LINKING LIVES UK

England & Wales · Charity number 1170325

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2016-11-23
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Linking Lives UK 32 Selmans Hill Bloxwich Walsall WS3 3RL
Phone	0300 302 0225
Email	admin@linkinglives.uk
Website	www.linkinglives.uk

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE;(A) THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT AMONG PERSONS WHO AREEXCLUDED FROM SOCIETY BECAUSE THEY ARE HOUSE-BOUND FOR ANY REASON, BUT IN PARTICULAR THOSEWHO ARE ELDERLY OR IN POOR HEALTH, AND ASSISTING THEM TO INTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY(B) THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

Activities: Linking Lives UK is a national charity working to reduce loneliness and social isolation amongst older people. We achieve this through the development of befriending schemes and social events and activities which are set up in partnership with local churches and other agencies.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** Disability
- **Who:** Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities

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Geography

- Guernsey
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-06-30	£233,294	£185,079	-	-
2024-03-31	£135,962	£129,487	-	-
2023-03-31	£173,584	£135,282	-	-
2022-03-31	£141,327	£135,803	-	-
2021-03-31	£116,641	£126,036	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Paul James Livingstone	Chair	2024-08-28
Bev Boden		2021-10-22
Catharine Worsley-Tomlinson		2024-08-28
Dr Ashley Liston		2020-07-22
Dr CHARLES PETER ASHALL		2016-12-01
Kolawole Oladipo Oshin		2024-11-13

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LINKING LIVES UK

England & Wales - Charity number 1170325

Accounts

LINKING LIVES UK



Annual Report and Accounts

1st April 2024 - 30th June 2025

Charity No. (England & Wales): 1170325
Charity No. (Scotland): SCO53855

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1. Reference and Administration Information

Registration History
Registered (England & Wales) 23rd November 2016
Registered Charity No. (England & Wales): 1170325
Registered (Scotland) 12th December 2024
Registered Charity No. (Scotland): SCO53855

Registered Address:
32 Selmans Hill
Bloxwich
Walsall
West Midlands WS3 3RL

Independent Examiner:
Debbie Risborough (FCCA)
Cornwall Community Accounting Service ,
61 Green Lane, Redruth
Cornwall TR15 1LS

Bank:
Co-Operative Bank plc
PO Box 250
Skelmersdale, Lancs
WN8 6WT

Trustees:
Paul Livingstone - Chair (Appointed 18th August 2024)
Mr Peter Ashall
Mr Alan Hare (Retired 15th April 2024)
Rev Bev Boden
Catharine Worsley-Tomlinson – Finance trustee (Appointed 28th August 2024)
Dr Ashley Liston
Kola Oshin (Appointed 13th November 2024)

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Organisation Type:

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Governing Document:

Linking Lives UK Constitution

Recruitment and selection of trustees:

New trustees are selected by the existing board of trustees in accordance with necessary skills, experience, shared vision and values of the charity.

3. Objectives and activities

Linking Lives UK is a national charity working to reduce loneliness and social isolation amongst older people. We achieve this through the development of befriending schemes which are set up in partnership with local churches and other agencies. We also run regular volunteer training courses aimed at those engaging in local community activities as well as webinars focusing on individual methods to address loneliness and social isolation.

The trustees have established this CIO as a practical means of showing the love of God in accordance with their Christian beliefs, in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world.

The objects of the CIO are:

- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among persons who are excluded from society because they are house-bound for any reason, but in particular those who are elderly or in poor health and assisting them to integrate into society.
- The advancement of the Christian faith.

4. Public Benefit

Our objectives and activities are outlined above. All activities focus on combating social isolation and loneliness among older people across the UK. This is achieved through the establishment of befriending schemes in various parts of the country ranging from rural areas to inner city urban areas. These local schemes focus on arranging for volunteers to visit older people in their own homes once a week or through telephone befriending. In addition, volunteers are encouraged, where possible, to arrange visits to suitable local social events and activities or outings to places of interest.

We also provide training for volunteers engaging in various local community activities which benefit socially isolated people. This training addresses skills such as 'effective listening', 'managing boundaries' and 'safeguarding awareness'.

As a result of these local interactions, the primary public benefit for our clients is increased self-esteem and confidence as well as stronger community links. Volunteers benefit from learning about the life of past generations as well as building strong relationships with their allocated scheme member. Also, there is a benefit for the wider community as people from various generations engage more effectively and those previously on the margins of society begin to re-engage with those around them. Through all our work, we also aim to value the diverse and rich experiences of older people and to celebrate their gifts and abilities in communities across the UK.

5. Trustee & Operational team

We are grateful to our board of trustees (see page 3) who have served during this period. The trustees meet on a bi-monthly basis and focus on the continued development of our governance structure, medium to long-term strategy and financial stability.

We are also grateful to our central operational team which included Jeremy Sharpe (National Director until 31st January 2025), Simon Betteridge (National Director from 6th January 2025), Angela Caley (Operations Manager), Chris Driver (Finance/ IT), David De La Haye (Training & Resources Manager), Richard Taylor (Regional Development Officer for Devon until 28th February 2025) and Michelle Candlish (Scotland Development Manager).

We also set up an Advisory Group in April 2023 to provide specialist advice to the National Director. The group comprises representatives from sectors and experience including health & wellbeing, charity management, fundraising, evaluation local government, faith and community development.

6. National Director's Report

It has been a year of both significant achievement and notable challenge for Linking Lives UK. I am pleased to present this report for the financial year 2024/25, which highlights our progress, the impact of our work, and the context in which we have been operating.

I would like to recognise and express my personal thanks to Jeremy Sharpe who founded and grew Linking Lives UK from a local project to UK wide charity. His hard work and commitment has played a pivotal part in thousands of people being supported and enjoying a better experience of life. Jeremy was National Director for the first nine months of the period this report covers with me taking over in January 2025.

Our Mission

Linking Lives UK exists to reduce loneliness and social isolation across the UK, particularly among older people and others who are marginalised or overlooked. We achieve this through growing a network of local befriending projects, partnerships with community stakeholders, and the training and support of volunteers.

External Context

Loneliness continues to be recognised as a pressing national issue, with over 1.4 million older people reporting chronic loneliness (Age UK). Wider inequalities, including rising living costs, health disparities, and digital exclusion, have deepened the vulnerability of many. The government's focus on social prescribing and community-based care has created opportunities for partnership, but local authority and NHS pressures have constrained commissioning budgets.

Organisational Performance

- Reach: We supported a network of 40 befriending schemes across England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. These collectively reached over 742 older people in 2024/25.
- Volunteer Engagement: Over 650 trained volunteers provided companionship and connection through home visits, phone calls, and group activities.
- Impact: Surveys show that 91% of beneficiaries felt more valued as a result of being befriended, with 77% saying their outlook on life had improved due to being befriended.

Strengths

Proven model: Our befriending model continues to demonstrate high impact at relatively low cost.
Reputation: LLUK is increasingly recognised nationally as a thought leader in community-based responses toloneliness.
Christian ethos, inclusive practice: Our distinct identity offers trust and motivation for many partners while remaining accessible to all.

Challenges

Funding climate: Grant competition remains intense, with fewer multi-year opportunities. This has placed pressure on reserves and staff capacity.
Volunteer sustainability: Recruiting and retaining younger volunteers is a challenge, reinforcing the need for intergenerational approaches.
Digital exclusion: While technology offers opportunities, many of our beneficiaries remain excluded, requiring continued investment in face-to-face approaches.
Hidden poverty: Beyond financial deprivation, we encounter deep experiences of social and relational poverty which require sensitive, narrative-based responses.

Looking Ahead

In 2025/26, we will begin implementing our new five-year strategic plan, focusing on:

- Intergenerational engagement as a means of building resilient, inclusive communities
- Regional development promoting hubs that provide greater sustainability
- Volunteer development with an emphasis on equipping younger generations
- Narrative inquiry as a way of hearing, amplifying, and learning from community stories
- We remain committed to our vision: strengthening communities, one connection at a time

7. Chair ofTrustee's Report

Having joined the Trustee team of Linking Lives UK in Autumn 2024, and taking up the role of Chair shortly thereafter, it has been an absolute pleasure to be involved and to be able to report on some of what I have seen in the year to end June 2025.

I really must, firstly, thank the existing group of Trustees who have made me feel so welcome and I know that I have some big shoes to fill, not least those of Ashley Liston who I succeeded as Chair.

There has been a lot of change!

As mentioned by Ashley last year, this financial year saw our founder, Jeremy Sharpe, move on and the recruitment of our new National Director, Simon Betteridge, who took up his post

in January 2025. It has been a pleasure for me to work with and get to know Simon as he settles in and starts to bring his thoughts about the future of this wonderful organisation.

We also recruited two new Trustees, Cath and Kolawole, who bring such knowledge, experience and a wealth of experience and passion to an already great group. Can I thank them and all the Trustees for all their work in supporting Simon, the team and me during this year.

In the midst of much change, there is also much that remains the same. Loneliness and isolation continue to be a massive issue for us as a nation, affecting millions of people. While there has been media coverage of the perhaps less expected impact of loneliness on younger people, it remains a huge issue for many older people across the UK.

More positively, what also has not changed is the enthusiasm, passion and drive of our staff team at Linking Lives UK, and of our partners, our scheme coordinators and our volunteers right across the UK to make a difference. I am constantly delighted and encouraged when I hear stories from schemes and projects across the UK, in different regions, from different backgrounds, in different contexts but all making a difference in the lives of lonely older people.

With the support of our staff team, and a massive amount of hard work, everyone involved with our schemes and projects are helping people build confidence, connection and relationships in communities across the country.

I am so glad that this hasn't changed, despite what can seem like change in every other aspect of life and I want to say a huge thank you to you all. You really are making a difference and, on behalf of the Trustees and personally, I am so grateful and want to record my thanks to you – staff, volunteers and partners - for another amazing year of impact and success. Thank you.

Paul Livingstone - Chair of Trustees (Appointed on 28th August 2024)

8. Financial Review

We continue to be grateful for the various trusts and foundations that have supported the work of Linking Lives UK and enable us to continue to develop our services. This amounted to £149,620 in grants received throughout the year (£138,174 of which was restricted funds) plus an endowment fund of £50,000 (2024 - £120,773 in grants (£75,899 of which was restricted funds).

We also received fees from churches that are setting up or have set up befriending schemes as well as other training fees and the total income derived from these sources was £9,800 (2024- £8,917).

Our expenditure was £185,079 (2024-£132,345), £134,510 (2024 - £60,127) of which was in respect of restricted funds) a detailed breakdown of this figure is provided in note 6. We recorded a deficit in our unrestricted funds for the year of £7,687 (2024 -£9,297). Our year- end unrestricted reserves balance remain in line with our Reserves Policy thanks to the endowment fund received. The trustees are confident that the charity continues to operate as a going concern in view of restricted funds balances in hand.

Reserves Policy

The trustees' policy is to retain sufficient funds to cover the notice periods of all members of our core operations team. The value of the reserves will be re-assessed at least annually, or when significant changes in financial obligations occur.

Investment Policy

The charity does not hold investments.

Risk Statement

A Risk Register is reviewed and amended where necessary at each trustee's meeting. This covers aspects of the charity's operation including governance, external risks, regulation and compliance, finance, and operations. Our current identified top five risks are below, along with the respective controls put in place to mitigate these risks:

- Inadequate funding to achieve business plan aims – Pipeline of funding applications ongoing and income stream from local project fees.
- Inadequate reserves – Active financial monitoring and forecasting of cash position
- Loss of key operational team members – Contracts established with appropriate notice periods to ensure suitable transference of responsibilities
- Local partner submits complaint about Linking Lives UK – Annual reviews and informal contact maintained on a regular basis
- Inadequate financial controls leading to poor use of resources and/or fraud - Key financial monitoring & banking controls in place

Signature.....

Paul Livingstone (Chair of Trustees)

Linking Lives UK
Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 30 June 2025 which are set out on pages 10 to 18.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the 2011 Act and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act;
- and state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

o to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 130 of the 2011 Act; and

o to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met;

2) or to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



.....

Debbie Risborough, Chartered Certified Accountant
Cornwall Community Accountancy Service
The Elms, 61 Green Lane,
Redruth, Cornwall TR15 1LS

27 April 2026

Date:

Linking Lives UK
Statement of Financial Activities

for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted income funds 2025 £	Permanent endowment funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Prior year funds 2024 £
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	3	19,696	2,238	-	21,934	5,745
Charitable activities	4	21,246	138,174	50,000	209,420	129,690
Investments	5	1,940	-	-	1,940	525
Total		42,882	140,412	50,000	233,294	135,960
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	6	50,569	134,510	-	185,079	132,345
Total		50,569	134,510	-	185,079	132,345
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains/(losses)		(7,687)	5,902	50,000	48,215	3,615
Net income/(expenditure)		(7,687)	5,902	50,000	48,215	3,615
Other gains/(losses)		-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(7,687)	5,902	50,000	48,215	3,615
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		11,920	82,006	-	93,926	90,311
Total funds carried forward		4,233	87,908	50,000	142,141	93,926

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities

As at 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Current Assets					
Cash at bank and in hand		161,655		96,786	
		161,655		96,786	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	9	(19,514)		(2,860)	
Net current assets			142,141		93,926
Total assets less current liabilities			142,141		93,926
Net assets			142,141		93,926
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted funds	10		88,498		82,006
Endowment funds	10		50,000		-
Unrestricted income fu	10		3,643		11,920
Total charity funds			142,141		93,926

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

For the year ended 30 June 2025 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

Approved by the Board on 27th April 2026 and signed on its behalf by:

Paul Livingstone
Chair of Trustees

1 Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with:
- Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard, applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) second edition - October 2019 (effective 1 January 2019);
- the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- the Companies Act 2006 and
- the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102

1.2 Change in basis of accounting or to previous accounts

The previous years accounts were prepared on a receipts and payments basis. The current year has been prepared on an accruals basis. The change in reserves of comparative figures is as follows:

	£
As per previous accounts:	96,786
Payroll creditor	(2,860)
Revised brought forward reserves	93,926

The opportunity has also arisen to review category coding within the accounts so this has been done for comparative figures as well as the current year.

1.3 Fund accounting policy

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

Designated funds are amounts that are allocated for specific purposes by the charity itself.

Restricted 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.

Revaluation funds are unrestricted funds which include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at their market value.

1.4 Income

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by the FRS102 SORP or FRS102.
Items of income are recognised and included in the accounts when all of the following criteria are met:

- the charity has entitlement to the funds;
- any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met or are fully within the control of the charity;
- there is sufficient certainty that receipt of the income is considered probable; and
- the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies are voluntary income received by way of donations and gifts. It is included within the accounts when receivable and only when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the income.

Tax reclaims on donations and gifts are included in the accounts at the same time as the gift/donation to which it relates

Donated goods and services are only included in income (with an equivalent amount in expenditure) where the benefit to the Charity is reasonably quantifiable, measurable and material.

The value of services provided by volunteers is not included within the accounts.

1.5 Resources expended

Liabilities are recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and includes the attributable value added tax which cannot be recovered.

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

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.

Support costs are the those costs required to support the charity in carrying out its activities and meeting its objects.

Governance costs include costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the Charity, including the preparation and examination of the statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings and other costs linked to the strategic management of the Charity including the cost of any legal advice to trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

1.6 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

1.7 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.8 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.9 Creditors and provisions

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

1.10 Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions are charged in the statement of financial activities as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the scheme.

1.11 Statement of cash flows

The charity is exempt from preparing a statement of cash flows on the grounds that it is a small charity

2 Company Status

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation and has no share capital.
The charity is incorporated and registered in England and Scotland
In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £nil per member of the charity.
The members of the charity are the trustees named on page 1.

3 Donations and Legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Prior year funds
			2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Appeals and donations	19,696	-	19,696	5,108
Crowdfunder	-	2,238	2,238	637
	19,696	2,238	21,934	5,745

4 Incoming resources from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Prior year funds
			2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Grant Income:				
Grants under £5,000	11,446	3,254	14,700	1,873
Allen Lane Foundation	-	-	-	10,000
Benefact Group	-	56,000	56,000	48,000
Barnabas Trust 2024	-	2,500	2,500	2,500
Haramead trust	-	-	-	5,000
Highway One	-	20,000	20,000	5,000
Jerusalem Trust 2024	-	20,000	20,000	20,000
McCarthy & Stone	-	6,783	6,783	-
Scotland NDM	-	29,637	29,637	-
TOR Christian Foundation	-	-	-	22,900
Tricordant	-	-	-	5,500
Primary Purpose Trading:				
Membership Fees	6,700	-	6,700	7,090
Training Income	2,608	-	2,608	-
Activity Packs	492	-	492	-
Other income	-	-	-	1,827
	21,246	138,174	159,420	129,690

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Prior year funds
			2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Interest on cash deposits	1,940	-	1,940	525

6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Prior year
			2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Direct costs				
Contractors	8,645	51,395	60,040	42,926
Conference	200	-	200	345
Refreshments and activity costs	647	684	1,331	721
National Chaplaincy	-	2,706	2,706	1,668
	9,492	54,785	64,277	45,660
Support costs				
Wages and salaries	18,483	75,162	93,645	73,148
Pensions	2,060	-	2,060	1,370
Staff training	3,285	122	3,407	220
Insurance	478	-	478	478
Equipment repairs and renewals	599	-	599	11
Telephone and fax	399	74	473	377
IT Services	2,459	-	2,459	982
Printing, postage and stationery	816	135	951	845
Subscriptions	1,153	-	1,153	90
Travel and subsistence	3,878	3,165	7,043	3,488
Advertising & Marketing	4,812	1,057	5,869	4,524
Consultancy fees	-	-	-	-
Legal and professional fees	1,665	10	1,675	1,152
Total Support Costs	40,087	79,725	119,812	86,685
Governance Costs				
The audit or independent examination of the charity's accounts	990	-	990	-
Total Governance Costs	990	-	990	-
Total Charitable Expenditure	50,569	134,510	185,079	132,345

7 Net income/ expenditure

Net income/expenditure is stated after charging:

	2025 £	2024 £
Auditors' / Independent Examiners' remuneration	990	-

7 Staff costs

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Staff in charitable activities	3	3
Volunteers (nos of people involved excluding Trustees)	650	600

The aggregate payroll costs of these persons were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	93,645	73,148
Pensions	2,060	1,370
	95,705	74,518

No employee received emoluments in excess of £60,000 in either the current or the prior year.

The charity operates a defined contributions scheme with The Peoples Pension. The pension cost shown represents the contributions payable by the charity to the scheme for the period.

8 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

Trustees received no remuneration, expenses or benefits in kind during the current or prior year.

9 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Taxation and social security	3,129	2,860
Accruals and deferred income	990	-
Other creditors	15,396	-
	19,515	2,860

10 Analysis of funds

	As at 1 April 2024 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	As at 30 June 2025 £
Restricted Funds					
Benefact Group	67,391	56,000	(35,423)	(24,149)	63,819
Highway One	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
Jerusalem Trust	-	20,000	(10,565)	-	9,435
TOR Edinburgh	11,161	-	(22,464)	11,303	-
Scotland NDM	-	29,637	(42,483)	12,846	-
Other projects under £10,000	3,454	14,775	(3,575)	590	15,244
	82,006	140,412	(134,510)	590	88,498
General Funds					
Unrestricted funds	11,920	42,882	(50,569)	(590)	3,643
Endowment Funds					
Edward Gosling Fund	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
Total Endowment funds	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
Total funds	93,926	233,294	(185,079)	-	142,141

11 Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Prior year funds
Current assets	23,157	50,000	88,498	161,655	96,786
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(19,514)		-	(19,514)	(2,860)
Net Assets	3,643	50,000	88,498	142,141	93,926

LINKING LIVES UK

England & Wales - Charity number 1170325

Accounts

LINKING LIVES UK



Annual Report and Accounts

1st April 2023-31st March 2024

Charity No. (England & Wales): 1170325

Charity No. (Scotland): SCO53855

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1. Reference and administration information

Registration History

Registered (England & Wales) 23rd November 2016
Registered Charity No. (England & Wales): 1170325
Registered (Scotland) 12th December 2024
Registered Charity No. (Scotland): SCO53855

Independent Examiner:

Mr John Wild ACA
West Warren
Warren Road
Woodley RG5 3AR

Registered Address:

32 Selmans Hill
Bloxwich
Walsall
West Midlands WS3 3RL

Bank:

Co-Operative Bank plc
PO Box 250,
Skelmersdale, Lancs
WN8 6WT

Trustees:

Paul Livingstone – Chair (Appointed 28th August 2024)
Mr Peter Ashall
Mr Alan Hare (Retired 15th April 2024)
Rev Bev Boden
Catharine Worsley-Tomlinson – Finance trustee (Appointed 28th August 2024)
Dr Ashley Liston
Kola Oshin (Appointed 13th November 2024)

2. Structure, governance and management

Organisation Type:

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Governing Document:

Linking Lives UK Constitution

Recruitment and selection of trustees:

New trustees are selected by the existing board of trustees in accordance with necessary skills, experience, shared vision and values of the charity.

3. Objectives and activities

Linking Lives UK is a national charity working to reduce loneliness and social isolation amongst older people. We achieve this through the development of befriending schemes which are set up in partnership with local churches and other agencies. We also run regular volunteer training courses aimed at those engaging in local community activities as well as monthly webinars focusing on individual methods to address loneliness and social isolation.

The trustees have established this CIO as a practical means of showing the love of God in accordance with their Christian beliefs, in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world.

The objects of the CIO are:

- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among persons who are excluded from society because they are house-bound for any reason, but in particular those who are elderly or in poor health and assisting them to integrate into society.
- The advancement of the Christian faith.

4. Public Benefit

Our objectives and activities are outlined above. All activities focus on combating social isolation and loneliness among older people across the UK. This is achieved through the establishment of befriending schemes in various parts of the country ranging from rural areas to inner city urban areas. These local schemes focus on arranging for volunteers to visit older people in their own homes once a week or through telephone befriending. In addition, volunteers are encouraged, where possible, to arrange visits to suitable local social events and activities or outings to places of interest.

We also provide training for volunteers engaging in various local community activities which benefit socially isolated people. This training addresses skills such as 'effective listening', 'managing boundaries' and 'safeguarding awareness'.

As a result of these local interactions, the primary public benefit for our clients is increased self-esteem and confidence as well as stronger community links. Volunteers benefit from learning about the life of past generations as well as building strong relationships with their allocated scheme member. Also, there is a benefit for the wider community as people from various generations engage more effectively and those previously on the margins of society begin to re-engage with those around them. Through all our work, we also aim to value the diverse and rich experiences of older people and to celebrate their gifts and abilities in communities across the UK.

5. Trustee & operational team

We are grateful to our board of trustees (see page 3) who have served during this period. The trustees meet on a quarterly basis and focus on the continued development of our governance structure, medium to long-term strategy and financial stability.

We are also grateful to our central operational team which included Jeremy Sharpe (National Director), Angela Caley (Partnerships & Support Services Manager), Chris Driver (Finance/ IT), Tessa Trace (Trusts & Foundations Manager until 20th November 2023), David de la Haye (Training & Resources Manager), Richard Taylor (Regional Development Officer – Devon) and Michelle Candlish (Scotland Development Manager).

We also set up an Advisory Group in April 2023 to provide specialist advice to the National Director. The group comprises representatives from sectors and experience including health

& wellbeing, charity management, fundraising, evaluation local government, faith and community development.

We would also like to thank our Patron, Bishop James Newcome – who has retired this year - for his encouragement and support since beginning this role with Linking Lives UK.

6. National Director's Report

During this past year, we have developed a framework which enables us to allocate existing and new projects and initiatives according to the circumstances of individuals involved. We recognise, however, that there will be an element of 'cross-over' between these circumstances in many cases, and so are to be seen as a helpful guide. These fall into the following categories:

- **Permanently housebound** – Those people in this category are unlikely (or rarely) able to leave their home due to either restrictions in physical mobility, mental health reasons or a combination of the two.

- **Temporarily housebound** – This group of people are likely to have been relatively active in the past and engaging in local activities. However, a life event such as bereavement, Covid-19 or health issues has resulted in a reduction in community participation.

- **Active** – We also recognise that there are a large number of people who have good levels of mobility but who also experience feelings of loneliness and may be socially isolated.

This framework acknowledges that loneliness can be experienced by anyone in any circumstances and that includes those with good levels of mobility and access to community activities as well as those unable to leave their home.

There were 44 schemes at the year-end making regular home visits, telephone calls or both to around 770 people experiencing loneliness across England, Scotland and Wales. As with many charities across the UK, we have seen a decline in partners being in a position to maintain their befriending services. The 'Time Well Spent' report (NCVO, May 2023) found that those organising or helping to run an activity had fallen by 52% from 14% to 7%. Sarah Vibert, CEO of NCVO, explained "People who were lifelong volunteers broke their habit during the pandemic and haven't yet got back to it. Millions more who would have committed to longer-term volunteering didn't have the chance." We have seen a corresponding reduction in volunteer availability across our local schemes.

We ran 39 Good Conversations courses and 296 volunteers from 117 distinct organisations benefited from attending. We also ran 8 Power of One webinars which were attended by 41 individuals and you can read more about our wider work later in this report.

Britain is a lonely nation..... Exclusive polling for a report by this name and published earlier in 2024 by the Centre for Social Justice has revealed that nearly six in 10 adults feel lonely most, often, or some of the time. This equates to 31.4 million people. [1]

Also, '62% of lonely young people say that 'feeling lonely makes them lose confidence in themselves' [2] and research shows that loneliness is associated with elevated blood pressure and acute stress responses [3]. Other side effects have also long been recognised including 'loneliness [being] associated with 'poorer sleep quality' in young adults and 'sleep inadequacy and dissatisfaction' in the general population [4].

This is the reason why Linking Lives UK was first set up in 2016 and why we continue to look for effective ways to work with local partners and individuals to reduce loneliness among older people. We have been pleased to see many new organisations, groups and initiatives begin to join efforts in addressing loneliness in recent years including warm spaces, local and national charities and local government. We have also been in a position to play our part in the shaping of the governments' Loneliness Strategy which has led to various actions and policies as well as ongoing multi-agency dialogue on this subject including the creation of an All Party Parliamentary Group on Loneliness and Connected Communities of which we have been members.

We are also excited to be joint founding members of the coalition 'Christians Together Against Loneliness' which is now made up of ten national charities involved in addressing loneliness in various ways.

In an ideal world, there should be no need for organisations such as Linking Lives UK and other initiatives which address loneliness. We would much prefer to see communities in which friends, neighbours and relatives ensure that no one is left alone unnecessarily. We would therefore encourage all of us to play our small part in look after those around us and we look forward to a day when loneliness is no longer an issue.

[1] 'Lonely Nation', Centre for Social Justice, May 24
[2] (Co-Op Foundation, A Friend in Need, 2022
[3] E. G. Brown, S Gallagher and A. Creaven, 'Loneliness and acute stress reactivity: A systematic review of psychophysiological studies', Psychophysiology 55.5, 2018
[4] (S. C. Griffin et al., 'Loneliness and sleep: A systematic review and meta-analysis', Health Psychology Open 7:1 (2020)

7. Chair of Trustee's Report

It has been a privilege to serve as the Interim Chair of Trustees for Linking Lives UK and to see their continuing work in addressing the issue of loneliness that remains so prevalent in our society. As a retired GP I am only too aware of the impact it can have on individuals' emotional wellbeing as well as on their mental and physical health. The heart of the charity is in supporting the development for befriending schemes with a vision to expand these into Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The extraordinary growth in schemes that occurred during the pandemic has been followed by a predictable decline. Nevertheless, the numbers of schemes still significantly exceeds the pre-pandemic numbers and we are working to find

new models and explore new ways to support churches that wish to address the problem of loneliness in their area.

It was with a deep sense of sadness that we received the news that our National Director has felt the call to hand over the reins of Linking Lives UK from the start of 2025 and move on to a portfolio career including Christian community development work and fundraising consultancy. Jeremy had the vision and drive to set up Linking Lives in 2016 and his commitment and skilled leadership has seen the charity steadily develop and expand its operations during his time with us. We wish him all the very best for the future and thank him for all he has done to help address the problem of loneliness as well as inspiring churches across the country to engage with their local communities in such a tangible way. We are pleased that we have been able to appoint his successor Simon and that they have been able to have a good period of handover.

Dr. Ashley Liston – Interim Chair of Trustees (until 13th November 2024)

8. Financial Review

We continue to be grateful for the various trusts and foundations that have supported the work of Linking Lives UK and enable us to continue to develop our services. This amounted to £121,372 in grants (£75,899 of which was restricted funds) received throughout the year.

We also received fees from churches that are setting up or have set up befriending schemes as well as other training fees and the total income derived from these sources was £7,090.

Our expenditure was £129,487 (£60,127 of which was expenditure in respect of restricted expenditure) and a detailed breakdown of this figure is provided below. We recorded a deficit in our unrestricted funds for the year of £9,297 (we had been notified of two key grants having been awarded but which were received at the start of the following financial period). Our year-end unrestricted reserves balance remained in line with our Reserves Policy. The trustees are confident that the charity continues to operate as a going concern in view of confirmed income shortly due to be received.

Reserves Policy

The trustees' policy is to retain sufficient funds to cover the notice periods of all members of our core operations team. The value of the reserves will be re-assessed at least annually, or when significant changes in financial obligations occur.

Investment Policy

The charity does not hold investments.

Risk Statement

A Risk Register is reviewed and amended where necessary at each trustee's meeting. This covers aspects of the charity's operation including governance, external risks, regulation and

compliance, finance, and operations. Our current identified top five risks are below, along with the respective controls put in place to mitigate these risks:

- Inadequate funding to achieve business plan aims – Pipeline of funding applications ongoing and income stream from local project fees.
- Inadequate reserves – Active financial monitoring and forecasting of cash position
- Loss of key operational team members – Contracts established with appropriate notice periods to ensure suitable transference of responsibilities
- Local partner submits complaint about Linking Lives UK – Annual reviews and informal contact maintained on a regular basis
- Inadequate financial controls leading to poor use of resources and/or fraud - Key financial monitoring & banking controls in place

IMPACT REPORT

2023 - 2024



Improving quality of life through friendship



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3 About Linking Lives UK
4 2023-24 Achievements
5 Befriending Focus
7 2023-24 Highlights
8 In their Own Words...
9 Our National Reach
10 Spotlight on Guernsey Linking Lives
11 Key Statistics
12 Performance and Growth
13 Our Thanks Go To...

"A father to the fatherless is God in His Holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families."
Psalm 68: 5-6

ABOUT LINKING LIVES UK

Linking Lives UK is a national Christian charity set up to address social isolation and loneliness particularly among older people. We achieve this through a variety of means including the development of befriending schemes in partnership with local churches and Christian charities as well as training volunteers and individuals in techniques which address loneliness.

During the year, we have developed a framework which enables us to allocate existing and new projects and initiatives according to the circumstances of individuals involved. We recognise, however, that there will be an element of 'cross-over' between these circumstances in many cases, and so are to be seen as a helpful guide. These fall into the following categories:

- **Permanently housebound** – Those people in this category are unlikely (or rarely) able to leave their home due to either restrictions in physical mobility, mental health reasons or a combination of the two.

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- **Active** – We also recognise that there are a large number of people who have good levels of mobility but who also experience feelings of loneliness and may be socially isolated.

This framework acknowledges that loneliness can be experienced by anyone in any circumstances and that includes those with good levels of mobility and access to community activities as well as those unable to leave their home.

There were 44 schemes at the year end making regular home visits, telephone calls or both to around 770 people experiencing loneliness across England, Scotland and Wales. As with many charities across the UK, we have seen a decline in partners being in a position to maintain their befriending services. The 'Time Well Spent' report (NCVO, May 2023) found that those organising or helping to run an activity had fallen by 52% from 14% to 7%. Sarah Vibert, CEO of NCVO, explained "People who were lifelong volunteers broke their habit during the pandemic and haven't yet got back to it. Millions more who would have committed to longer-term volunteering didn't have the chance." We have seen a corresponding reduction in volunteer availability across our local schemes.

We ran 39 Good Conversations courses and 296 volunteers from 117 distinct organisations benefited from attending. We also ran 8 Power of One webinars which were attended by 41 individuals and you can read more about our wider work later in this report.

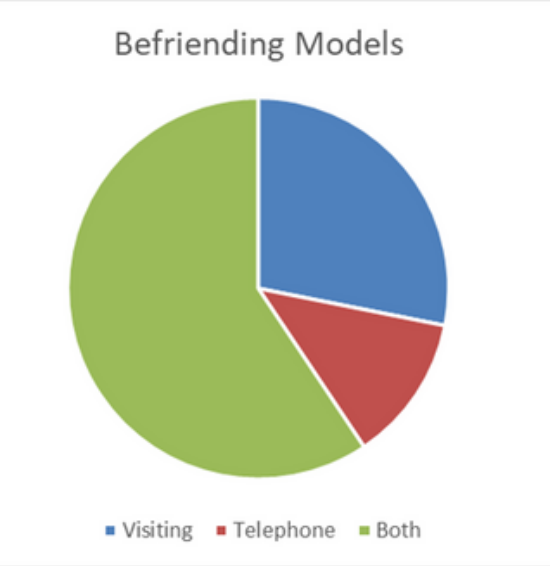
2023-24 ACHIEVEMENTS

We are excited to have been able to continue developing our existing services during this year as well as piloting new initiatives which will help us to broaden the ways in which we address loneliness. Some of our key achievements are below.

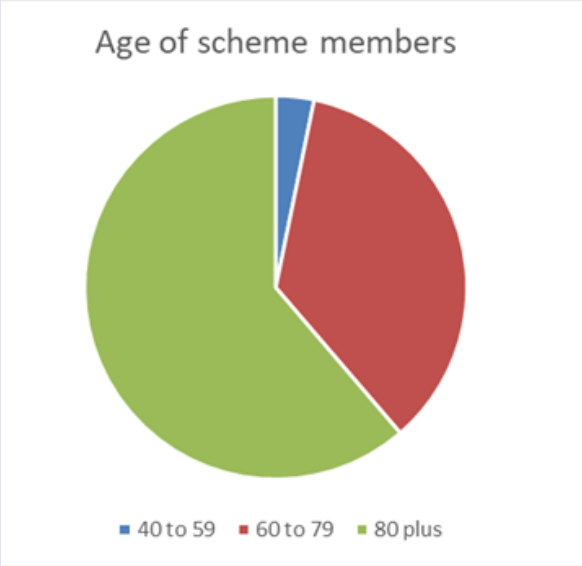
FOCUS	AIMS	PROGRESS MARCH 24
SUPPORTING CHURCHES	• Continue developing befriending schemes & building affiliate links	• 44 befriending schemes in operation
	• Encourage strong and sustainable local partnerships	• 64% of schemes successfully continued
	• Begin developing new models of operation	• Continued development of two new befriending models
EQUIPPING VOLUNTEERS	• Roll out online & face to face Good Conversations courses across UK	• Delivered 39 courses
	• Provide quality befriending training to coordinators & volunteers	• Delivered 20 sessions to volunteers & coordinators
INSPIRING INDIVIDUALS	• Continue monthly 'Power of One' webinars	• Delivered 8 webinars
PROFILE RAISING	• Highlight the work of Linking Lives across the UK through events	• Attended 30 events either as speakers or exhibitors
	• Engage in media articles and interviews	• Participated in 10 interviews and stories
NATIONAL MULTI-AGENCY/ GOVERNMENT EVENTS	• Attend key national 'loneliness' events	• Attended 8 national events focusing on loneliness

BEFRIENDING FOCUS

Through our partner befriending schemes across the UK, we have been excited to see continued positive outcomes in the lives of those receiving regular calls or visits as well as benefits to volunteers. Most schemes offer both home visits and telephone befriending (Pie chart 1) and 61% of scheme members are over 80 years old (pie chart 2).

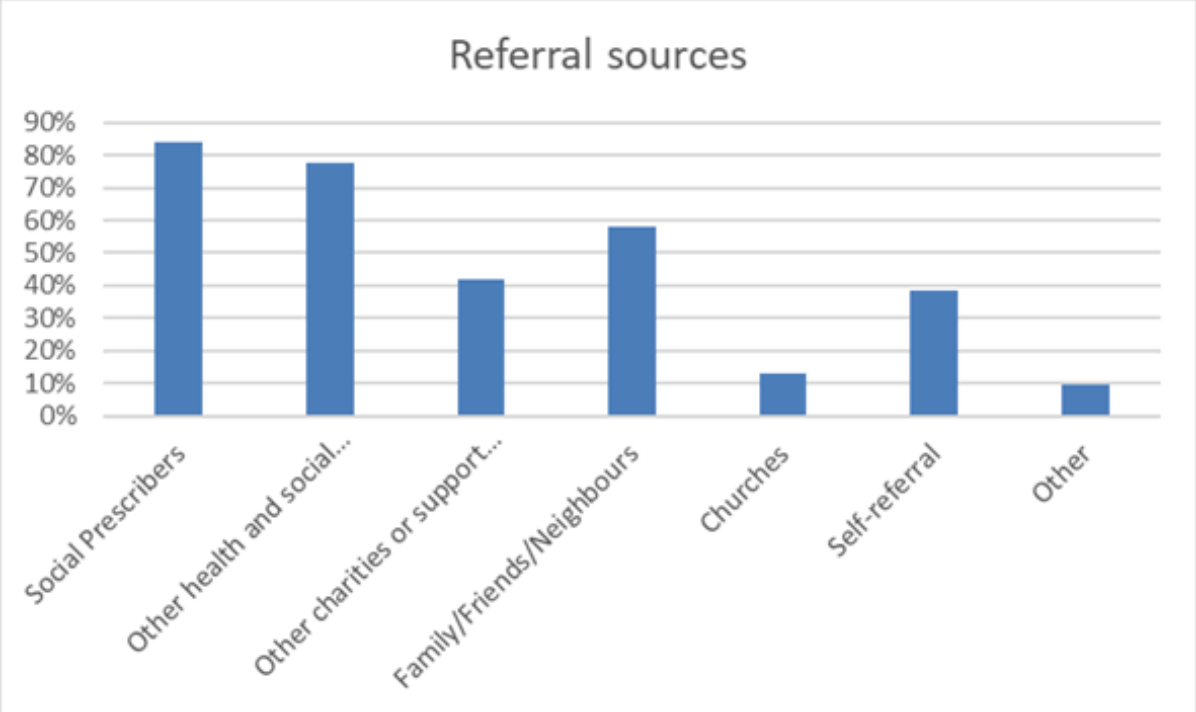


Pie chart 1



Pie chart 2

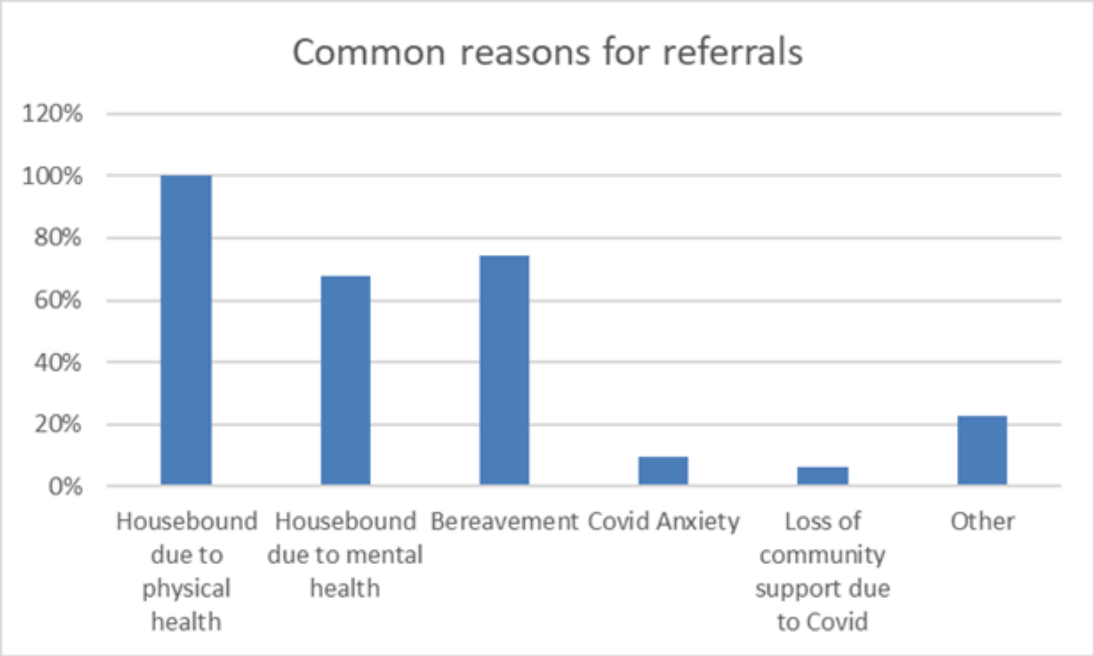
By far the majority (74%) of schemes employ a coordinator and the average hours worked is 13 per week. The total number of referrals received was 555 with the majority of these coming from social prescribers or other health and social care professionals (Graph 1).



Graph 1

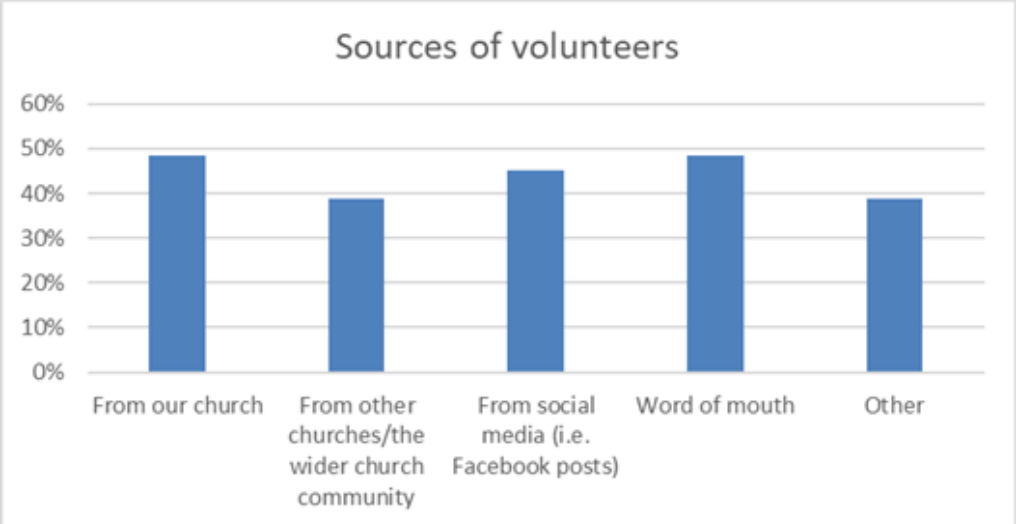
BEFRIENDING FOCUS (CONT)

The most common reason for the need for befriending was scheme members being housebound due to physical health (Graph 2). 260 new volunteers were collectively recruited with the majority of these coming from local churches (Graph 3) and this enabled 312 people to be linked to a volunteer. By the end of the year 763 people had been receiving regular calls or visits.



Graph 2

As a Christian charity, it is also encouraging to note that 42% of our partner befriending schemes had seen scheme members engaging with wider church activities as a result of participating in their befriending scheme.



Graph 3

2023 - 2024 HIGHLIGHTS



This year has seen the start of the strategic development of our work in Scotland as we employed Michelle Candlish as our Scotland Development Manager in March 2023. Michelle has been busy raising the profile of Linking Lives UK with key organisations and churches and this has led to interest and engagement in many of our available training packages and resources. We also plan to begin some research into options to begin similar work in Northern Ireland & Wales in May 2024.

We were pleased to begin a collaboration with Anna Chaplaincy (part of Bible Reading Fellowship) which has led to the development of chaplaincy training for Linking Lives/ Two's Company volunteer befrienders. Two 6-week training courses were run during the year with more planned in the future.

Both of these initiatives have been funded by Benefact Trust as part of a three year strategic grant, along with further funding from TOR Christian Foundation for the work in Scotland and we are very grateful to be partnering with them in this way.



Our annual online conference in May 2023 was entitled 'Together for the Journey' and was run across two days with day one being attended by almost 70 people. We were privileged to be joined by Kim Leadbeater MP who inspired us all with her perspective on 'The Role of Faith Groups in Addressing Loneliness'. We also heard from Phil Knox of Evangelical Alliance about the value and importance of strong friendships as a pro-active way to reduce loneliness. Finally, Matt Smith from the Waffle House in Devon shared the story of his charity building opportunities for companionship.

We have also continued to develop and build on national partnerships including with the Warm Welcome initiative, Christians Together Against Loneliness and the Together Network. It is also important that we continue to engage with national dialogue focusing on addressing loneliness and we remain members of the 'Loneliness and Connected Communities APPG' and the Loneliness Champions Network.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

"I have been volunteering for Linking Lives Northampton since 2021.The best part is the flexibility and joy that volunteering brings. Volunteering at Linking Lives is the best gift that I have ever given and I am grateful."
Chris
Northampton Linking Lives

"It's very important. Honestly and truly, you've no idea how much I look forward to Linda coming. She's like a ray of sunshine coming through my door."

Molly, Scheme Member

"One gentleman had not been out of the house for 18 months, but now attends the Place of Welcome once a week."

Linking Lives Coordinator

"One volunteer built up a really good relationship with a lady with dementia and she has been able to have more clear conversations with her and taught her to knit. She also brought her along to a church Easter event and the lady had a lovely time."

Linking Lives Coordinator



"I get on well with my befriender; we are never short of conversation. We sometimes stay in or more often go out. He is lovely"

Scheme Member

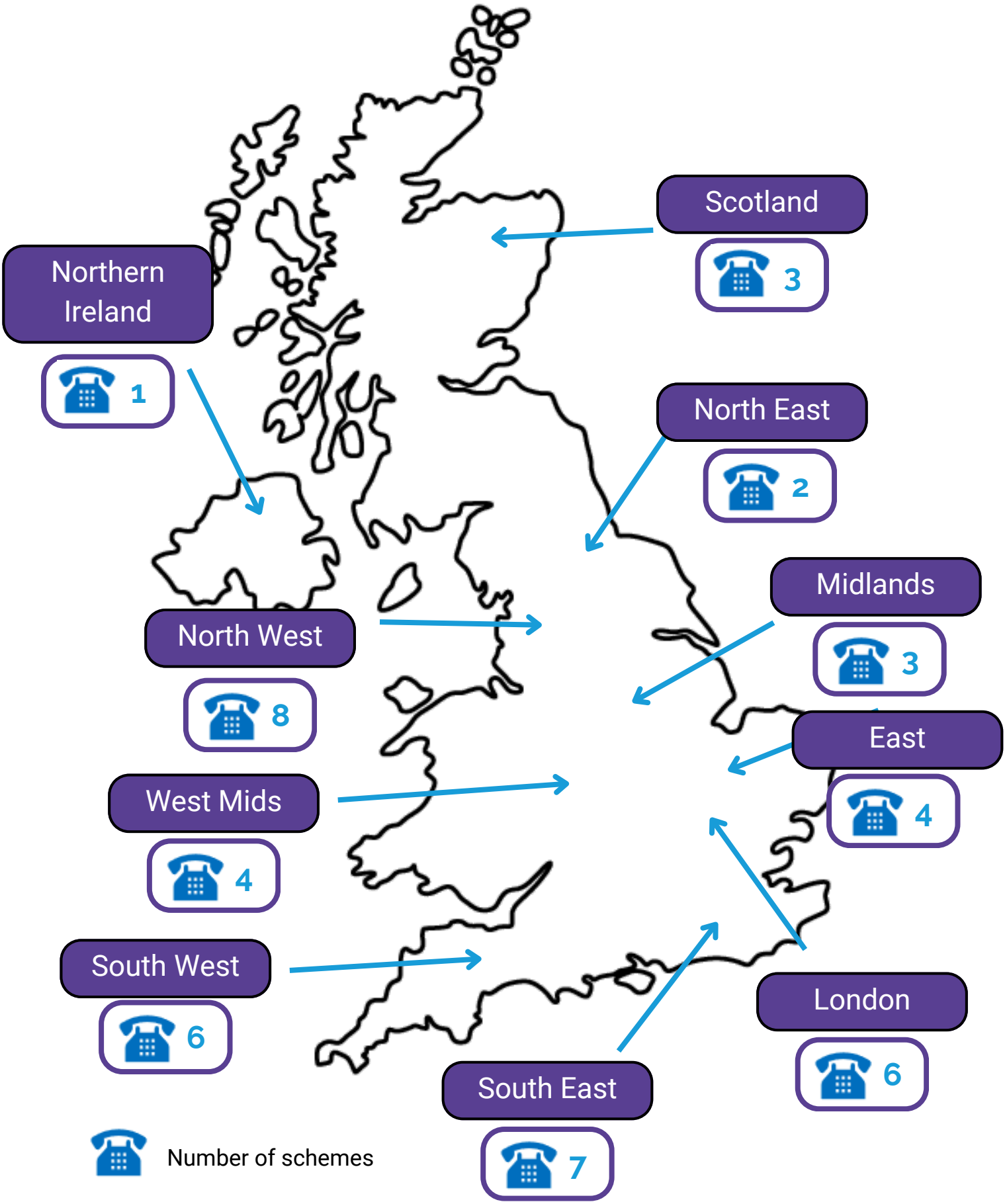
"One befriender who had recently lost her husband is now visiting a scheme member in a similar situation."
Two's Company Coordinator

"My befriender is the kindest person I've ever met and loves and supports me so much, it's made a huge difference to my mental health!"
Scheme Member

OUR NATIONAL REACH

Scheme numbers and locations across the UK

44 schemes were offering befriending across the United Kingdom.



Spotlight on Guernsey Linking Lives

We have been partnering with Holy Trinity Church in Guernsey since 2016 and their coordinator has carried out an interview with one of their volunteers, Helen, who visits Pam.

Coordinator: "How did you hear about Linking Lives?

Helen: I was looking to do some volunteering locally and I was online looking at the different charitable organizations and my friend told me about Linking Lives locally so I got in touch through that way.

Coordinator: Can I ask you what sort of things do you do together?



Pam & Helen

Pam: Just have a lots of lovely chats about family, everyday life, put the world to rights and also have a cup of coffee. We sometimes we go out and have fish and chips!

Coordinator: I can tell that you both obviously enjoy it, so what difference do you think in particular it has made to you?

Pam: Well, it's brought me out where before I was stagnating - just watching television and waiting for bedtime. Now I've got something to do and the days are not long enough.

Coordinator: And Helen, what difference is it made to you do you think?

Helen: It's lovely to hear Pam say saying that. For me, I get as much out of it I think as Pam does - it's one of my favourite times of the week. Really look forward to coming and visiting and listening to Pam's stories. She's had an amazing life and it's just improved my well-being I think as well as Pam's, so I would recommend it to anybody.

Coordinator: That's good to hear. So would you encourage anyone to volunteer?

Helen: Yes, absolutely. If you're thinking about it, please give it a go because it's an hour of your week and it makes such a difference to somebody else but also to yourself.

KEY STATISTICS

Changing responses to loneliness during the year.

39
'Good Conversations' courses delivered to
296
people from
117
distinct organisations

We supported
763
older people nationally to reduce their loneliness & isolation

5
new **Two's Company** befriending schemes were launched

6
exhibitions engaging with
1,250
attendees

2
community organisations joined us as
Affiliate Partners



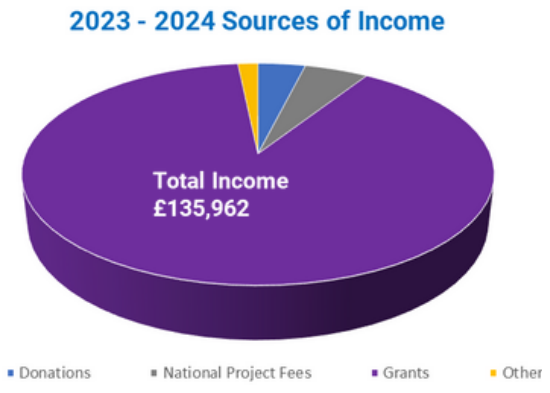
8
'Power of One' courses delivered to
41 individuals

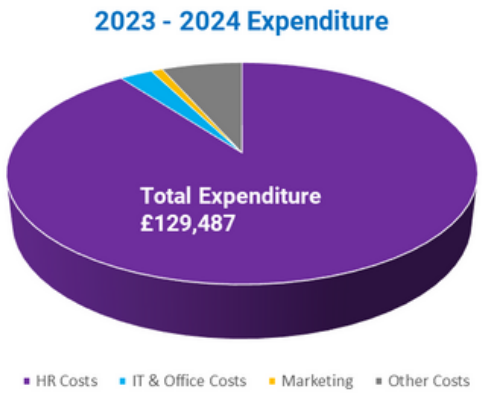
Delivered online conference for
110
attendees

4
other training sessions delivered to
240 people

PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH

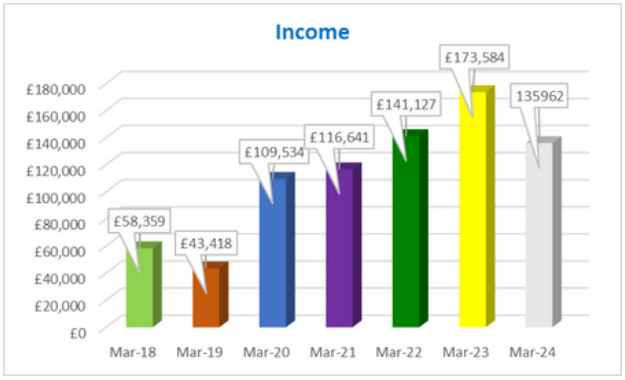
2023/24 Financial Performance

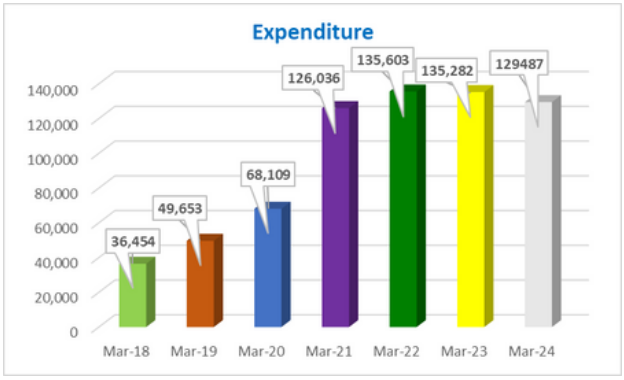




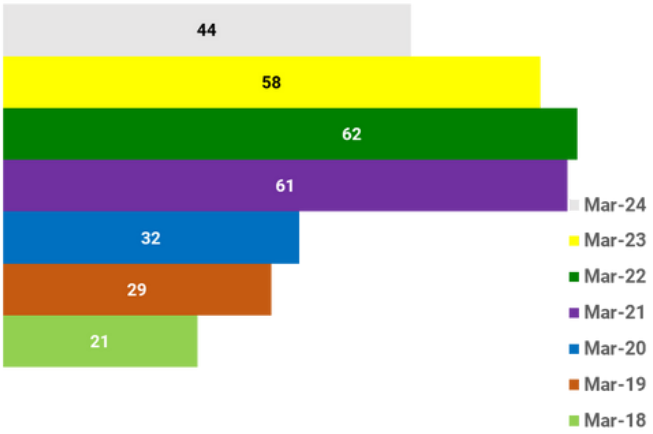
Our Progress since 2018

Financial Growth

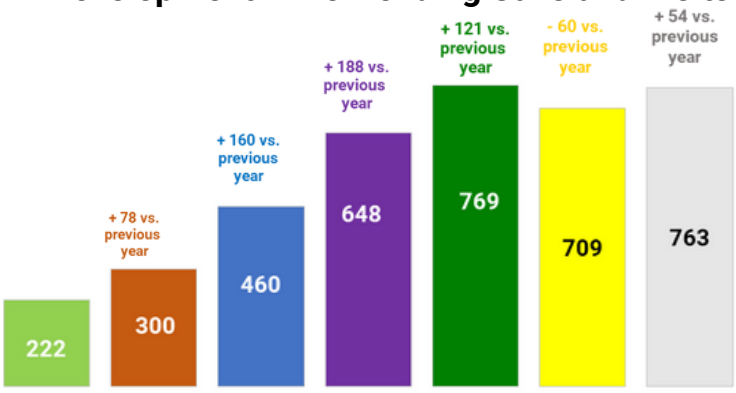




Development of Befriending Schemes



Development in Befriending Calls and Visits



OUR THANKS GO TO...

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our local partners volunteers across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland whose dedication at the frontline makes all of our impact achievable.

We would also like to thank our delivery partners and project coordinators for their commitment and motivation to make a difference in the lives of so many older people.

Finally, and very importantly, thank you to our supporters, donors and funders. We are privileged to receive your kind support without which Linking Lives UK would not be able to reach out to those most in need at the margins of society.

Linking Lives UK
PO Box 8279, Reading RG6 9UN
www.linkinglives.uk
info@linkinglives.uk
0300 302 0225

Charity No. (England & Wales): 1170325
Charity No. (Scotland): SCO53855

Find out more about our work and impact at www.linkinglives.uk

@LinkingLivesUK **Linking Lives UK**

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity name: Linking Lives

On accounts for the year ended	31 March 2024	Charity no (if any)	1170325

Set out on pages 1-2 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust'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

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable 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.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:	John Wild	Date:	11/02/2025

Name: John Wild

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): ACA ICAEW

Address: West Warren, Warren Road

Woodley
RG5 3AR

Section B	Disclosure
	Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).
Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name	No (if any)
Linking Lives UK	1170326

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01/04/2023	To	31/03/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	5,273	-	-	5,273	6,677
Fees	7,090	-	-	7,090	6,202
Grants	45,473	75,899	-	121,372	160,217
Bank interest	526	-	-	526	38
Other	1,700	-	-	1,700	450
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total *(Gross income for AR)*	60,063	75,899	-	135,962	173,584
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	60,063	75,899	-	135,962	173,584
A3 Payments					
Contractors	19,724	25,163	-	44,888	47,663
Staff Costs	42,119	29,215	-	71,334	62,815
Insurance	478	-	-	478	388
Training & Accommodation	55	-	-	55	230
Marketing	1,203	-	-	1,203	865
Expenses & travel	1,120	2,326	-	3,446	4,536
Postage, printing & stationery	1,187	-	-	1,187	805
Website	1,181	-	-	1,181	887
Database	650			650	4,698
Membership of other organisations	90			90	274
CTAL		132		132	138
Management charges		3,291		3,291	11,983
HR Package	1,152			1,152	
Conference	401			401	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	69,359	60,127	-	129,487	135,282
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	69,359	60,127	-	129,487	135,282
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 9,297	15,772	-	6,475	38,301
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	24,077	66,234	-	90,311	52,010
Cash funds this year end	14,780	82,006	-	96,786	90,311

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

B1 Cash funds

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	Current Account	14,780	14,232	-
	Deposit Account	-	67,774	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	14,780	82,006	-

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
Laptop - Norfolk		263	-
Laptop		534	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	B D Bowden	4/2/2025

LINKING LIVES UK

England & Wales - Charity number 1170325

Accounts

LINKING LIVES UK



Annual Report and Accounts

1st April 2022-31st March 2023

Charity No: 1170325

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1. Reference and administration information

Registration History

Registered 23rd November 2016
Registered Charity Number 1170325

Independent Examiner:

Mr John Wild ACA
West Warren
Warren Road
Woodley RG5 3AR

Registered Address:

32 Selmans Hill
Bloxwich
Walsall
West Midlands WS3 3RL

Bank:

Co-Operative Bank plc
PO Box 250,
Skelmersdale, Lancs
WN8 6WT

Trustees:

Dr Ashley Liston (Interim Chair)
Mrs Shelagh Marshall OBE (resigned 2nd September)
Mr Peter Ashall
Mr Alan Hare
Rev Bev Boden

2. Structure, governance and management

Organisation Type:

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Governing Document:

Linking Lives UK Constitution

Recruitment and selection of trustees:

New trustees are selected by the existing board of trustees in accordance with necessary skills, experience, shared vision and values of the charity.

3. Objectives and activities

Linking Lives UK is a national charity working to reduce loneliness and social isolation amongst older people. We achieve this through the development of befriending schemes which are set up in partnership with local churches and other agencies. We also run regular volunteer training courses aimed at those engaging in local community activities as well as monthly webinars focusing on individual methods to address loneliness and social isolation.

The trustees have established this CIO as a practical means of showing the love of God in accordance with their Christian beliefs, in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world.

The objects of the CIO are:

- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among persons who are excluded from society because they are house-bound for any reason, but in particular those who are elderly or in poor health and assisting them to integrate into society.
- The advancement of the Christian faith.

4. Public Benefit

Our objectives and activities are outlined above. All activities focus on combating social isolation and loneliness among older people across the UK. This is achieved through the establishment of befriending schemes in various parts of the country ranging from rural areas to inner city urban areas. These local schemes focus on arranging for volunteers to visit older people in their own homes once a week or through telephone befriending. In addition, volunteers are encouraged, where possible, to arrange visits to suitable local social events and activities or outings to places of interest.

We also provide training for volunteers engaging in various local community activities which benefit socially isolated people. This training addresses skills such as 'effective listening', 'managing boundaries' and 'safeguarding awareness'.

As a result of these local interactions, the primary public benefit for our clients is increased self-esteem and confidence as well as stronger community links. Volunteers benefit from learning about the life of past generations as well as building strong relationships with their allocated scheme member. Also, there is a benefit for the wider community as people from various generations engage more effectively and those previously on the margins of society begin to re-engage with those around them.

Through all our work, we also aim to value the diverse and rich experiences of older people and to celebrate their gifts and abilities in communities across the UK.

5. Trustee & operational team

We are grateful to our board of trustees (see page 3) who have served during this period. The trustees meet on a quarterly basis and focus on the continued development of our governance structure, medium to long-term strategy and financial stability. We are particularly grateful to Shelagh Marshall who resigned as trustee in September 2023 having brought her expertise and passion to address loneliness among older people since the start of the charity in 2016.

We are also grateful to our central operational team which included Jeremy Sharpe (National Director), Angela Caley (Partnerships & Support Services Manager), Chris Driver (Finance/ IT), Tessa Trace (Trusts & Foundations Manager), David de la Haye (Training & Resources Manager), Carol Hebden (Regional Development Officer – West Midlands), Richard Taylor (Regional Development Officer – Devon).

6. National Director's Report

During this year we identified three key strategic elements which create a framework for all aspects of our work. See Impact Report 2022/23 for further details. These are:

- **Inspiring Individuals** – We are aware that whilst projects and events can play an important part in addressing loneliness and social isolation, there are many ways in which individuals can play their part on a more informal level. Our new **'Power of One'** one-hour free webinar provides hints, tips and inspiration for individuals wanting to make a difference in their community.

- **Equipping Volunteers –** There are many thousands of amazing volunteers engaging with older people (and others) each week in community spaces such as lunch clubs, community cafés and drop-in centres. We have developed a volunteer training course which equips volunteers in such settings with 'soft skills' such as 'effective listening'; 'managing boundaries' and 'safeguarding'.

- **Supporting Churches –** We remain focused on enabling churches and Christian organisations to reach and support older people experiencing loneliness or social isolation on a regular basis. Our main model is 'Two's Company Befriending' which is a tried and tested framework including training and template documents needed to enable volunteers to visit local people in their own homes.

In addition to this core framework, the following developments took place during this year:

Strategic development in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales & Chaplaincy launch
We are extremely grateful to Benefact Trust for their investment of £145,000 into a three-year project to develop our work in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and to establish a chaplaincy approach for use in befriending schemes. We subsequently received matched funding from TOR Christian Foundation to enable us to employ a National Development Manager for Scotland and we appointed Michelle Candlish to this role during March 2023 and look forward to the project commencing in April 2023.

We also held meetings with key organisations in Belfast to begin dialogue and increase awareness of our planned work in Northern Ireland. This included attendance at the All-Party Group for Loneliness in Stormont.
We began initial discussions with Anna Chaplaincy for Older People to prepare for the development of a tailored training course to be piloted with local Linking Lives befriending schemes during 2023/24.

Partnerships
We were pleased to establish a national partnership with the new **Warm Welcome** initiative which was created as a response to the cost of living crisis during the winter months. This successful initiative brought together various national charities and local community groups,

libraries and churches to run warm spaces. Our 'Good Conversations' training was made available to local projects.

We also worked in partnership with Cinnamon Network, Embracing Age and Sanctuary Mental Health in a project based in Cambridgeshire through the government's Faith New Deal Pilot Project. The project focused on building links between churches and statutory agencies in Cambridgeshire and we ran webinars aimed at churches in the county and attended a Partnership Day in Cambridge.

Events
We ran various events throughout the year, both online and 'face to face'. These included four regional **Abbeyfield** conferences; **Befriending Network** conference webinar on 'Inclusivity in Befriending'; **Faith in Older People** webinar focusing on 'Loneliness & Mental Health'; **Edinburgh City Mission** conference seminar; Co-presented Warm Welcome 'Creating a Welcoming Environment' webinar; Monthly webinars addressing loneliness

We also participated in other events including a national Christians Against Poverty event; Loneliness Awareness Week including media interviews, blogs and webinars; and regular All-Party Parliamentary Group events.

Exisiting partners
We continued our support for exisiting 58 befriending scheme partners across the UK. This included holding quarterly online coordinator gatherings at which we provided training and advice on recruiting volunteers, fundraising and local collaboration. We also worked with selected local partners to pilot a new impact measurement tool. This will be fully rolled out during 2023.

7. Chair of Trustee's Report

We have maintained our focus as a charity on addressing loneliness and social isolation among older people during this year. This has involved continuing to promote our traditional befriending scheme model – Two's Company – including adapting and improving the way in which the model operates. We have also taken the decision to introduce other approaches which diversify our core work and we see this as an important element of our approach to ensure that we are able to adapt to circumstances around us at all times. We are excited to see all that will develop during the coming year.

Ashley Liston – Interim Chair of Trustees

8. Patron's report

It is, as always, a pleasure to write a report for the Linking Lives Annual Report. Having recently retired I am even more aware than before of the loneliness which has become such a scourge of our society in the West; and social commentators have unanimously commented on the way in which this has been exacerbated by the COVID Pandemic. Statistics vary – but whichever one follows – the figures are deeply alarming. What's more, loneliness isn't confined to older people. As we all know, mental health issues (often associated with loneliness) now seem to be commonplace in the younger generation.

So the need for care and companionship is as great as it has ever been, and I am deeply impressed by the ongoing commitment of Linking Lives UK to providing it. This is not an easy time for charities and Linking Lives is no exception. Most are struggling with faltering donations in the wake of our 'cost of living' crisis. But the work continues, and in expressing my own gratitude to everyone involved, I know that I speak also for the many hundreds of people whose lives they have touched in such a transformative way. This is truly Christian service, and I thank God – as well as our numerous volunteers – for it.

James Newcome (recently retired Bishop of Carlisle and Lead Bishop for Health and Social Care)

9. Financial Review

The principle sources of funding are from grant making trusts and we are very grateful to trusts and grant making bodies that have supported us throughout the year which has enabled this work to continue to develop and expand by collectively investing £160,216 (£88,503 of which was restricted funds) into our work.

We are grateful to other organisations (among others) listed below for their support during this year. Also, fees are received from churches that are setting up or have set up befriending schemes as well as other training fees and the total income derived from these sources was £6,202.

Our expenditure was £135,282 (£50,631 of which was expenditure in respect of restricted income) and a detailed breakdown of this figure is provided below. We recorded a small deficit for the year of £21.00 leaving our year-end unrestricted reserves balance in line with our Reserves Policy. The trustees are confident that the charity continues to operate as a going concern.

Reserves Policy

The trustees' policy is to retain sufficient funds to cover the notice periods of all members of our core operations team. The value of the reserves will be re-assessed at least annually, or when significant changes in financial obligations occur.

Investment Policy

The charity does not hold investments.

Risk Statement

A Risk Register is reviewed and amended where necessary at each trustee's meeting. This covers aspects of the charity's operation including governance, external risks, regulation and compliance, finance, and operations. Our current identified top five risks are below, along with the respective controls put in place to mitigate these risks:

- Inadequate funding to achieve business plan aims – Pipeline of funding applications ongoing and income stream from local project fees.
- Inadequate reserves – Active financial monitoring and forecasting of cash position
- Loss of key operational team members – Contracts established with appropriate notice periods to ensure suitable transference of responsibilities
- Local partner submits complaint about Linking Lives UK – Annual reviews and informal contact maintained on a regular basis
- Inadequate financial controls leading to poor use of resources and/or fraud - Key financial monitoring & banking controls in place

IMPACT REPORT

2022 - 2023



Improving quality of life through friendship



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3 About Linking Lives UK
4 Welcome
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6 2022-23 Highlights
8 Key Statistics
9 In their Own Words...
10 Our National Reach
11 Case study - Dingwall Two's Company
12 Performance and Growth
13 Our Thanks Go To...

"A father to the fatherless is God in His Holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families."
Psalm 68: 5-6

ABOUT LINKING LIVES UK

Linking Lives UK is a national Christian charity set up to address social isolation and loneliness particularly among older people.

This year we have identified three over-arching approaches through which we carry out our work. These are:

- **Inspiring individuals** – We believe that all of us can play our own part in addressing loneliness that we come across in our day to day lives. Our new free 'Power of One' one-hour free webinar provides hints, tips and inspiration for individuals wanting to make a difference in their community.
- **Equipping volunteers** – Every week, thousands of committed volunteers offer their time and energy to help in the running of vital local groups and events such as drop-in centres, community cafes and lunch clubs. Our popular new 'Good Conversations' course, launched in December 2022, enables such volunteers to gain soft skills including effective listening, managing boundaries and safeguarding.
- **Supporting churches** – Befriending continues to be an extremely effective and valuable way to combat social isolation and loneliness. Through our befriending framework – 'Two's Company' we enable churches and Christian organisations to establish befriending schemes in their local community using a tried, tested and safe approach.

There were 58 schemes at year end making regular home visits, telephone calls or both to around 700 people experiencing loneliness across England, Scotland and Wales. This is a net reduction in schemes operating mainly due to some being forced to close due to lack of volunteers or funding. We continue to be encouraged that, however, that 10% of befriending relationships which ended during the year were due to scheme members being in a position to re-engage with community activities or events. This highlights some of the key outcomes including greater independence, self-confidence and community engagement. We ran 9 Power of One webinars attended by 135 individuals and 177 volunteers benefited from attending 18 Good Conversations courses.



WELCOME

Thank you for reading Linking Lives UK's Annual Impact Report for 2022-2023.

Using our new framework outlined above, we have remained focused on our mission to address loneliness and social isolation. Despite the effects of the pandemic beginning to improve, a significant section of our society continues to experience loneliness on a daily basis. This makes all of our work as urgent and necessary as it ever has been, and we encourage everyone to do what they can to respond to these needs.
The name 'Linking Lives UK' came out of a desire to draw people together across the country for mutual benefit and this includes scheme members, volunteers, local church partners and other individuals and organisations. We are excited to see the ways in which this is being outworked in many ways in villages, towns and cities across the UK.



Jeremy Sharpe
National Director

"Loneliness is 'a subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship. It happens when there is a mismatch between the quantity and quality of the social relationships that we have, and those that we want."[1]

Approximately 7.1% of people in Great Britain (3.83 million) experience chronic loneliness, meaning they feel lonely 'often or always.' [2]

[1] Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, A connected society: a strategy for tackling loneliness (2018)
[2] Campaign to End Loneliness, The State of Loneliness 2023: ONS Data on loneliness in Britain (2023)

2022-23 ACHIEVEMENTS

We are excited to have been able to continue developing our existing services during this year as well as piloting new initiatives which will help us to broaden the ways in which we address loneliness. Some of our key achievements are below.

FOCUS	AIMS	PROGRESS MARCH 23
SUPPORTING CHURCHES	• Continue developing befriending schemes & building affiliate links	• 58 befriending schemes in operation (6 affiliates)
	• Encourage strong and sustainable local projects	• 84% of schemes successfully continued during the year.
	• Begin developing new models of operation	• Begun developing concepts of two new befriending approaches
EQUIPPING VOLUNTEERS	• Roll out online & face to face Good Conversations courses across UK	• Delivered the course to 177 individuals
	• Provide quality befriending training to coordinators & volunteers	• Delivered 26 sessions to volunteers & coordinators
INSPIRING INDIVIDUALS	• Establish monthly 'Power of One' webinars • Other training/ seminars	• Delivered 9 webinars • Delivered 31 other training sessions/ seminars/ presentation
FINANCE	• Continue to secure funds to meet strategic aims	• 297% increase in income from 2018 to 2023
	• Broaden financial base through income diversification	• Started development of corporate partnerships initiative
CREATE NATIONAL HUBS ACROSS UK	• Raise funds to develop our work in Scotland, Wales & N. Ireland	• Raised 3-year part funding to enable creation of national hubs
	• Appoint National Development Managers	• Appointed National Development Manager for Scotland

2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

Our changing responses to loneliness

One of the highlights of the year was securing a three year grant from Benefact Trust to enable us to continue to develop our work specifically in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Thanks to a 'matched' grant from TOR Christian Foundation we were able to appoint a National Development Manager for Scotland in March 2023, and Michelle Candlish started working for us in April 2023. We also began developing networks in Northern Ireland during a visit to Belfast in March 2023 and we aim to raise sufficient funding to enable a national project to be created shortly. This grant will also enable us to begin developing a chaplaincy model for our partner befriending schemes to use and we have begun discussions with Anna Chaplaincy for Older People to enable this project to begin at the end of 2023.
We also take every opportunity to engage in local, regional and national events and initiatives which relate to our aims. These included engagement in:

National events such as Mental Health Awareness and Loneliness Awareness Weeks; Campaign to End Loneliness Annual Conference and the launch of 'Keeping the Faith' report in London.

Local and Regional Events included the launch of Edinburgh Two's Company in June following the creation of a partnership with Edinburgh City Mission. We were also pleased to work with Sanctuary Mental Health, Cinnamon Network and Embracing Age as part of the government's 'Faith New Deal project'. The project focused on partnership working with local authorities in relation to loneliness and mental health and we took part in a launch event in Cambridge at its conclusion.



Conferences – We presented at three Abbeyfield regional conferences and participated in a ChurchWorks Summit, Re-Imagining Care Launch, Together Network Summit and a Southwark Diocese Conference.

Central Government Engagement - We continue to sit on the All Party Parliamentary Group for Loneliness and Connected Communities, and we also met with representatives of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sports to discuss the role of faith groups in addressing loneliness.

Partnerships - We were pleased to be able to build our first relationship with a business which shares our vision. Total Energy Solutions provided a grant towards our work in addressing loneliness and equipping volunteers specifically in Devon. We also joined the national steering group of the Warm Welcome Campaign which was run for the first time, in response to the cost of living crisis. We ran our Good Conversations Training for local spaces involved in this campaign.

We are also actively involved in the coalition 'Christians Together Against Loneliness' (www.ctal.uk) which is made up of ten national faith-based charities working to address loneliness and social isolation in a variety of ways

We were also pleased to gather most of our operational team and trustees together for a Vision Day at the end of 2022 and this was a great opportunity to discuss future ideas and strategy and review progress so far. This was an opportunity for some members of the team to meet 'face to face' for the first time, having only met 'online'!



KEY STATISTICS

Changing responses to loneliness during the year.

We supported **706** older people nationally to reduce their loneliness & isolation

7 new **Two's Company** befriending schemes were launched

18 'Good Conversations' courses delivered to 177 people

2 community organisations joined us as Affiliate Partners

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up."
Ecclesiastes 4: 9-10

9 'Power of One' webinars delivered to 135 people

10% of befriending relationships which ended in the year were as a result of re-engagement in community activities



7 other training sessions delivered to 294 people

Our model of befriending costs just **£3.68 per week** per befriended person

'While loneliness has the potential to kill, connection has even more potential to heal'
Vivek Murthy
US Surgeon General

"I have been totally bowled over by the care and attention given by my volunteer visitor during what has been a very difficult time."
Scheme Member - Exwick Two's Company

IN THEIR OWN WORDS... Our Volunteers

Some lovely relationships have formed with the volunteers and scheme members. We recently held a celebration night to share stories & encouragements which was really helpful."

Kirkby in Ashfield Two's Company

"One of my volunteers told me recently that they now think of their scheme member as a friend, not as a scheme member."

Exwick Two's Company

"One of our volunteers has been feeling down and it's given him a sense of purpose and a reason to get up every day. He feels really supported"

Ely Linking Lives

"Being a befriender has reminded me of just how important human connection is. I know that I am not the intended beneficiary of this scheme, but it has enriched my life in ways I couldn't have imagined."

Linking Lives Befriender

Our Beneficiaries



"Thank you for your visits. I could talk to you about things I couldn't talk to my family about."

Scheme Member

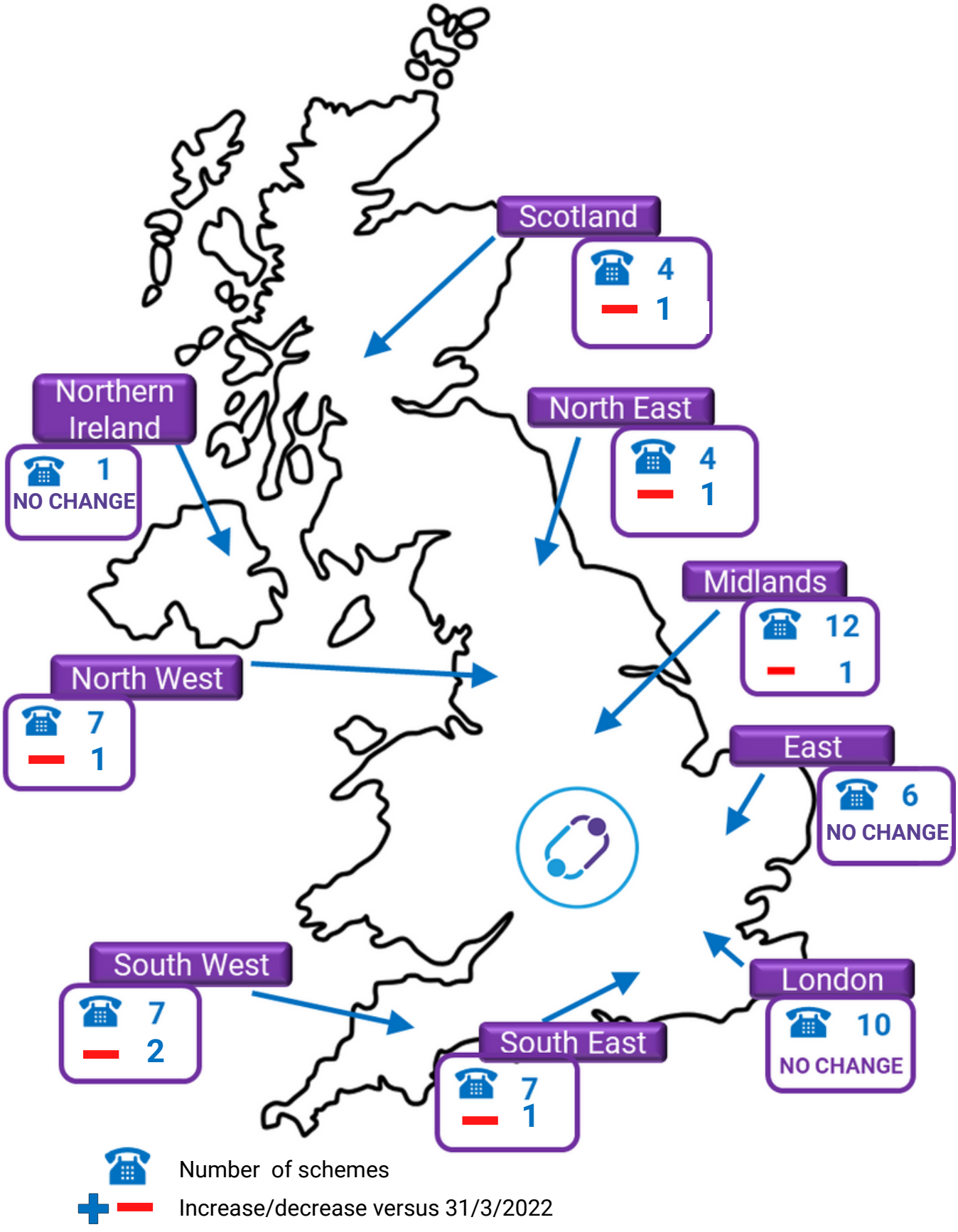
"One scheme member who is a wheelchair user is definitely getting out much more on his own since being matched with his befriender. He has gained much more confidence."

"I have been suffering with chronic pain and depression for some time. I went to the church cafe for the first time and realised that I hadn't mentioned my pain once. My positivity has been increasing since then!"

OUR NATIONAL REACH

Scheme numbers and locations across the UK

58 schemes were offering befriending across the United Kingdom.



Dingwall Proves that ‘Two's Company’

Our church has always been centred on outreach. For many years we ran a group for marginalised and lonely people and found it was a great benefit to those who attended and to our volunteers.

From experience we knew that within our community there was extreme loneliness and isolation and it was clear this would increase under lockdown restrictions at the time. After some research, we found Linking Lives UK and attended the befriending training and absorbed all the literature we could to set up our own scheme.

It worked well and we recruited volunteers. We then set about linking with the professionals and agencies who were best placed to refer those experiencing isolation. First we had just a slow trickle of referrals which then became a steady flow of people requiring access to the scheme.



We experienced a huge boost when lockdown was lifted. We were at last able to meet up or visit those we had befriended and have now heard time and again how much of a difference this makes to the individuals who receive the visits or calls.



Chris, Coordinator at Dingwall Two’s Company Befriending near Inverness, Scotland

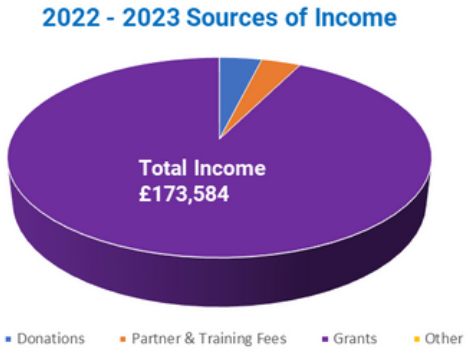
> I look forward to chatting to my befriender. We chat about anything and everything. We put the world to rights, and we share our interests. It has brought a new dimension into my life. I don't feel as alone anymore.

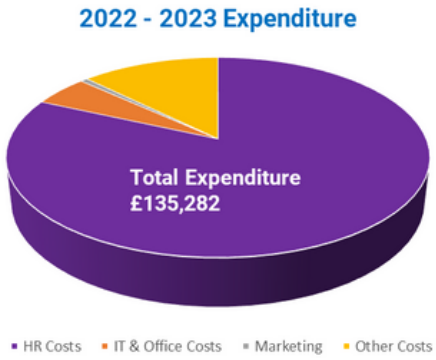
> The befriending scheme has made a big difference to me. It's a comfort. Sometimes my befriender is the only person I speak to all week. If I'm up or down there is a listening ear. We share all sorts and I'm teaching her to cook! She's swapping gardening tips. Meeting up has been a big bonus and I get to meet her dogs!

> “I've been lonely and suffer from poor mental health, especially after my husband passed and and lost touch with friends and family over the years... it helps having our chats”

PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH

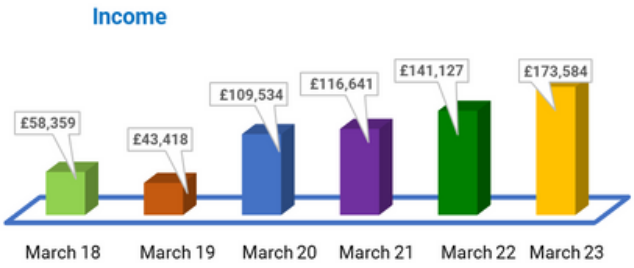
2023 Financial Performance

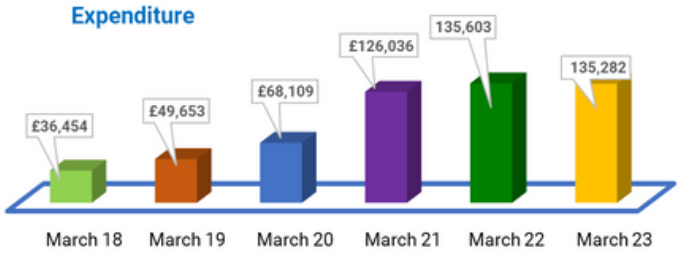




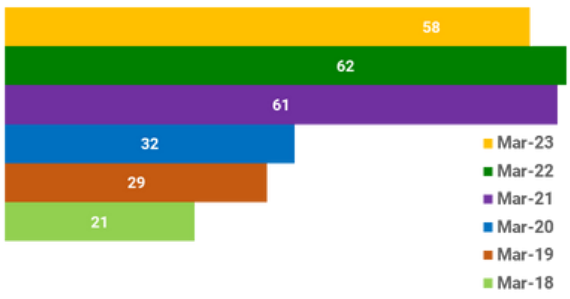
Our Progress since 2018

Financial Growth

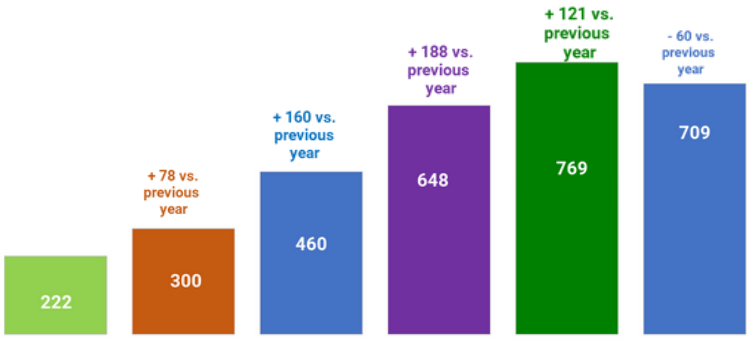




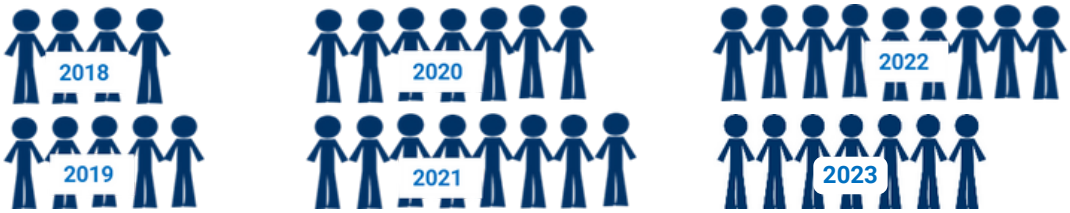
Development of Befriending Schemes



Development in Befriending Calls and Visits



Staffing



OUR THANKS TO GO...

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our local partners volunteers across England, Scotland and Northern Ireland whose dedication at the frontline makes all of our impact achievable.

We would also like to thank our delivery partners and project coordinators for their commitment and motivation to make a difference in the lives of so many older people.

Finally, and very importantly, thank you to our supporters, donors and funders. We are privileged to receive your kind support without which Linking Lives UK would not be able to reach out to those most in need at the margins of society.

The Allen Lane Foundation · Cinnamon Network · Marsh Charitable Trust · The Mercers' Company · Benefact Trust

Highway One Trust · The Edward Gostling Foundation · The Albert Hunt Trust · TR

Woodroffe Benton Foundation · Gerald Palmer Eling Trust · The Jerusalem Trust · Magic Little Grants

The R S Brownless Trust ◆ The River Trust ◆ SMB Trust

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Charity No. 1170325

Find out more about our work and impact at www.linkinglives.uk

@LinkingLivesUK **Linking Lives UK**

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity name: Linking Lives

On accounts for the year ended	31 March 2023	Charity no (if any)	1170325

Set out on pages 1-2 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust'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

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable 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.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:	John Wild	Date:	12/01/2024

Name: John Wild

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): ACA ICAEW

Address: West Warren, Warren Road

Woodley
RG5 3AR

Section B	Disclosure
	Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).
Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name	No (if any)
LINKING LIVES UK	1170325

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01/04/2022	To	31/03/2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	6,677	-	-	6,677	4,066
Fees	6,202	-	-	6,202	5,300
Grants	71,713	88,503	-	160,216	131,901
Bank Interest	38	-	-	38	10
Other	-	450	-	450	50
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total *(Gross income for AR)*	84,631	88,953	-	173,584	141,327
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	84,631	88,953	-	173,584	141,327
A3 Payments					
Contractors	11,595	36,068	-	47,663	70,001
Staff Costs	62,815	-	-	62,815	53,061
Insurance	388	-	-	388	378
Annual Conference	-	-	-	-	232
Training & Accommodation	230	-	-	230	495
Marketing	763	102	-	865	5,083
Expenses & travel	2,196	2,340	-	4,536	2,394
Postage, printing & stationery	805	-	-	805	658
Room hire & ICT				-	2,085
Website	887			887	-
Database	4,698			4,698	1,078
Membership of other organisations	274			274	205
CTAL		138		138	133
Management charges		11,983		11,983	-
				-	
				-	
				-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	84,651	50,631	-	135,282	135,803
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	84,651	50,631	-	135,282	135,803
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 21	38,322	-	38,301	5,524
A5 Transfers between funds	- 400	400	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	24,498	27,512	-	52,010	46,486
Cash funds this year end	24,077	66,234	-	90,311	52,010

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

B1 Cash funds

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	Current Account	24,077	8,985	-
	Deposit Account	-	57,249	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	24,077	66,234	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
Laptop - Norfolk		263	66
Laptop		534	145
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

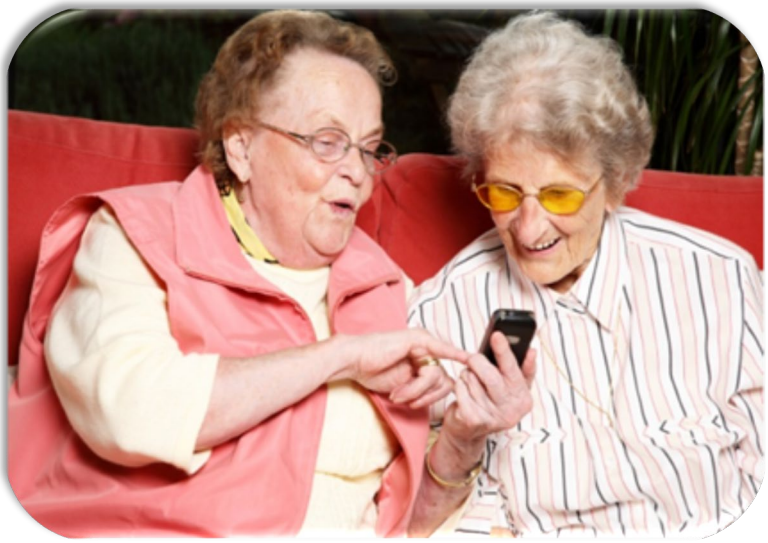
Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	R D BODEN	29/1/24

LINKING LIVES UK

England & Wales - Charity number 1170325

Accounts

LINKING LIVES UK



Annual Report and Accounts

1st April 2021-31st March 2022

Charity No: 1170325

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1. Reference and administration information

Registration History

Registered 23rd November 2016
Registered Charity Number 1170325

Independent Examiner:

Mr John Wild ACA
West Warren
Warren Road
Woodley RG5 3AR

Registered Address:

6 Bow Bridge Drive
Embsay
Skipton
BD23 6QU

Bank:

Co-Operative Bank plc
PO Box 250,
Skelmersdale, Lancs
WN8 6WT

Trustees:

Mr Alan Magness – Chair (Resigned 11th July 2022)
Mrs Shelagh Marshall OBE
Mrs Jennifer Sawyer (Resigned 14th July 2021)
Mr Peter Ashall
Mr Alan Hare
Dr Ashley Liston (Appointed interim Chair 23rd January 2023)
Dave Roberts (Appointed 18th October 2021 & resigned 17th October 2022)
Rev Bev Boden (Appointed 18th October 2021)

2. Structure, governance and management

Organisation Type:

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Governing Document:

Linking Lives UK Constitution

Recruitment and selection of trustees:

New trustees are selected by the existing board of trustees in accordance with necessary skills, experience, shared vision and values of the charity.

3. Objectives and activities

Linking Lives UK is a national charity working to reduce loneliness and social isolation amongst older people. We achieve this through the development of befriending schemes and

social events and activities which are set up in partnership with local churches and other agencies.

The trustees have established this CIO as a practical means of showing the love of God in accordance with their Christian beliefs, in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world.

The objects of the CIO are:

- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among persons who are excluded from society because they are house-bound for any reason, but in particular those who are elderly or in poor health and assisting them to integrate into society.
- The advancement of the Christian faith.

4. Public Benefit

Our objectives and activities are outlined above. All activities focus on combating social isolation and loneliness among older people across the UK. This is achieved primarily through the establishment of befriending schemes in various parts of the country ranging from rural areas to inner city urban areas. These local schemes focus on arranging for volunteers to visit older people in their own homes once a week and – beginning this year – telephone befriending is another core element. In addition, volunteers are encouraged, where possible, to arrange visits to suitable local social events and activities or outings to places of interest.

As a result of these local interactions, the primary public benefit for our clients is increased self-esteem and confidence as well as stronger community links. Volunteers benefit from learning about the life of past generations as well as building strong relationships with their allocated client. Also, there is a benefit for the wider community as people from various generations engage more effectively and those previously on the margins of society begin to re-engage with those around them.

Through all our work, we also aim to value the diverse and rich experiences of older people and to celebrate their gifts and abilities in communities across the UK.

5. Background

This report reflects the period from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. Linking Lives UK exists to enable churches and Christian organisations to find ways of supporting older people experiencing loneliness and social isolation in their communities. This is achieved by helping to set up telephone and home visiting befriending schemes; training volunteers in roles which address loneliness and through regular webinars on the subject.

6. Trustee & operational team

We are grateful to our board of trustees (see page 3) who have served during this period. The trustees meet on a quarterly basis and focus on the continued development of our governance structure, medium to long-term strategy and financial well-being.

We are also grateful to our central operational team which included Jeremy Sharpe (National Director), Angela Caley (Partnerships & Support Services Manager), Chris Driver (Finance/ IT), Charlotte Munro (Trusts & Grants Fundraiser until June 2021), David de la Haye (Training & Resources Manager), Carol Hebden (Regional Development Officer – West Midlands), Richard Taylor (Regional Development Officer – Devon), Tessa Trace (Trusts & Foundations Manager from July 2021), Hannah McLoughlin (Social Media Coordinator) and Julie Marshall (Prayer Coordinator). It has been exciting to see our core team growing and adapting during this year as we have worked hard to respond to circumstances around us.

7. National Director's Report

During this year we have become increasingly aware of a sense of fatigue being felt by many individuals, volunteers and leaders in the wake of the pandemic and lockdown. This has resulted in lower than expected engagement with partners wishing to establish a befriending scheme and – as with other charities – greater challenges in relation to fundraising. Despite these challenging circumstances, we have continued to develop new initiatives which address loneliness and social isolation as well as improving our existing processes. Please see our Impact Report for a more detailed summary of our achievements this year:

Befriending
We have carried out a full review of our befriending scheme on-boarding and support processes leading to well-designed template documents, forms and publicity. Feedback from local coordinators has been very positive. We also launched Two's Company Befriending as our primary model for all future befriending scheme partnerships. This now includes three distinct operating models:

- Home visiting
- Telephone Befriending
- Hybrid – Mix of home visiting and telephone befriending

We created the opportunity, as part of this process, for previous telephone befriending schemes to receive training in home visiting and this enabled them to convert their scheme to a 'hybrid' approach. We also launched our Affiliation initiative in which existing befriending schemes have the opportunity to become affilated with Linking Lives and make use of

The final element of our Two's Company improvements was the creation of a modular training package for all new befriendeing partner organisations. This is is made up of:

Module 1 – Introduction & overview of the coordinator role
Module 2 – Setting up a befriending scheme
Module 3 – Volunteer training
Module 4 – Matching, signposting and monitoring

Conference and Webinars
Our annual conference entitled 'Streams in the Desert', held online between 13th and 17th September 2021, was attended by 87 people. We were pleased to welcome the Loneliness

Minister at the time – Baroness Diana Barran and Executive Director of Redeeming Our Communities - Debra Green OBE as our keynote speakers. Other workshops held during the week included 'Encouraging community re-engagement'; 'Overcoming anxiety'; 'Supporting those who have been bereaved'; 'Using Music in befriending' and 'Intergenerational befriending'. Feedback was very positive and we were grateful to all speakers and workshop facilitators for their support.

We also began running regular webinars focusing on effective individual responses to loneliness which have proved to be a popular resource since their launch.

Partnerships
We were excited to commence a three-year partnership with Edinburgh City Mission to establish a Two's Company Befriending in Edinburgh. This project aims to build links with churches in the city to enable an effective response to loneliness through regular visits and telephone calls.

Strategic Plan/ Next Steps

During the next year, we plan to build on the progress made this year in the following ways:

- **Befriending Schemes** - We aim to continue encouraging the growth of befriending schemes across the UK in areas where they are most needed, and where we have suitable local partnerships.
- **Strategically develop our work into Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland** – We will be looking to raise funds and build partnerships to enable our models of operation to grow from grassroots level by appointing National Development Managers in each country.
- **Chaplaincy roles** – We plan to arrange for volunteers wishing to carry out roles more focused on spiritual development, to receive appropriate training, guidance and support on a local level.
- **Profile-raising** – We will raise awareness of our work through local presentations; webinars; regional events with potential partners and conferences

8. Chair of Trustee's Report

In spite of the continued impact of COVID we have managed to continue to grow and develop the work of Linking Lives, and that is testimony to the excellent leadership of our National Director and the team he has pulled together. We are so grateful for the dedication and skills of all those involved, and the growing number of projects at local level. The plans for the future are exciting, with expansion across the 4 nations of the UK enabled by some dedicated funding and strategic partnerships. We look forward to seeing these bear fruit in the coming years.

Alan Magness – Chair of Trustees

9. Patron's report

What a privilege it is to serve as patron of Linking Lives! During 2022 I became more aware than ever before of the way in which loneliness and isolation are reaching alarming levels in our culture (not helped by the COVID pandemic).

I also witnessed some of the amazing work being done by Linking Lives volunteers including those in Cockermouth and Keswick (which is where I live). This work is steadily growing :- for instance the Cockermouth Team had 13 referrals in November, when they would normally expect about 4. What's more, it has really positive implications for people's physical as well as their mental health. Experts now say that loneliness and isolation constitute a public health problem on a par with smoking and obesity. So this comes not only with my very best wishes for the New Year - but also with my heartfelt gratitude for such a prophetic and significant ministry.

James Newcome (Bishop of Carlisle and Lead Bishop for Health and Social Care)

10. Financial Review

The principle sources of funding are from grant making trusts and we are very grateful to trusts and grant making bodies that have supported us throughout the year which has enabled this work to continue to develop and expand by collectively investing £131,901 (£35,700 of which was restricted funds) into our work.

We received the third instalment of a three-year grant received from The Earl of Northampton's Charity. This gave us the opportunity to continue developing our befriending services in different ways whilst ensuring that the Norfolk area (for which much of the original grant was focused) was able to benefit from the ongoing work. We are also grateful to other organisations (among others) listed below for their support during this year. Also, fees are received from churches that are setting up or have set up befriending schemes and the total income derived from these sources was £5,300.

Our expenditure was £135,803 and a detailed breakdown of this figure is provided below. We recorded a total surplus for the year of £5,524 leaving our year-end balance in line with our Reserves Policy. The trustees are confident that the charity continues to operate as a going concern.

Reserves Policy

The trustees' policy is to retain sufficient funds to cover the notice periods of all members of our core operations team. The value of the reserves will be re-assessed at least annually, or when significant changes in financial obligations occur.

Investment Policy

The charity does not hold investments.

Risk Statement

A Risk Register is reviewed and amended where necessary at each trustee's meeting. This covers aspects of the charity's operation including governance, external risks, regulation and compliance, finance, and operations. Our current identified top five risks are below, along with the respective controls put in place to mitigate these risks:

- Inadequate funding to achieve business plan aims – Pipeline of funding applications ongoing and income stream from local project fees.
- Inadequate reserves – Active financial monitoring and forecasting of cash position
- Loss of key operational team members – Contracts established with appropriate notice periods to ensure suitable transference of responsibilities
- Local partner submits complaint about Linking Lives UK – Annual reviews and informal contact maintained on a regular basis
- Inadequate financial controls leading to poor use of resources and/or fraud - Key financial monitoring & banking controls in place

IMPACT REPORT

2021 - 2022

LINKING LIVES UK



Improving quality of life through friendship



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"A father to the fatherless is God in His Holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families."
Psalm 68: 5-6

ABOUT LINKING LIVES UK

Linking Lives UK is a national Christian charity set up to address social isolation and loneliness particularly among older people.

Using a tried and tested approach, we build partnerships with churches and Christian organisations to enable befriending schemes to be established in local communities.

By the end of March 2022, there were 61 schemes making regular home visits, telephone calls or both to around 770 people experiencing loneliness across England, Scotland and Wales with our first affiliate partnership beginning in Northern Ireland. (See 'National Reach' for further details of locations).

Our Model

Based on a successful model established over 20 years ago, we engage with potential delivery partners to provide them with a blueprint to research, develop, launch and sustain a befriending scheme in their local area. This enables new projects to be up and running quickly, professionally, and safely at minimal cost. It also provides partners with the training their staff and volunteers need and ongoing support when required.

Awareness Generation

Alongside helping to set up befriending schemes, we engage with churches, Christian organisations, and individual Christians to make them more aware of loneliness and isolation, the impact it has and the challenges it presents for those affected. We run webinars and an annual conference which brings people together to discuss and learn how they can become part of the solution to the loneliness epidemic in the UK.



WELCOME

Thank you for reading Linking Lives UK's Annual Impact Report for 2021-2022.

We are privileged to be continuing to reach and serve the many older people across the UK impacted by our work, both directly and indirectly. Last year we outlined the way in which we responded quickly and effectively to the huge challenges which all of us faced as a result of Covid-19 and various degrees of lockdown.

This year has been a further year of challenges for many organisations adjusting to 'life after lockdown' and assessing their priorities and resources available in coming months and years. We have consistently come across a sense of 'project fatigue' leading, at times, to a hesitancy in setting up new initiatives.

At the same time, new and existing community projects which had recruited volunteers and secured funds during the pandemic have often since lost these volunteers and funding. We have therefore been responding to these circumstances as far as we can to ensure that our work is both effective and relevant on a local level.

We are always encouraged, however, by the determination and heart of many individuals and organisations to explore ways of making a difference in the lives of those around them. This is displayed in the generosity of time and resources required to develop new initiatives which impact the lives of older people and this then inspires others to play their part as well.

We have also valued the partnerships that have developed during this year. Our approach has always been to explore options to work together where this adds value, and this has proved to be an effective strategy in many ways.

We continue to participate in the coalition, Christians Together Against Loneliness and this has provided a valuable opportunity to share ideas and information with other similar charities. We also engage with various regional 'Together Network' bodies and collaboration with their many 'Places of Welcome' groups represents a powerful synergy with much of our work. We also very much appreciate the ongoing partnerships in place across the country with churches and other organisations running befriending schemes within their communities.

As we move forwards, we will continue to adapt our approach to ensure that our work is having a positive impact on the lives of those experiencing loneliness on a day to day basis. This will include continuing to work with other organisations where helpful, as well as continuing to ensure that every effort is made to improve standards and experiences on a local level.

If you would like to discuss any element of this report in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Jeremy Sharpe
National Director



2.1 million men & 2.2 million women aged 45-74 live alone in the UK.

Source: ONS. Families & Households 2021



LONELINESS AFTER COVID

In April 2020, 5% of the adult population reported that they often or always felt lonely (similar to pre-lockdown levels). In the period of Sept-Nov 2021, 3.7 million people (7.2%) continued to say that they were chronically lonely & felt lonely often or always.

It is therefore clear that levels of loneliness continue to be higher than before Covid-19. Further studies have also found that, within this, more women than men (56% compared to 43%) are likely to report feeling lonely.

The groups most likely to experience loneliness have been the under 25's and over 65's; those going through transitions such as relationship breakdown, bereavement or moving to a new house; those already disadvantaged. This is highlighted in the report 'Loneliness Beyond Covid' (Campaign to End Loneliness July 2021) which explains that 'There are strong links between loneliness and other drivers of exclusion including poverty, poor mental or physical health, disability, and being part of a marginalised community.'

"Alongside the ongoing need for direct loneliness support, there's an opportunity to build up infrastructure to facilitate connection. We're calling for action and investment into strengthening community capacity, green spaces, high streets and meeting places, as well as transport and digital connectivity, to ensure a connected recovery'. ('Loneliness Beyond Covid' Campaign to End Loneliness July 2021).



OUR 3-YEAR STRATEGY

At our 'Dreaming Big' vision day in March 2019, our trustees and core team agreed Linking Lives UK's 3-year strategy. Our aims and progress 3years on, are shown below.

FOCUS	AIMS	PROGRESS MARCH 22
PARTNERSHIPS	• 80 - 100 befriending schemes operating • Most new projects established through existing networks • Develop strong and sustainable projects	• 62 in operation • 10 new projects from existing networks • 88% of schemes successfully continued during the year.
FINANCE	• Secure increased funding to meet strategic aims • Broaden financial base to include regular personal donors	• 142% increase in income from 2018 to 2022 (21% 2021-22) • Developing an income diversification strategy
PROFILE RAISING	• Establish advocates on a regional and national level • Recognised at government level as key organisation	• Actively engaging with 12 regional and 20 national organisations • Engaging with government departments and multi-disciplinary groups
OPERATIONAL	• Move towards full time employees • Provide funding advice and support to local schemes	• Increased employees from one to three • One to one support now available

Despite the challenges facing many charities in the wake of Covid-19, we have made progress in most areas of our work.

We have broadened the scope of our work to address loneliness in preparation for the coming years' focus on training volunteers and inspiring individuals within their day to day lives. We have continued to build new strategic partnerships with national and regional organisations where this is beneficial.

2021- 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Responses to loneliness during a pandemic.

We supported
769
older people nationally to reduce their loneliness & isolation

8
new **Two's Company** befriending schemes were launched

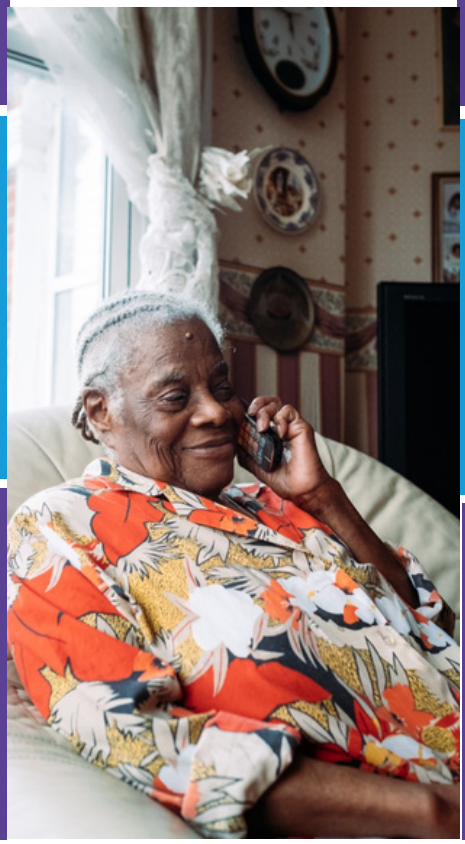
Our model of befriending costs just
£3.39 per week
per befriended person

25
Taster Sessions introduced Two's Company befriending to local churches

Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.
Psalm 25:16

300
attendees were inspired at workshops during our *"Streams in the Desert"* Annual Conference

37%
of befriending relationships which ended in the year were as a result of re-engagement in community activities



Our webinar series
"Effective Christian Responses to Loneliness"
launched in November 2021

2
community organisations joined us as
Affiliate Partners

We responded to the increase in informal building-based befriending and began developing a new volunteer training package

"One of our previous scheme members has become a volunteer and a valued member of our team."
Nottingham (NG9) Two's Company

2021 - 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Responses to loneliness post-pandemic

Our Launch of Two's Company Befriending

Following the development of 'Two's Company' as our initial telephone befriending scheme in response to Covid-19 lockdown, we have this year launched Two's Company Befriending as our primary model for all new befriending schemes in future. This will include those operating home visiting, telephone befriending or a 'hybrid' approach. We also enabled existing befriending schemes set up during lockdown to convert their processes from telephone befriending to home visiting where requested.

We were also encouraged to see a good number (60-70) of those previously receiving regular calls or visits no longer requiring volunteer contact by the end of the year as a result of engaging with community activities or becoming more confident. This is an extremely positive outcome.

Development of Modular Training

A further key development was the creation of our modular training package used to support local schemes to set up a Two's Company Befriending scheme. There are now 5 modules delivered through a combination of online interactive sessions, self-service videos and expert panels. Key modules cover: **setting up schemes; preparing a team; receiving referrals; beginning activity, monitoring and signposting.**

Conference & Webinars

We held our 2021 conference from 13th-17th September using the theme of 'Streams in the Desert' following the previous challenging months of the pandemic and this was attended by almost 90 people. We were pleased to be joined by keynote speakers Debra Green OBE - Executive Director of Redeeming Our Communities and Baroness Diana Barran MBE - Minister for Civil Society.



We ran a wide variety of conference workshops including:

- Using Music in Befriending
- Supporting Informal Carers
- Intergenerational Participation
- Overcoming Anxiety

We also ran 24 webinars during the year focusing on addressing loneliness through Linking Lives UK and on a more informal and individual level.

Impact Measurement and Reporting

We received a grant in kind to cover the costs of consultancy support as part of The Dunhill Medical Trust's capability scheme in January 2022. We began working with consultants to better understand and quantify the impact of Linking Lives UK on its delivery partners and the impact of their befriending activities on beneficiaries.

Remarkable research for healthy ageing
THE DUNHILL MEDICAL TRUST

The project completed in our 2022-23 financial year and will be presented in our next Impact Report.

IN THEIR WORDS...

Our Partners

"As an affiliate partner we have really benefitted from online resources and volunteer training. It has been very useful signing volunteers up for online training. Thank you for all the work you have done to make this available."

"We appreciate the support from Linking Lives UK. We can't always engage fully with everything, but appreciate what is accessible to us. All our scheme members have indicated how valuable the scheme is to them and has helped alleviate loneliness"

Our Volunteers

"I really love volunteering. It gets me out and about, keeping active and meeting people. Since I started, I have made new friends and this has been very positive for me.

" Volunteering has helped my well-being. It has improved my life and the social condition. It is one of the best things anyone could do with their spare time."



Our Beneficiaries

"Just having someone not involved or connected with this difficult situation I am in, is helping me. I am feeling better about things."

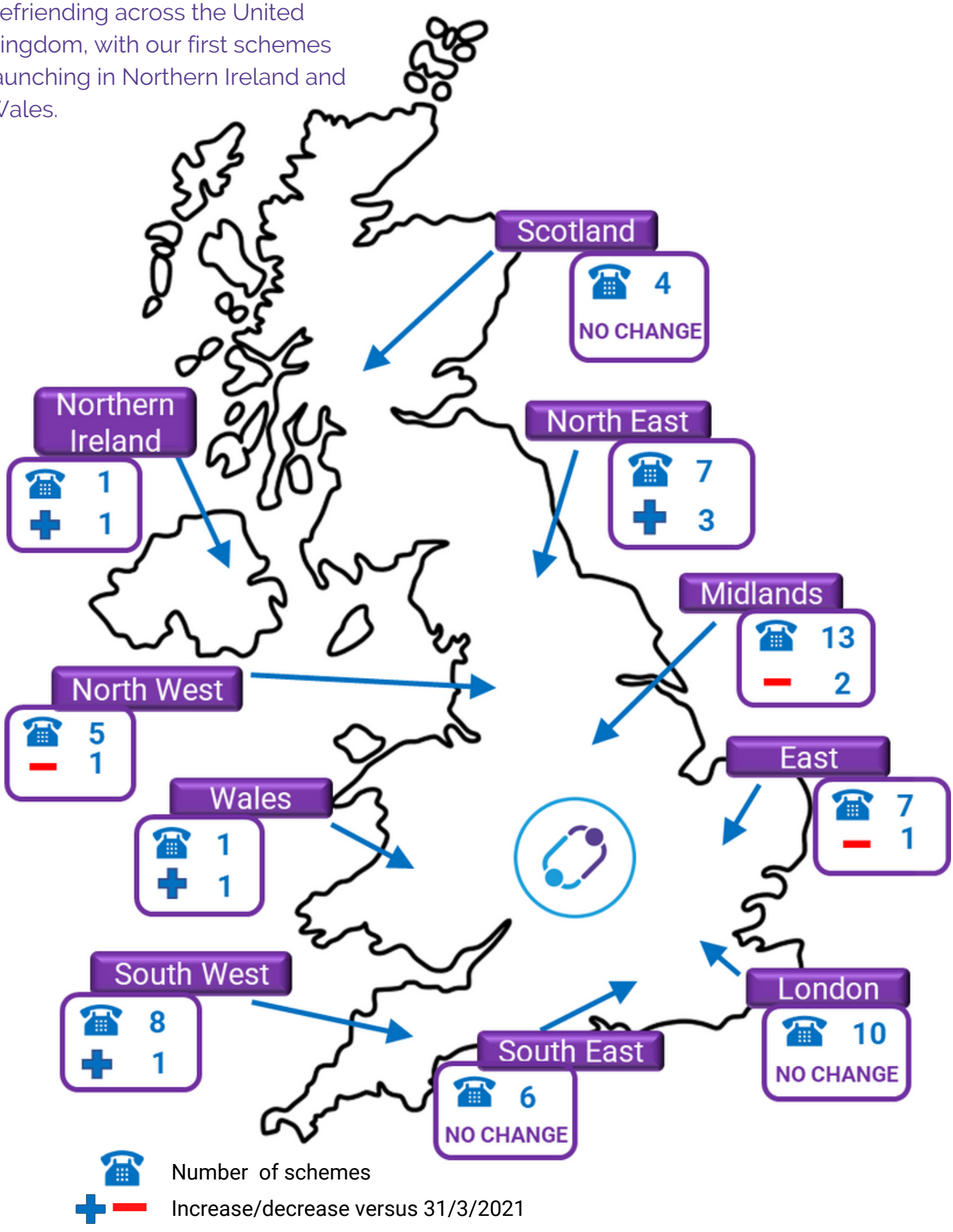
"Just a friendly hug feels like the world is embracing me! It makes feel like God is here"

"The excitement felt by one scheme member when she was able to go out for a drive with her volunteer after 2 months in isolation was infectious. Our volunteer compared it to having her young child in the car. Just lovely!"

OUR NATIONAL REACH

Scheme numbers and locations across the UK

62 schemes were offering befriending across the United Kingdom, with our first schemes launching in Northern Ireland and Wales.



CASE STUDY

Keswick Two's Company Launch

Two's Company Keswick launched in early September 2021 as a partnership between Churches Together in Keswick (CTiK) and Keswick Rotary Club with support from Age UK West Cumbria.

Our journey started at the end of 2020 when we made contact with Linking Lives UK nationally and the befriending scheme already operating in Cockermouth, Cumbria. We had heard the inspiring things they were doing and recognised there was a similar need in Keswick.

Over the next six months the partners set up a working group, and with great support from the local and national Linking Lives team, put the necessary infrastructure in place, registered with Linking Lives, secured funding from local sources for the first year and developed a communications and publicity plan.

A paid part-time coordinator and a volunteer coordinator were in place by July 2021, and we formally launched on 8 September as a visiting and telephone befriending scheme. A steering group oversees the day to day running of the scheme along with trustees from the partner organisations and which is now registered with the Charity Commission. Referrals were coming from a range of sources and the word was getting out that the Two's Company Keswick befriending scheme was here to help reduce loneliness and social isolation in this area. By the end of March 2022, we had recruited 18 volunteer befrienders and 7 scheme members were receiving regular home visits with 3 receiving phone calls.

One scheme member said, 'I feel in very capable hands with Two's Company Keswick' and another, 'I am really getting a lot out of this friendship.'

As we look forward to the future our hope and prayer is that there will always be the right volunteers to meet the needs of those referred.

TWO's COMPANY Befriending KESWICK



Just 7 months after launching in Keswick, we had

18

volunteer befrienders, who were supporting

7

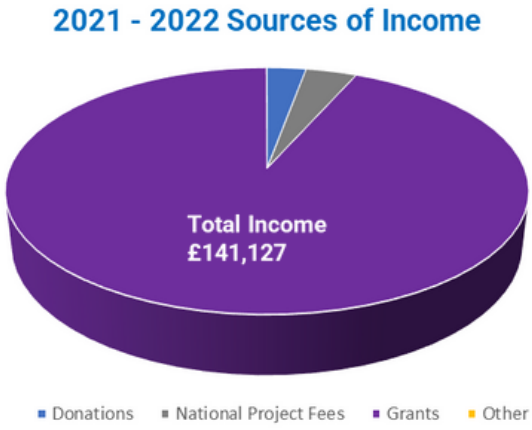
older people with regular home visits and another

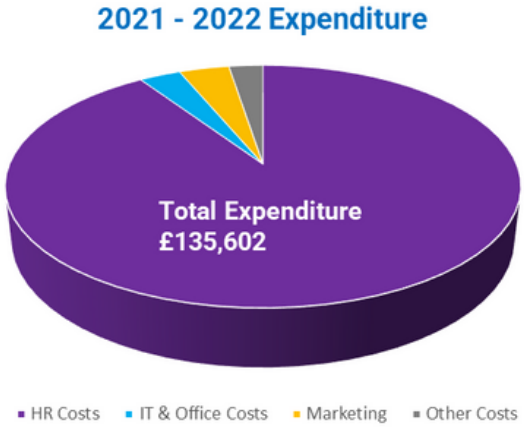
3

older people with regular phone calls.

PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH

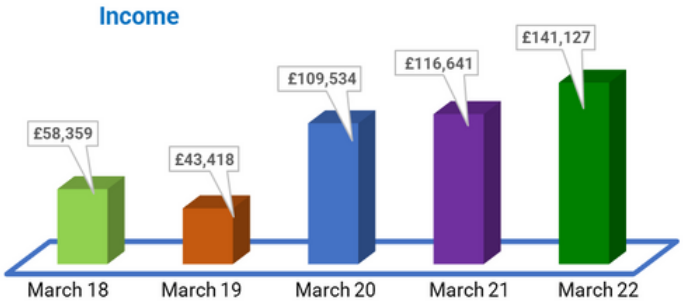
2022 Financial Performance

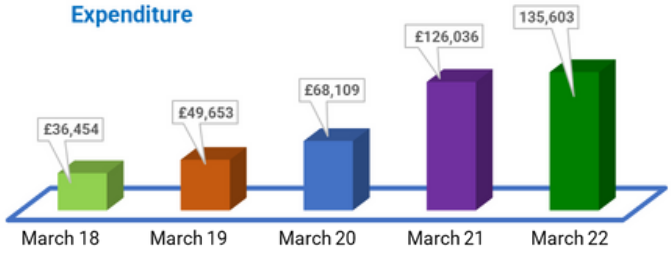




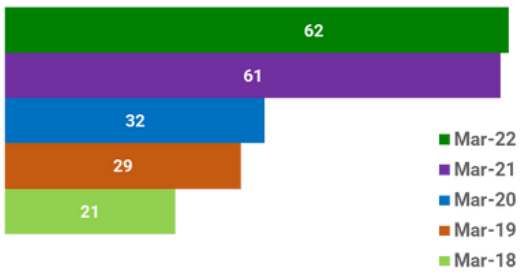
Our Progress since 2018

Financial Growth

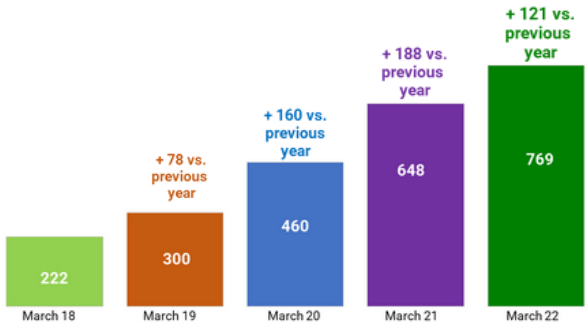




Growth of Befriending Schemes

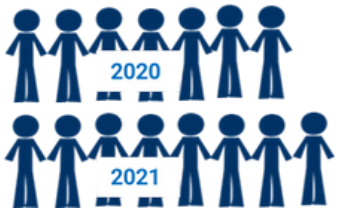


Growth in Befriending Calls and Visits



Growth in Staffing







OUR THANKS TO GO...

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our volunteers across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland whose dedication at the frontline makes all of our impact achievable.

We would also like to thank our delivery partners and project coordinators for their commitment and motivation to make a difference in the lives of so many older people.

Finally, and very importantly, thank you to our supporters, donors and funders. We are privileged to receive your kind support without which Linking Lives UK would not be able to reach out to those most in need at the margins of society.

The Allen Lane Foundation · The Albert Hunt Trust · Didymus · Remarkable research for healthy ageing – The Dunhill Medical Trust · The Eveson Trust · The Forrester Family Trust · Gerald Palmer Eling Trust · The Grace Trust · The Edward Gostling Foundation – Enhancing Quality of Life for People in Need · Highway One Trust · The Jerusalem Trust · The Mercers' Company · Souter Charitable Trust

Loseley Christian Trust • The R S Brownless Charitable Trust
The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust • SMB Trust

Linking Lives UK
6 Bowbridge Drive, Embsay, Skipton BD23 6QU
www.linkinglives.uk
info@linkinglives.uk
0300 302 0225

Charity No. 1170325

Find out more about our work and impact at www.linkinglives.uk

@LinkingLivesUK Linking Lives UK

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

Charity Name
Linking Lives UK

On accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022

Charity no (if any) 1170325

Set out on pages 1-2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/03/2022**.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust'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

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable 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.

* *Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed: John Wild **Date:** 28/01/2023

Name: John Wild

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): ACA ICAEW

Address:	West Warren, Warren Road
	Woodley
	RG5 3AR

Section B Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Linking Lives UK	1170325

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01/04/2021	To	31/03/2022

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Commission	-	-	-	-	-
Donations	4,066	-	-	4,066	4,707
Fees	5,300	-	-	5,300	6,550
Grants (1)	96,201	35,700	-	131,901	104,711
Bank Interest	10	-	-	10	149
Income received for CTAL (2)		50	-	50	400
Other			-	-	124
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total *(Gross income for AR)*	105,577	35,750	-	141,327	116,641
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	105,577	35,750	-	141,327	116,641
A3 Payments					
Contractors (3)	56,596	13,405	-	70,001	87,270
Staff Costs (4)	53,061			53,061	12,232
Insurance	378	-	-	378	378
Annual Conference	232	-	-	232	595
Training & accommodation	495	-	-	495	15
Marketing	5,083	-	-	5,083	2,400
Expenses & travel	1,887	507	-	2,394	307
Postage, printing & stationery	658	-	-	658	150
Room hire& ICT	2,085	-	-	2,085	721
Website				-	3,912
Outcome measurement				-	9,984
Loneliness lock-in				-	1,295
Database	1,078			1,078	5,370
Membership of other organisations	204			204	788
HR Advertising				-	619
CTAL		133		133	
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	121,758	14,045	-	135,803	126,036
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
Equipment		-	-	-	534
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	534
Total payments	121,758	14,045	-	135,803	126,570
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 16,181	21,705	-	5,524	- 9,929
A5 Transfers between funds	3,000	- 3,000	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	37,679	8,807	-	46,486	56,415
Cash funds this year end	24,498	27,512	-	52,010	46,486

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

B1 Cash funds

Categories / Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
Current Account	20,799	-	
Deposit Account	3,699	27,512	-
	-	-	-
Total cash funds	24,498	27,512	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

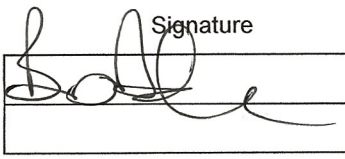
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
Exhibition Stands (5)		552	-
Laptop - National Director		350	-
Projector		280	-
Printer		48	12
Roller Banners		80	20
Laptop - Norfolk		263	132
Laptop		534	290
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	B D. BOWEN	31/01/23

LINKING LIVES UK

England & Wales - Charity number 1170325

Accounts

LINKING LIVES UK



Annual Report and Accounts

1st April 2020-31st March 2021

Charity No: 1170325

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2. Stucture, governance and management 3
3. Objectives and activities 3
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5. Background 4
6. Trustee & operational team 4
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8. Chair of Trustee's Report 6
9. Patron's report 6
10. Financial Review 7

1. Reference and administration information

Registration History

Registered 23rd November 2016
Registered Charity Number 1170325

Independent Examiner:

Mr John Wild ACA
West Warren
Warren Road
Woodley RG5 3AR

Registered Address:

6 Bow Bridge Drive
Embsay
Skipton
BD23 6QU

Bank:

Co-Operative Bank plc
PO Box 250,
Skelmersdale, Lancs
WN8 6WT

Trustees:

Mr Alan Magness – Chair
Mrs Shelagh Marshall OBE
Mrs Jennifer Sawyer
Mr Peter Ashall
Mr Alan Hare
Dr Ashley Liston

2. Structure, governance and management

Organisation Type:

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Governing Document:

Linking Lives UK Constitution

Recruitment and selection of trustees:

New trustees are selected by the existing board of trustees in accordance with necessary experience, shared vision and values of the charity.

3. Objectives and activities

Linking Lives UK is a national charity working to reduce loneliness and social isolation amongst older people. We achieve this through the development of befriending schemes and social events and activities which are set up in partnership with local churches and other agencies.

The trustees have established this CIO as a practical means of showing the love of God in accordance with their Christian beliefs, in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the world.

The objects of the CIO are:

- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among persons who are excluded from society because they are house-bound for any reason, but in particular those who are elderly or in poor health and assisting them to integrate into society.
- The advancement of the Christian faith.

4. Public Benefit

Our objectives and activities are outlined above. All activities focus on combating social isolation and loneliness among older people across the UK. This is achieved primarily through the establishment of befriending schemes in various parts of the country ranging from rural areas to inner city urban areas. These local schemes focus on arranging for volunteers to visit older people in their own homes once a week and – beginning this year – telephone befriending is another core element. In addition, volunteers are encouraged, where possible, to arrange visits to suitable local social events and activities or outings to places of interest.

As a result of these local interactions, the primary public benefit for our clients is increased self-esteem and confidence as well as stronger community links. Volunteers benefit from learning about the life of past generations as well as building strong relationships with their allocated client. Also, there is a benefit for the wider community as people from various generations engage more effectively and those previously on the margins of society begin to re-engage with those around them.

Through all our work, we also aim to value the diverse and rich experiences of older people and to celebrate their gifts and abilities in communities across the UK.

5. Background

This report reflects the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. Linking Lives UK exists to enable churches and Christian organisations to find ways of supporting older people in their communities using our tried and tested model of operation. We provide the necessary training and advice to enable befriending schemes to be established in such a way that there is no duplication of effort in local communities. Our template documents, policies and procedures significantly reduce the amount of work required to set up a local scheme, and we also provide initial training to volunteers prior to launch.

6. Trustee & operational team

We are grateful to our board of trustees (see page 3) who have served during this period. The trustees meet on a quarterly basis and focus on the continued development of our governance structure and agree medium to long-term strategy.

We are also grateful to our central operational team which included Jeremy Sharpe (National Director), Angela Caley (Two's Company Coordinator/ Partnerships & Support Services Manager), Chris Driver (Finance/ IT), Angie Colebrook (Admin Assistant), Charlotte Munro

(Trusts & Grants Fundraiser), David de la Haye (Training & Resources Manager), Carol Hebden (Regional Development Officer – West Midlands), Richard Taylor (Regional Development Officer – Devon), Hannah McLoughlin (Social Media Coordinator) and Julie Marshall (Prayer Coordinator). It has been exciting to see our core team growing and adapting during this year as we have worked hard to respond to circumstances around us.

7. National Director's Report

The enclosed Impact Report outlines the key achievements of Linking Lives UK during this year as well as progress against our three-year strategy. We responded quickly and efficiently to the onset of Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdown. We immediately recognised that our historic model of home visiting would need to be switched to a new format of support, at least in the short term, and we provided guidance to existing home visiting schemes to enable them to make changes to telephone befriending with speed and safety. We also saw the wider need to enable this new model to be made available to new partner churches across the country, as many sought to respond to the pandemic in their local communities. Within one month, we had developed Two's Company as a new package and this was piloted in four areas in April 2020. Interest in Two's Company grew during the year and you will see details of the uptake of this model in the Impact Report.

We were also pleased to be able to further develop our training and support to our existing partners and we delivered workshops focusing on 'Social Prescribing', 'Telephone Befriending Techniques' and 'Spirituality & Ageing' during the year.

Strategic Plan/ Next Steps

During the next year, we plan to expand our historic focus on 'service delivery' to include opportunities to equip and inform churches in engaging with socially isolated older people in their communities. This option may not lead to the development of partner projects but will facilitate activity to take place following our input and encouragement. Our primary aims will be to:

a) Partnership Development

- **Build multiple regional partnerships with similar charities**
- **Create further national and regional development projects**
- **Continue to establish local befriending hubs**
- **Create an affiliate model** aimed at engaging and supporting existing befriending projects being run by churches and Christian organisations.

b) Training & Resourcing

- **Run regular taster sessions/ training courses** focusing loneliness and social isolation and our models of operation.

- **Present the Linking Lives models at external conferences and special events**

- **Run our Annual Conference**
- **Run quarterly gatherings** for existing Linking Lives coordinators focusing on key issues and updates
- **Arrange issue-based training** events for local coordinators
- **Compile practical resources** providing guidance and advice in addressing loneliness and social isolation

c) **Existing hub support:**

- **Encourage & support the recruitment of local paid coordinators**
- **Support increases in referrals** within local projects
- **Develop hubs to run multiple befriending models and/ or projects**
- **Increase mutual support opportunities**

8. Chair of Trustee's Report

In what has been a year like no other for everyone, we at Linking lives UK have sought to rise to the challenges of isolation and loneliness that have been brought into even sharper relief through the COVID pandemic. It is a tribute to our amazing team of people and wider partners that we have adapted and grown in this context. We are conscious, however that we are still scratching the surface of this other huge "pandemic". Our ambition remains to continue to press into all we feel called to as we work, pray and partner across the UK with a growing network of like-minded churches, organisations and individuals to see thousands of beneficiaries in every corner of the UK.
Alan Magness – Chair of Trustees

9. Patron's report

As this year's inspiring 'Impact Report' makes clear, the COVID pandemic has made the issue of loneliness even more obvious than it was before. Levels of anxiety and mental health problems have increased – but so too has the ministry of 'Linking Lives'. A new local group has been established in Cumbria, where I live, together with another 30 around the UK; and I am especially impressed by the emphasis there has been on adaptation (e.g. Two's Company) and collaboration (working closely with partner organisations).

I know too, that volunteers can benefit almost as much as those they befriend – which is a further reason for being able to assure supporters and funders that all donations are being put to really good use. We are so grateful for all contributions to the work of Linking Lives, which is based firmly on a belief in the value of every individual made in the image of God. I also look forward very much to the development of additional training and resources in what we hope will be a less turbulent New Year.

The Right Revd James Newcome
Bishop of Carlisle

10. Financial Review

The principle sources of funding are from grant making trusts and we are very grateful to trusts and grant making bodies that have supported us throughout the year who have enabled this work to continue to develop and expand by collectively investing £104,711 (£10,000 of which was restricted funds) into our work.

We received the second instalment of a three-year grant received from The Earl of Northampton's Charity and we were particularly grateful that they decided to allow us to derestrict our grant as a result of the implications of the pandemic. This gave us the flexibility to be able to develop our befriending services in different ways and we were still able to ensure that the Norfolk area (for which much of the original grant was focused) was able to benefit from the ongoing work. We are also grateful to other organisations (among others) listed below for their support during this year. Also, fees are received from churches who are setting up or have set up befriending schemes and the total income derived from these sources was £6,550.

Our expenditure was £126,036 and a detailed breakdown of this figure is provided below. We recorded a deficit for the year of £9,929 leaving our year-end balance in line with our Reserves Policy. The trustees are confident that the charity continues to operate as a going concern.

Reserves Policy

The trustees' policy is to retain sufficient funds to cover three months of our operating expenditure. The value of the reserves will be re-assessed at least annually, or when significant changes in financial obligations occur.

Investment Policy

The charity does not hold investments.

Risk Statement

A Risk Register is reviewed and amended where necessary at each trustee's meeting. This covers aspects of the charity's operation including governance, external risks, regulation and compliance, finance, and operations. Our current identified top five risks are below, along with the respective controls put in place to mitigate these risks:

- Inadequate funding to achieve business plan aims – Pipeline of funding applications ongoing and income stream from local project fees.
- Inadequate reserves – Active financial monitoring and forecasting of cash position
- Loss of key operational team members – Contracts established with appropriate notice periods to ensure suitable transference of responsibilities
- Local partner submits complaint about Linking Lives UK – Annual reviews and informal contact maintained on a regular basis
- Inadequate financial controls leading to poor use of resources and/or fraud - Key financial monitoring & banking controls in place

IMPACT REPORT
2020 - 2021



LINKING LIVES UK

Improving quality of life through friendship



CONTENTS

3 About Linking Lives UK
4 Welcome
5 Let's Talk Loneliness
6 Our 3 Year Strategy
7 2020 - 21 Highlights
9 In their Own Words...
10 Our National Reach
11 Performance and Growth
12 Our Thanks Go To...

'A father to the fatherless is God in His Holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families.'
Psalm 68:6

ABOUT LINKING LIVES UK

Linking Lives UK is a Christian charity established to combat social isolation and loneliness, primarily affecting older people.

We registered as a charity in November 2016 and began expanding our work across the UK from its original base in Berkshire.

At the end of March 2021, we were working with 61 partner organisations to deliver befriending, by telephone or home visits, across England and Scotland to 650 older people.

Our Partners

We work with churches and Christian organisations to help them mobilise the most appropriate local solution to the issues of loneliness and social isolation in their area.

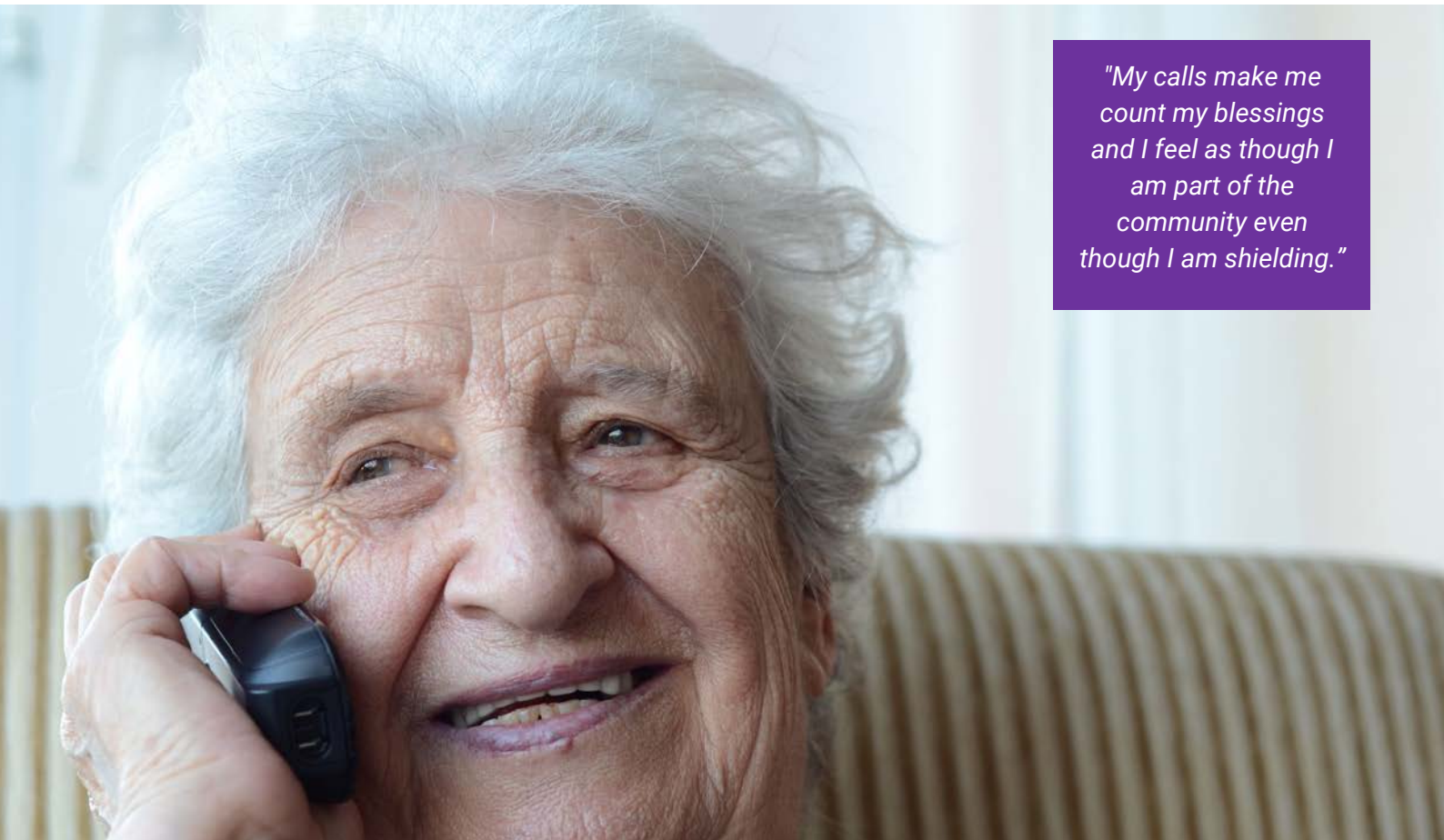
Our Model

Our partner befriending schemes are based on a successful model established over 20 years ago. We engage with potential delivery partners to provide them with a blueprint to research, develop, launch and sustain a befriending scheme in their local area. This enables new projects to be up and running quickly, professionally, and in a safeguarding-compliant way at minimal cost. It also provides partners with the training their staff and volunteers need and ongoing support when required.

Awareness Generation

Alongside facilitating practical befriending activities, we engage with churches, Christian organisations and individual Christians to make them more aware of loneliness and isolation, the impact it has and the challenges it presents for those affected.

We run webinars and an annual conference which brings people together to discuss, debate and learn how they can become part of the solution to the loneliness epidemic in the UK.



"My calls make me count my blessings and I feel as though I am part of the community even though I am shielding."

WELCOME

Thank you for reading Linking Lives UK's Annual Impact Report for 2020-2021.

This past year has been like no other in our history and has brought many challenges, strains and a significant sense of loss into the lives of many people across the world.

As a charity which was established to address loneliness and social isolation, we are conscious that these issues have come into sharp focus in a very short period of time and many of us have newly experienced some degree of isolation or loneliness in recent months.

The increased awareness of loneliness and isolation and the impact that it can have has been a helpful development for our charity in some ways. It has increased public interest in the issue, improved understanding of the impact on physical, mental and emotional health, reduced the stigma around feeling lonely and spread the word that one is not alone in feeling lonely.

For us particularly, it has strengthened our call to action and led to an increase in enquiries about ways to respond.

Our response to Covid-19 was to mobilise quickly to adapt our home visiting befriending to telephone befriending. Our beneficiaries more desperately needed support and we were determined to continue giving it.

We formed a steering group to review ongoing changes to the lockdown restrictions and provided tailored guidance throughout to ensure the safety and protection of the befriended , our volunteer befrienders and project staff.

It has been inspiring to see the work of Linking Lives UK growing during the year both in terms of numbers of people we support, number of schemes running and an increase in core staff. We have also grown our supporters and partnerships with other organisations and grant making trusts and foundations.

As a Christian charity, we continue to trust God for our resources and next steps as we look to serve Him and those most in need of friendship and community across the UK.

Jeremy Sharpe
National Director

36%

OF OLDER PEOPLE FEEL MORE ANXIOUS SINCE THE START OF THE PANDEMIC

Source: Age UK's "Impact of Covid-19 on older people's physical and mental health: one year on" (Oct 21)

25%

OF OVER 65'S WOULD LIKE TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS BUT HAVE NO IDEA WHERE TO START

Source: YouGov poll commissioned by Churchill Retirement Living (Oct 21)

LET'S TALK LONELINESS

Covid-19 has resulted in a greater number of older people becoming isolated, lonely and struggling with their mental health.

Prior to Covid-19, loneliness in the UK was widely recognised as a public health crisis. There were 9 million people who were lonely, almost half of whom were older people. The speed and severity of the first lockdown took everyone by surprise but those least able to cope with lockdown - older people, those shielding or self-isolating - were worst affected.

In May 2020, 840 church leaders took part in a survey by the Allchurches Trust which found that 78% of them predicted that responding to loneliness and social isolation were going to be the biggest need during the following three months.

By November 2020, a similar survey by the Church Urban Fund found that over 90% of respondents said that loneliness and isolation were affecting people "a little more" or "much more" than before the pandemic.

Research by the Red Cross in June 2020 found that the pandemic has had a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing particularly of those who live alone, have needed to shield and those with long-standing physical or mental health challenges. They found that 41% of all adults felt lonelier since lockdown and one third were concerned that their loneliness will get worse.

The Red Cross pinpointed the importance of meaningful conversations to reduce loneliness and that loneliness increased the longer people went without a meaningful conversation - from 39% feeling lonely after a week and 83% after a month. Engagement in meaningful conversations also correlated with greater confidence in people's ability to cope with the pandemic.

Fast forward to summer 2021, and Age UK's research highlighted the negative impacts of Covid on older people's mental and physical health.

Their insights include reduced mobility and fitness and in the confidence to take exercise. It found a reduction in resilience, independence and ability to manage long-term conditions.

Older people report feeling more anxious, depressed and fearful for the future. Restrictions on going out have left older people feeling lonely, isolated and forgotten, going days without any contact with another person. This has impacted their confidence with 18% less confident to go out of the house and 64% less confident to use public transport.

After so long with limited social contact, many have become withdrawn and feel they have lost the skills to socialise. The thought of spending time with someone else has become a frightening proposition and they actively avoid speaking to friends and family.

The way forward to reduce loneliness and isolation, as seen by the Red Cross and Age UK, is to tackle the inequalities faced by older people , prioritise those most vulnerable to loneliness and work collaboratively across sectors and specialisms to share learning and develop new solutions to address the underlying causes with an holistic and coordinated approach.

90%

OF CHURCH LEADERS SAID LONELINESS AND ISOLATION WAS AFFECTING THEIR PARISHONERS MORE THAN BEFORE THE PANDEMIC

Source: Church Urban Fund's "Church in Action 2021: A Survey of Churches' Community Responses to the Pandemic" April 2021

OUR 3-YEAR STRATEGY

At our 'Dreaming Big' vision day in March 2018, our trustees and core team agreed Linking Lives UK's 3-year strategy. Our aims and progress 3 years on, are shown below.

FOCUS	AIMS	PROGRESS MARCH 21
PARTNERSHIPS	• 80 - 100 befriending schemes operating • Most new projects established through existing networks • Develop strong and sustainable projects	• **61 in operation** • **12 new projects from existing networks** • **94% of schemes successfully continued during the year.**
FINANCE	• Secure increased funding to meet strategic aims • Broaden financial base to include regular personal donors	• **10% increase in income from 2019 to 2020** • **Exploring opportunities to attract personal donations**
PROFILE RAISING	• Establish advocates on a regional and national level • Generate increased enquiries	• **Actively engaging with 7 regional and 5 national organisations** • **Average monthly enquiries increased from 8 to 26**
OPERATIONAL	• Move towards full time employees • Provide funding advice and support to local schemes	• **Full time National Director and plans to employ others** • **Workshops and 1-2-1 support now available**

We are pleased to report significant progress has been made in most areas.

We have held to our primary aim during the pandemic but have adapted the way in which some of these have been achieved in order to follow necessary government guidelines.

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Responses to loneliness during a pandemic

We were aware that many more churches and community organisations were eager to support those struggling with loneliness in an even more acute way. So, we developed a new telephone befriending 'Two's Company' model and then a hybrid model for maximum flexibility going forward. Other highlights of our year are shown below.

We supported

648

older people nationally to reduce their loneliness & isolation

31 new

Two's Company

telephone befriending schemes were launched

The cost of our work to set up befriending schemes and provide ongoing support was just

£3.83 per week

per beneficiary

"I really value being able to talk about anything with my befriender.... things I can't talk about with my family."



Over 200

virtual seats filled by participants at our July Annual Conference which focussed on nine key befriending topics in

19

webinar sessions

25

webinars were run during 2020 - 2021 to

400+ attendees

to explore the issues of loneliness and how to respond with a local solution

Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.

Psalm 25:16

Regular befriending visits and calls grew by

nearly 41%

between March 2020 and March 2021

"We can help to show people they are still cared about, they are still the same person they have always been, and they still have so much value."

2020 - 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Responses to loneliness during a pandemic

Our Outcome Measurement Project, conducted by academics at Coventry University, researched the outcomes and impact of Linking Lives UK's work with older people.

Sadly, Covid-19 deflated participation levels of beneficiaries and volunteers but the qualitative data was encouraging with 5 positive themes identified. These indicated improved wellbeing through positive self-impact and social wellbeing, and benefits accrue to both volunteers and those they befriend.

We remain committed to improving our impact measurement and will be working with an external consultant during 2022 to develop this.

Positive impact themes

- better health related quality of life
- better mental wellbeing
- increased spiritual wellbeing as befriending continues
- reduced loneliness

Befriending has "*given me something to focus on, it's kept me going and it's brought me out of my depression…I think if I didn't have them in my life, …I'm not sure if to be honest I would still be here*"

We developed a remote, inter-generational initiative to keep in touch with older people during Covid-19 with our Care Home Cards.

We matched primary school children in Norfolk with four local care homes. The children sent cards and pictures during the summer to residents in the homes and then followed up with over 200 Christmas cards being sent in December 2020.

We also invited residents in the care homes to attend weekly worship via Zoom at the partner schools across the autumn.



We held our Annual Conference in July 2020 and welcomed delegates via Zoom.

Over 200 places were booked on our workshops which focussed on practical subjects relating to loneliness, befriending and running local projects.

IN THEIR WORDS...

Partners

"We have not had any unsuccessful matches. When completing regular reviews, the Scheme Members are all very grateful for the befriending provided. They all speak very highly of their volunteer and the conversations they have. They are eager to meet when this is possible and report that it has been someting valuable that has helped with the loneliness and social isolation caused by the lockdown and restrictions"

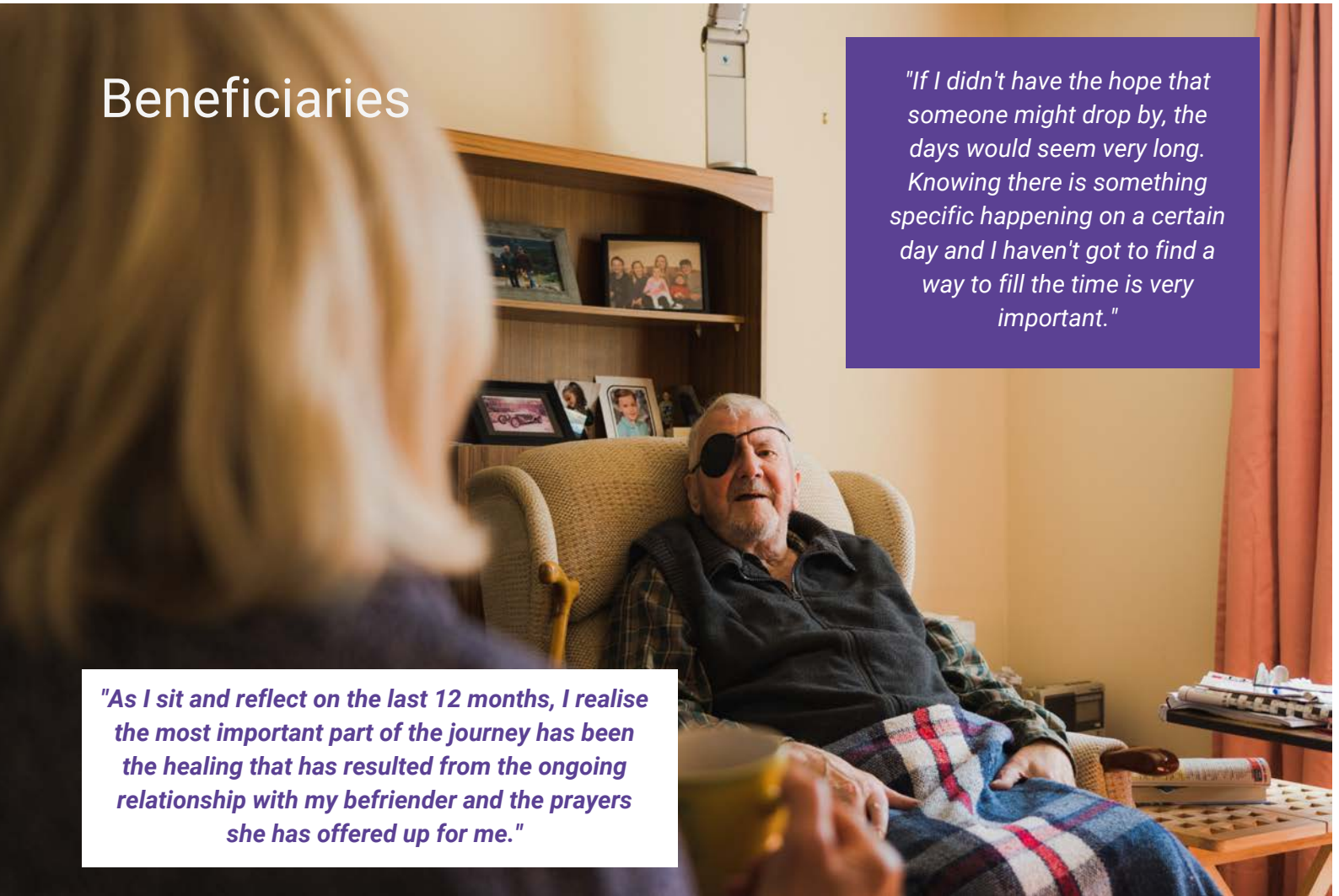
"Every volunteer said they were enjoying the calls and were happy to continue into the New Year with a number of them looking forward to being able to visit their Scheme Member when the situation allows. It's lovely to hear about close friendships being formed and how much these relationships are important to both parties"

Volunteers

" I have been matched with a person who has lots of interests and a wonderful personality. Volunteering for this has really enriched my life."

" I regard my volunteering role as an enormous privilege. Being able to help and make a positive contribution to somebody else's life is a great thing to be able to do."

Beneficiaries

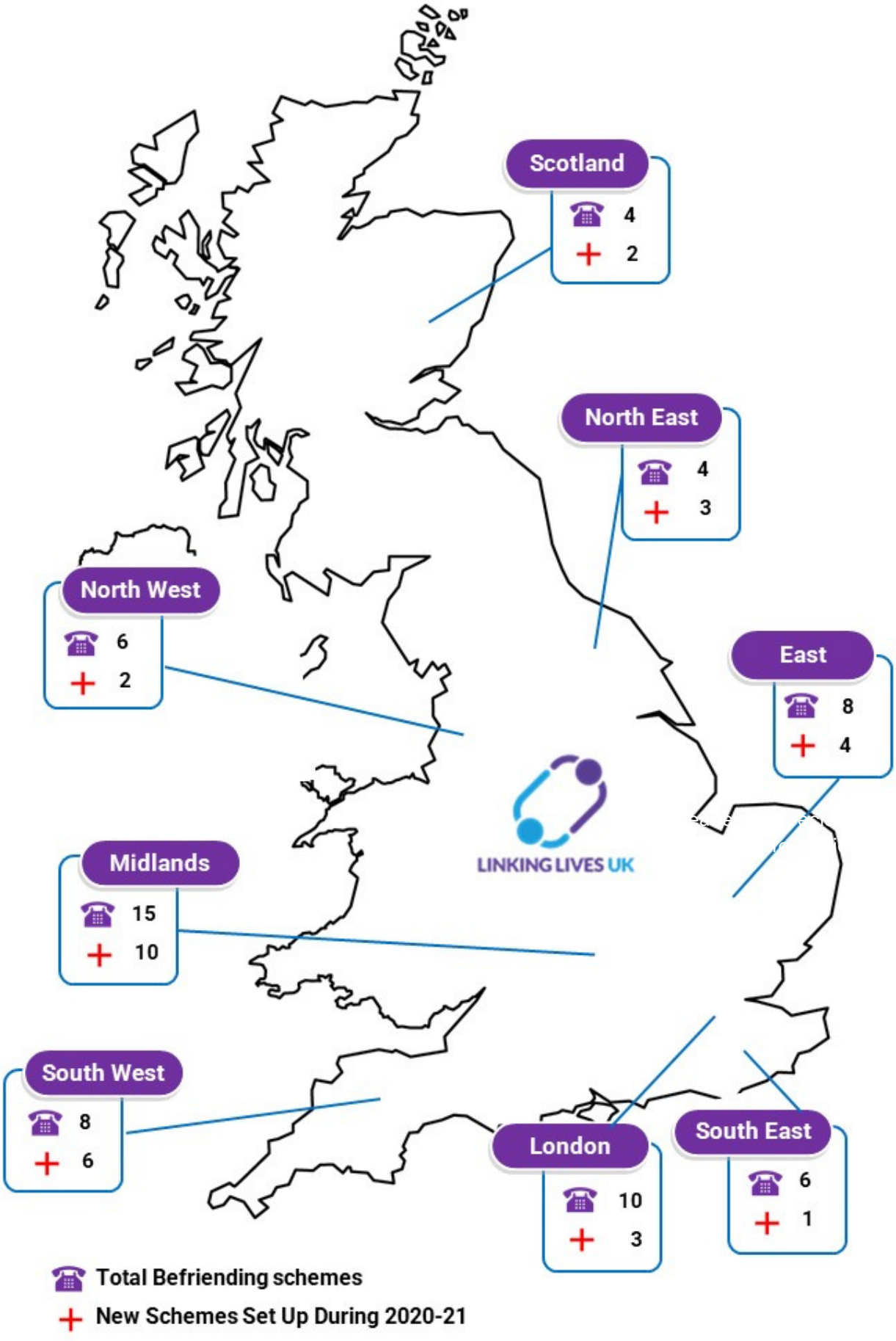


"If I didn't have the hope that someone might drop by, the days would seem very long. Knowing there is something specific happening on a certain day and I haven't got to find a way to fill the time is very important."

"As I sit and reflect on the last 12 months, I realise the most important part of the journey has been the healing that has resulted from the ongoing relationship with my befriender and the prayers she has offered up for me."

NATIONAL REACH

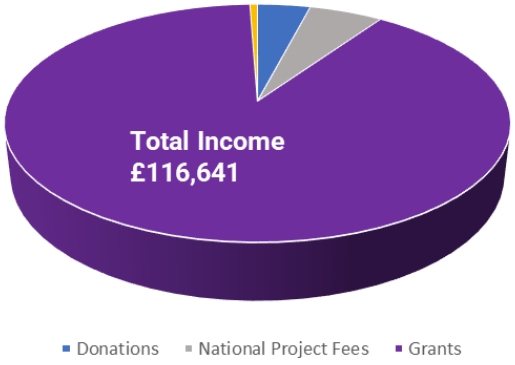
Project numbers and locations across the UK



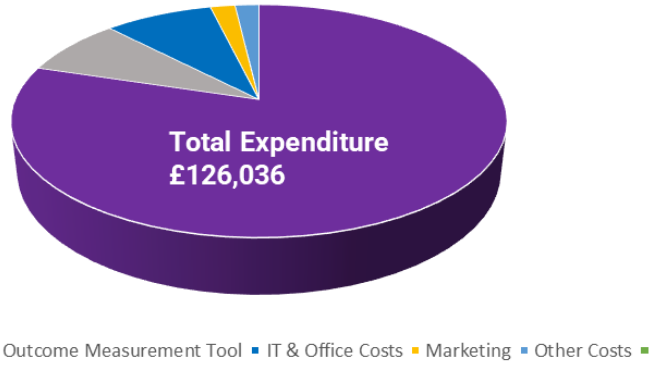
PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH

2020 - 2021 Financial Performance

2020 - 21 Sources of Income

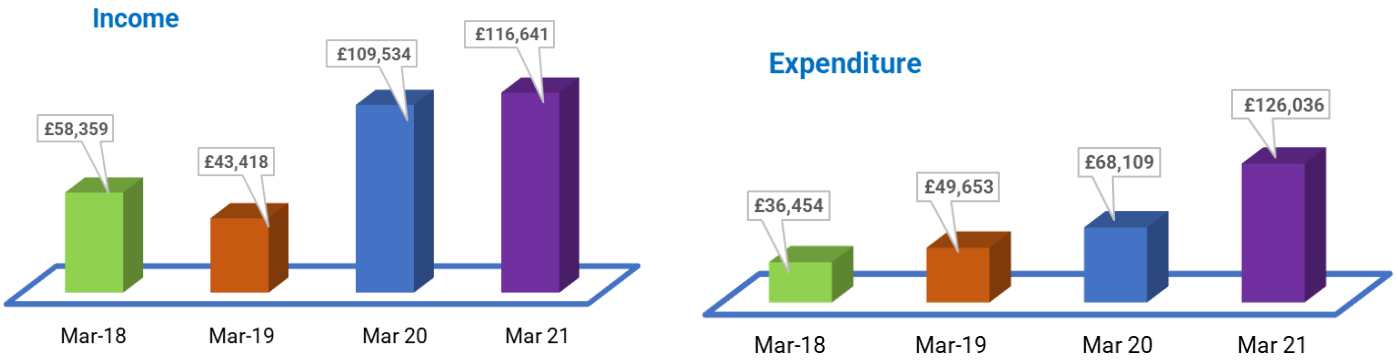


2020-21 Expenditure

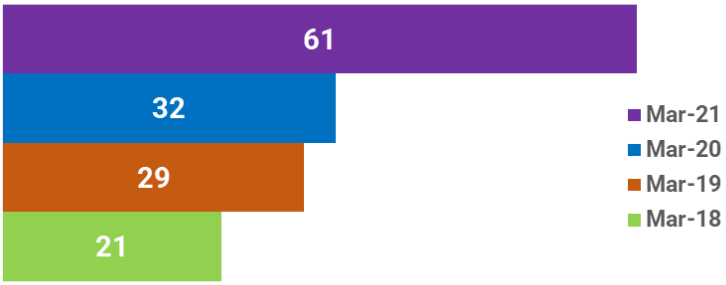


Our Growth since 2018

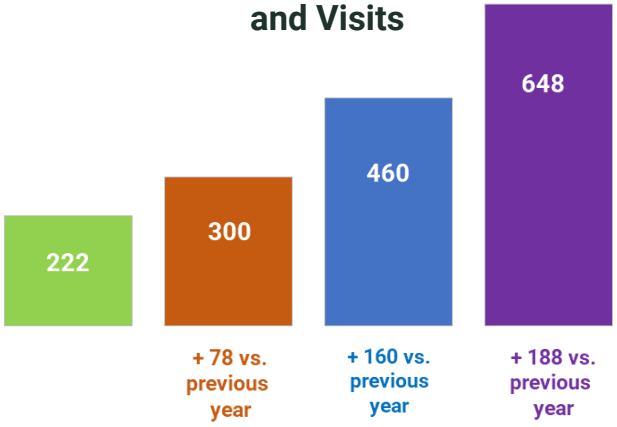
Financial Growth



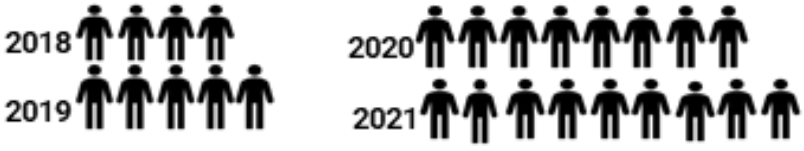
Growth of Befriending Schemes



Growth in Befriending Calls and Visits



Growth in Core Team



OUR THANKS GO TO...

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all local volunteers whose dedication at the frontline makes all of our impact achievable.

We would also like to thank our delivery partners and project coordinators for their commitment and motivation to make a difference in the lives of so many older people.

Finally and very importantly, thank you to our supporters, donors and funders. We are privileged to receive your kind support without which Linking Lives UK would not be able to reach out to those most in need at the margins of society.



Linking Lives UK

6 Bowbridge Drive, Embsay, Skipton BD23 6QU

www.linkinglives.uk

info@linkinglives.uk

0300 302 0225

Charity No. 1170325

Find out more about our work and impact at www.linkinglives.uk

@LinkingLivesUK **Linking Lives UK**

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name Linking Lives UK		
On accounts for the year ended	31 March 2021	**Charity no (if any)**	1170325
Set out on pages	1-2 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)		

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/03/2021**.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust'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.

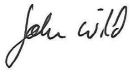
Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable 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.

* *Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:		**Date:**	20/01/2022
Name:	John Wild		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	ACA ICAEW		

Address:	West Warren, Warren Road
	Woodley
	RG5 3AR

Section B Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Linking :ives UK	1170325

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01/04/2020	To	31/03/2021

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Commission	-	-	-	-	24
Donations	4,707	-	-	4,707	5,349
Fees	6,550	-	-	6,550	10,146
Grants (1)	94,711	10,000	-	104,711	92,840
Bank Interest	149	-	-	149	52
Income received for CTAL (2)	400	-	-	400	1,123
Other	124	-	-	124	-
	-	-	-	-	-
***Sub total** (Gross income for AR)*	106,641	10,000	-	116,641	109,534
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	106,641	10,000	-	116,641	109,534
A3 Payments					
Contractors (3)	79,863	7,407	-	87,270	42,629
Staff Costs (4)	12,232			12,232	
Insurance	378	-	-	378	378
Annual Conference	595	-	-	595	-
Training & accommodation	15	-	-	15	403
Marketing	2,400	-	-	2,400	3,152
Expenses & travel	231	76	-	307	4,392
Postage, printing & stationery	150	-	-	150	784
Room hire& ICT	721	-	-	721	4,039
Website	3,912			3,912	843
Outcome measurement	9,984			9,984	10,000
Loneliness lock-in	1,295			1,295	1,489
Database (5)	5,370			5,370	
Membership of other organisations (6)	788			788	
HR Advertising (7)	619			619	
Other				-	
Refund	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	118,553	7,483	-	126,036	68,109
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Equipment	534	-	-	534	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	534	-	-	534	-
Total payments	119,087	7,483	-	126,570	68,109
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 12,446	2,517	-	- 9,929	41,425
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	56,415	-	-	56,415	14,990
Cash funds this year end	43,969	2,517	-	46,486	56,415

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds

B1 Cash funds

	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
Current Account	25,286	-	
Deposit Account	12,393	8,807	-
	-	-	-
Total cash funds	**37,679**	**8,807**	**-**

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

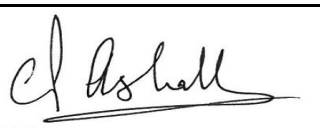
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
Exhibition Stands (5)		552	138
Laptop - National Director		350	88
Projector		280	70
Printer		48	24
Roller Banners		80	40
Laptop - Norfolk		263	198
Laptop		534	423
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Dr Charles Peter Ashall	25-Jan-22

Notes
(1) Significant grants were received from AllChurches Trust £10,000,
The Earl of Northampton's Charity £30k - year 2 of 3, Donald Forrester Trust £15,000, Sobell Foundation £10,000.

(2)	Membership fees held on behalf of Christians Together Against Loneliness
(3)	Contracts are in place with Julie Marshall - Prayer Coordinator, Jeremy Sharpe - National Director Hannah McLoughlin - Social Media Coordinator Angela Caley - Two's Compamy Coordinator/ Partnerships & Support Services Manager Richard Taylor - Regional Development Officer (Devon) Carol Hebden - Regional Development Officer (West Midlands) Chris Driver - Finance & Administration Manager Angie Colebrooke - Administrator Charlotte Munro - Trust & Foundations Fundraiser David de la Haye - Training & Resources Manager Trew Fundraising The National Director, Jeremy Sharpe, became an employee during the year.
(4)	
(5)	A new database was developed
(6)	Membership fees paid to other organisations including the Directory for Social Change
(7)	Advertising for staff