

Bags of Blessings
(Registered charity, number 1182290)
Financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024

Page	Contents
2 - 5	Trustees' annual report
6	Independent examiner's report
7	Receipts & payments account
8	Statement of assets & liabilities
9 - 10	Notes to the accounts

**Bags of Blessings
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

Full name Bags of Blessings

Organisation type Charitable incorporated organisation

Registered charity number 1182290

Principal address c/o 137 Standhill Road, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 1JT

Trustees

Christine Shuter, Chair

Catherine Stones

Debbie Jackson, Treasurer

Lauren Gunn, until 18.7.24

Michelle Heckford,

Independent examiner

John O'Brien, employee of Community Accounting Plus, Units 1 & 2 North West, 41 Talbot Street, Nottingham, NG1 5GL

Governance and management

The charity is operated under the rules of its constitution adopted 4 March 2019.

We advertise specific roles and volunteers who are interested and capable are invited to apply to become a trustee. At the first trustees meeting after an application we discuss the merits of the applicant and then take a vote.

Objectives and activities

The prevention or relief of poverty in Nottinghamshire by providing items to charities or other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty.

We provide bags of gifts to young people, from birth to 18 years of age at Christmas, plus activity bags to children from 4 to 11 years at Easter and during school Summer holidays. We work with a homeless charity to provide clothing, equipment and toys for children from birth to 4 years and items of equipment not suitable for our bags are donated to the same homeless charity. We collect clothing for a clothing bank and have the means and contacts to equip families who are experiencing extreme difficulties. We also provide hygiene items to food banks.

All of this is done through public appeal, with collection boxes being placed in the community at Christmas and donors approaching us through our social media.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit

By providing items for disadvantaged families, we are able to relieve them of the stress of having to buy these items. Good mental health is always an issue and our activities, as well as helping with meagre budgets, bring reassurance that the items donated through the kindness of strangers gives beneficiaries the knowledge that they are seen and cared about.

Bags of Blessings

Public benefit statement

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Summary of the main achievements during the period

The start of the accounting period in April 2023 saw us pack and deliver 600 Easter Activity Packs. Each containing Easter themed toys or craft activities, stationery, a reading book and an Easter egg. They were aimed at children from 4 to 11 years and were delivered mostly to food banks, but also included a Malawian group of families. We repeated this exercise in July, when we packed 600 similar bags, with two outdoor toys instead of Easter items. As always, a reading book and stationery were included in the bag.

L'Oreal have supported Bags of Blessings since our first campaign and we were approached by them during the summer, where they offered to fill bags with hygiene items during their Citizen Day in July and deliver 2,000 to us to be distributed at our discretion. All of these packs were delivered to food banks and homeless charities within one week.

Our Hygiene Hub continues to deliver personal and household hygiene items to our food bank clients. This Hub has become an integral part of our charitable giving, using funds specifically awarded to buy hygiene items.

We continue to donate to the charity, Around Again, which is managed under the umbrella of our biggest homeless charity, Framework. We have been pleased to pass on many items of clothing, nursery apparatus and toys for children from birth up to 4 years and enjoy an ongoing relationship with them throughout the year.

We continue to collect items of household linen and clothing for our clothing bank friends, Sharewear, receiving many donations, especially around Christmas time and one of our food bank clients also received items of warm clothing and footwear from us over the winter period, when we learned that they frequently receive visits from homeless men.

Our fundraising efforts with our Summer Fair and an Autumn Fashion Show raised £1,387 which went towards our Christmas Campaign. Also, stall holders' rents for our 2024 spring Fair, paid during the 2023/24 financial period yielded £358.

We continue to engage with young people, encouraging them to learn about food poverty and homelessness through volunteering with us. We believe that when they engage first hand in our charitable endeavours they will carry their experiences through into later life and foster a caring and compassionate attitude amongst their peers. In August we attended a youth event, where 430 young people between the ages of 13 and 18 years packed 900 stationery packs for distribution at Christmas and 900 personal hygiene packs for our food bank clients. Following that, in November and December we took our bags of toys to five Police Cadets units and two Guides groups. These young people joyfully wrapped over 3,000 individual items in more than 600 bags and will be doing the same for us this year. For the first

Bags of Blessings

time we had the support of two colleges, where students collected and wrapped many gifts to go into our Christmas bags. With the help of all these young people, plus the many businesses, schools and churches throughout Nottingham who have toys collection boxes on their premises, we succeeded in packing and distributing 1,993 bags of gifts at Christmas, the vast majority of which were donated items. As always, the bags contained 3 toys, stationery and colouring items, seasonal confectionery and a signed Christmas card.

We find that we are receiving more referrals for family packs around Christmas time and are happy to be able to provide Christmas gifts for entire families, including wherever possible, a few luxury Christmas food items.

Financial review

We started the year with an opening balance of £14,715 and fundraising events and grants and donations yielded another £8,550, which enabled us to fund Easter and Summer Activity bags and to meet the shortfall in donations. Thanks to an award of £9,166 from The National Lottery Community Fund and £12,780 from Postcode Places Trust we were able to meet our obligations with rent, insurances and general maintenance of our premises and ended the year with a balance of £27,594, which gave us a healthy start to the year 2024/25. With a healthy financial position, we were able to meet all of our challenges this year.

Financial risk

We have no significant financial risk - our priority is to pay the rent and tailor activities to suit the funds we have at the time. As the majority of our work is the result of public donation, we work according to our financial position at the time, with our only ongoing obligation being rent and running costs.

The charity's policy on reserves

Our policy is to hold six months rent for our premises and when those reserves are needed we will start to wind up the charity.

Acknowledgments

Our volunteers and trustees are the beating heart of our charity and we would not be able to continue without their dedication and generosity of their time.

This year we have been supported by more local offices of national businesses, Turner & Townsend, Boots, BJSS and we are grateful to John Lewis for both a £2,000 donation and also a generous donation of Easter eggs from their distribution department.

We have appreciated the support that we have received from L'Oreal since our first campaign in 2018. In summer 2023 they donated 2,000 hygiene packs of exceptional quality which we were able to deliver to disadvantaged families throughout Nottingham via our network of food bank contacts.

Bags of Blessings

We are indebted to Nottinghamshire Constabulary, Nottingham College and The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latterday Saints for their continued support throughout the year. The young people in their organisations cheerfully and enthusiastically support us in a variety of ways.

We have a network of collection points throughout Nottingham, which grows year on year. We are approached by businesses and individuals who see what we do and want to support our work. Without these contacts we would not be able to grow as we do.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed  Date 15.08.2024
Christine Shuter, Trustee

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of
Bags of Blessings
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bags of Blessings (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

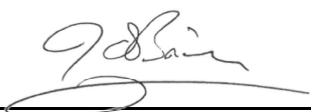
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed  Date 01/09/2024
John O'Brien MSc, FCCA, FCIE
Employee of Community Accounting Plus


Bags of Blessings
Receipts & payments account
for the year ended 31 March 2024

2023				2024
Total		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Funds		Funds	Funds	Funds
£	Note	£	£	£
	Receipts			
2062	Fundraising	1426	-	1426
3133	Grants and donations	2	18423	11166
2400	Rent repayments	1915	-	1915
105	Sundry receipts	32	-	32
<u>7699</u>	Total receipts	<u>21796</u>	<u>11166</u>	<u>32962</u>
	Payments			
5937	Charitable activities	6687	970	7657
603	Equipment, repairs & renewals	452	-	452
485	Fundraising costs	218	-	218
383	Insurance	368	-	368
122	Phone, postage & internet	241	-	241
-	Premises, repairs & maintenance	12	-	12
309	Printing, stationery & computer	111	-	111
10325	Rent & services	4364	5833	10197
420	Legal & professional	559	-	559
77	Sundry payments	268	-	268
<u>18661</u>	Total payments	<u>13280</u>	<u>6803</u>	<u>20083</u>
(10962)	Net receipts/(payments)	8516	4363	12879
25677	Cash funds at start of this period	14029	686	14715
-	Transfers between funds	686	(686)	-
<u>14715</u>	Cash funds at end of this period	<u>23231</u>	<u>4363</u>	<u>27594</u>

Bags of Blessings
Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 March 2024

2023			2024
£	Cash assets	Note	£
14586	Bank accounts		27540
<u>129</u>	Cash in hand		<u>54</u>
<u>14715</u>			<u>27594</u>
	Other monetary assets		
2263	Debtors		-
<u>-</u>	Prepayments	4	<u>371</u>
<u>2263</u>			<u>371</u>
	Assets retained for the charity's own use		
	General equipment.		
	Liabilities		
<u>(444)</u>	Creditors - Legal & professional		<u>(480)</u>
<u>(444)</u>			<u>(480)</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed  Dated 16/08/2024
Debbie Jackson, Trustee

Bags of Blessings
Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Grants & donations

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Postcode Places Trust	12780	-	12780
National Lottery Community Fund	-	9166	9166
Abbvie	-	2000	2000
John Lewis	2000	-	2000
Sundry grants & donations	3643	-	3643
	18423	11166	29589

3. Funds analysis

	Opening balance £	Receipts (Payments) £		Transfers £	Closing balance £
Restricted funds					
Hygiene Hub	-	2000	(970)	-	1030
Rent and running costs	-	9166	(5833)	-	3333
Postcode Places Trust	686	-	-	(686)	-
	686	11166	(6803)	(686)	4363
Unrestricted funds					
General	14029	21796	(13280)	686	23231
	14029	21796	(13280)	686	23231

The transfer from the Postcode Places Trust fund to the General fund reflects the release of any restrictions on the use of these funds.

Bags of Blessings

4. Prepayments

	£
Insurance	292
Phone, postage & internet	79
	<hr/>
	371
	<hr/>

5. Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no expenses, remuneration or benefits in this period.

6. Glossary of terms

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.

Debtors: These are amounts owed to the charity, but not received in the accounting period.

Prepayments: These are services that the charity has paid for in advance, but not used during the accounting period.

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.