

Soho First Community Development Trust

Trustee's Annual Report 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

Charity name: Soho First Community Development Trust

Other names charity is known by: Soho First, Soho First CDT

Charity Number: 1173499

Principal address:

Handsworth Baptist Church Centre
38A Victoria Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 0SA

Trustees

Andrew Simons (Chair)
Rhona Rouse (Treasurer)
Robert John Higginson (Minutes secretary)
Rev John Mall
Carol Henry

We thank the Trustees for their continued commitment and contribution to the work of Soho First.

Structure, governance, and management

Governing document

Association model constitution
Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered 20 June 2017

Trustee selection

The Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting.

The objects of the charity are:

1. To develop the capacity and skills of the members of the socially and economically disadvantaged community of Soho Ward, Birmingham, in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society.
2. The promotion for the public benefit of urban regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation (and Birmingham's Soho Ward) by all or any of the following means:

- a) the relief of poverty in such ways as may be thought fit;
- b) the relief of unemployment in such ways as may be thought fit, including assistance to find employment;
- c) the advancement of education, training, or retraining, particularly among unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience;
- d) the provision of financial assistance, technical assistance, or business advice or consultancy in order to provide training and employment opportunities for unemployed people in cases of financial or other charitable need through help:
 - (i) in setting up their own business, or
 - (ii) to existing businesses;
- (e) the creation of training and employment opportunities by the provision of workspace, buildings and/or land for use on favourable terms;
- (f) the provision of housing for those who are in conditions of need and the improvement of housing in the public sector or in charitable ownership provided that such power shall not extend to relieving any local authorities or other bodies of a statutory duty to provide or improve housing;
- (g) the maintenance, improvement, or provision of public amenities;
- (h) the preservation of buildings or sites of historic or architectural importance;
- (i) the provision or assistance in the provision of recreational facilities for the public at large and/ or those who, by reasons of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty, or social and economic circumstances, have need for such facilities;
- (j) the protection or conservation of the environment;
- (k) the provision of public health facilities and childcare;
- (l) the promotion of public safety and prevention of crime; and
- (m) such other means as may from time to time be determined subject to the prior consent of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales.

The Trust's mission statement is:

"Connecting the gifts, aspirations, capacities, and skills of the people in Birmingham's Soho and Jewellery Quarter Ward to identify local needs and priorities better and to act to address them. Soho First strives to collaborate with residents and partners to address local social, economic, and environmental priorities and create a better place for everyone to live and work in."

Summary of main activities undertaken

This report covers the financial year from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025. Soho First continues to rely entirely on volunteers to achieve its objectives. Since its establishment in 2017, the organization has greatly benefited from the commitment and contributions of many dedicated individuals, particularly its Trustees. However, we have also experienced the loss of some key members who have moved away and are no longer able to participate actively. This change has affected our ability to reach certain goals. Therefore, recruiting new members, including Trustees, will be a top priority in the coming year.

Thriving Soho

The Community Economic Development Plan for the Soho and Jewellery Quarter Ward is being revised. This updated plan will incorporate findings from research conducted by two groups of community researchers as part of the USE-IT! program (Unlocking Social and Economic Innovation Together):

Procurement in the Soho Ward of Birmingham: Alison Thompson and Debbie Kerslake, USE-IT! Community Researchers (2019)

Exploration of a Maker Space in the Soho Ward: Jeanette Derbyshire, Gazala Aslam, Katarzyna Gut, Karen Thomas, Shazia Baig, and Jennifer Thomas, USE-IT! Community Researchers (2019)

The research conducted by the USE-IT! researchers has contributed to a report on Progressive Procurement in Birmingham. This report examines the challenges that social enterprises face when trying to access public sector procurement processes and discusses potential solutions to these challenges.

Environment

Soho First continues to advocate for residents concerning environmental issues, particularly in relation to local parks and green spaces. This includes Black Patch Park, which, although located just over the border in Sandwell, is an important asset for the residents of Soho Ward. We have been involved in discussions about the future land use around the park and promoting the heritage and cultural assets in the area.

Social media

We continue to manage the Soho First website (<https://sohofirst.org.uk/>) and Facebook page with support from Lee Thorpe at Steamroom Media. The website includes a link to the Ladywood Neighbourhood Network Scheme - <https://www.facebook.com/NNSLadywood/>.

Statutory Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Signature:



Full name: Andrew Simons

Position: Chair

Date: 24th January 2026

Soho First Community Development Trust

Financial Statement

1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

Income	0.00
Expenditure	
Website domain name and hosting	115.99
Service charges	53.40
Total expenditure	<u>169.39</u>
Balance from the previous year	6,483.68
Total income	0.00
	<u>6,483.68</u>
Total expenditure	169.39
Balance as of 31st March 2025	<u>6,314.29</u>

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees

Signature:



Full name: Andrew Simons

Position: Chair

Date: 24th January 2026