842	13,513	35,355	18,021
Total funds carried forward		26,134	27,985	54,119	35,355

Attic Project

Notes to the Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2022

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

Change in basis of accounting or to previous accounts

There has been no change to the accounting policies (valuation rules and method of accounting) since last year and no changes have been made to accounts for previous years.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds	These are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity.
Designated funds	These are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.
Revaluation funds	These are unrestricted funds which include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at their market values.
Restricted funds	These are available for use subject to restrictions imposed by the donor or through terms of an appeal.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities. The charity is not registered for VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the expense to which it relates.

Transactions with trustees

No remuneration nor expenses were paid to trustees or any persons connected with them during the year or previous year.

Attic Project
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
Receipts from:				
Charitable activities	30,534	76,843	107,377	104,484
	-	-	-	-
	<u>30,534</u>	<u>76,843</u>	<u>107,377</u>	<u>104,484</u>
Total income	30,534	76,843	107,377	104,484
Payments on:				
Charitable activities	18,673	4,327	23,000	19,017
Total of expenditure on charitable activities	<u>18,673</u>	<u>4,327</u>	<u>23,000</u>	<u>19,017</u>
	18,673	4,327	23,000	19,017
Employee costs				
Salaries/wages	-	48,636	48,636	47,097
Pension costs	-	3,051	3,051	-
Temporary staff	-	-	-	1,668
	<u>-</u>	<u>51,687</u>	<u>51,687</u>	<u>48,765</u>
Motor and travel costs				
Travel and subsistence	5,942	-	5,942	-
	<u>5,942</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,942</u>	<u>-</u>
Premises costs				
Rent	-	-	-	3,167
Premises repairs and maintenance	0	2,098	2,098	12,277
	<u>0</u>	<u>2,098</u>	<u>2,098</u>	<u>15,444</u>
General administrative costs, including depreciation and amortisation				
General insurances	0	2,613	2,613	-
Software, IT support and related costs	-	203	203	-
Sundry expenses	732	-	732	698
Telephone, fax and broadband	611	1,443	2,054	1,196
	<u>1,343</u>	<u>4,259</u>	<u>5,602</u>	<u>1,894</u>
Legal and professional costs				
Accountancy and bookkeeping	284	-	284	360
Consultancy fees	-	-	-	1,670
	<u>284</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>284</u>	<u>2,030</u>
Total of expenditure of other costs	<u>7,570</u>	<u>58,044</u>	<u>65,613</u>	<u>68,133</u>

Attic Project**Detailed Statement of Financial Activities**

Total expenditure	26,242	62,371	88,613	87,150
Net gains on investments	-	-	-	-
Net income	4,292	14,472	18,764	17,334
Net income before other gains/(losses)	4,292	14,472	18,764	17,334
Other Gains	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	4,292	14,472	18,764	17,334
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	21,842	13,513	35,355	18,021
Total funds carried forward	26,134	27,985	54,119	35,355