

# ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY, BLACKBURN

England & Wales · Charity number 1188910

## Details

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Other names	ARC (BLACKBURN)
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2020-04-06
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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Email	<a href="mailto:arcprojectblackburn@gmail.com">arcprojectblackburn@gmail.com</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.ARCProjectBlackburn.com">www.ARCProjectBlackburn.com</a>

## Activities

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**Objects:** 1. TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND RELIEVE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP AMONGST THOSE SEEKING ASYLUM AND THOSE GRANTED REFUGEE STATUS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS, PRIMARILY BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY WITHIN THE DISTRICT OF BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN, PARTICULARLY BY THE PROVISION OF CLASSES, SIGNPOSTING TO LEGAL AND OTHER ADVICE SO AS TO ADVANCE THEM IN LIFE AND ASSIST THEM TO ADAPT AND INTEGRATE WITHIN A NEW COMMUNITY.2. TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL ABOUT THE ISSUES RELATING TO REFUGEES AND THOSE SEEKING ASYLUM.3. THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR RECREATION OR OTHER LEISURE TIME OCCUPATION WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS OF LIFE OF THOSE PERSONS WHO HAVE NEED OF SUCH FACILITIES BY REASON OF THEIR YOUTH, AGE, INFIRMITY OR DISABLEMENT, FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES.4. TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF THOSE GRANTED REFUGEE STATUS OR SEEKING ASYLUM AND THEIR DEPENDENTS BY WHATEVER CHARITABLE MEANS THE CHARITY TRUSTEES THINK FIT.

**Activities:** Help provided in various forms to those who are seeking asylum or have been granted refugee status so they can live productive lives in their new country of residence

## Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Accommodation/housing, Recreation
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities

## Geography

- Blackburn With Darwen

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-08-31	£205,943	£173,836	-	-
2023-08-31	£70,120	£144,235	-	-
2022-08-31	£133,365	£80,540	-	-
2021-08-31	£154,450	£137,704	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rachel Ann Hodge	Chair	2022-04-27
Amanda Elizabeth Cook		2023-11-30
Anwar Ismael		2025-06-12
Christine Joyce Seddon		2022-07-01
Jasber Singh		2026-03-05
Katherine Louise Lee		2026-01-09
STEPHEN NORCROSS		2023-02-10
Salma Mohammed		2023-04-13
Victoria Nelson		2026-03-05

**ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY, BLACKBURN**

England & Wales - Charity number 1188910

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# Accounts

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**ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY BLACKBURN**

**Registered Charity No: 1188910**

**ACCOUNTS &**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**for the year ended 31 August 2024**

**Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn**

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**For the period ended 31 August 2024**

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**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees**

Charity Name  
Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31 August 2024  
**Charity no  
(if any)** 1188910

**Set out on pages**

3 to 5  
(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 / 08 / 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.

**Signed:** David Marriott

**Date:** 22/04/2025

**Name:** David Marriott FCA

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

<b>Address:</b>	Suite 10B The Beehive, Lions Drive
	Shadsworth Business Park, Blackburn
	BB1 2QS

**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.**

**Income & Expenditure Account**  
**Year Ended 31 August 2024**

	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>			
Grants	191,629.04		
Donations	13,452.00		
Miscellaneous Income	<u>862.12</u>		
			205,943.16
<b>Less Expenditure and Overheads</b>			
<b>Direct Restricted Expenses</b>			
Equipment & Consumables	2,066.84		
External Services	0.00		
Lamplight Training & Database	726.00		
Other Training	418.29		
Memberships	2,000.00		
Other Expenses	1,945.20		
Accountancy Fees	1,536.40		
Rent	10,598.92		
Room Hire	3,976.39		
Staff Wages	111,161.68		
Stationery	861.98		
Sundry Expenses	307.95		
Telephone & Internet	3,753.23		
Travel Expenses	1,347.20		
Workshop Fees	7,887.32		
Donations - Lunches/Clothing	6,971.70		
Allotment	1,937.09		
Licences	409.29		
Repair and Renewals	940.00		
Insurance	<u>835.76</u>		
			159,681.24
<b>Administration Expenses</b>			
Staff Wages	7,984.14		
Staff Training Costs	0.00		
Pension Fees	165.00		
External Services	0.00		
Staff & Volunteer Expenses	90.00		
Client, Socials & Charity Expenses	3,215.18		
Advertising	0.00		
Postage	0.00		
Accountancy Fees	0.00		
Funding Application Expenses	0.00		
Bank & Card Fees	26.10		
Travel Expenses	167.91		
Website Fees	0.00		
Rent, Electricity & Water	47.50		
Insurance	0.00		
Computer Expenses	0.00		
Repairs & Sundry Equipment	0.00		
Due Diligence Checks	0.00		
Sundry Expenses	1,519.00		
Depreciation of Assets	<u>939.92</u>		
			14,154.75
<b>Total Expenses</b>			<u>173,835.99</u>
<b>Surplus (Deficit) Generated from Operations</b>			32,107.17
<b>Profits (Losses) transferred to Revenue Reserves</b>			<u><u>32,107.17</u></u>

Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn Charity No : 1188910

Balance Sheet  
Year Ended 31 August 2024

	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Computer Equipment	4,651.91	
Less: Depreciation	<u>1,937.20</u>	
		2,714.71
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash at bank	88,161.39	
Petty Cash in Hand	<u>48.84</u>	
		88,210.23
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accrued Charges	2,103.12	
Deferred Grant Income	40,018.23	
Pensions		
PAYE & NI	<u>1,130.80</u>	
		43,252.15
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>44,958.08</u>
		47,672.79
<b>Less : Restricted Funding &amp; Grants</b>		0.00
		<u>47,672.79</u>
<b>Reprerented by :</b>		
Revenue Reserves brought forward		15,565.62
Capital Introduced		0.00
Surplus (Deficit) for the year		32,107.17
		<u>47,672.79</u>

Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the period ended 31 August 2024

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Accounting Principles**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 with applicable Accounting Standards.

**Depreciation**

Depreciation has been calculated to write off the net book values of fixed assets over their expected economic lives at the following annual rates.

Computer Equipment	33% on reducing balance
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**2. INCOME**

Turnover for the year was £205,943.16 (2023 £70,120) and represents the £191,629 restricted and £14,314 unrestricted funding grants and donations received from various sources and during the year.

**3. CORPORATION TAX**

Corporation tax is charged in the accounts in the period to which it relates.

The amount of corporate tax due on non-mutual trading activities for the year was £ nil.

**4. CONTINUING OPERATIONS**

None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued during the year.

**5. TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES**

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the profit for the financial period detailed herewith.

**ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY, BLACKBURN**

England & Wales - Charity number 1188910

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# Accounts

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## **ARC Blackburn Annual Report 2022-23**

### **Project ID: 20178184**

#### **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. How we support the Asylum and Refugee Community in Blackburn with Darwen
3. What is unique about the support and benefit ARC Blackburn offers?
4. What changes have we made based on our learning experiences?
5. Feedback from the Community
6. Suggestions
7. Main Challenges
8. How the feedback and learning will impact our service in the future
9. Appendices

#### **1. Introduction**

To prepare for the review we have collected feedback from service users (male, female, single and families from different countries), all staff and volunteers and 7 partner organisations. This includes a volunteer questionnaire with the purpose of identifying opportunities and obstacles to effective volunteer coordination. From gathering this information, we strongly feel that ARC Blackburn is offering excellent support to asylum seekers and refugees. We have also been able to gain useful feedback and suggestions for improving the services we offer.

#### **2. How we support the Asylum and Refugee Community in Blackburn with Darwen**

##### ***Context***

At ARC we offer all asylum seekers and refugees a warm welcome, a safe place to receive the support they need through services and activities, and a meeting place. All of which help them to start rebuilding their lives and settle into a new country. ARC provides direct support, and sign-posting services, to comply with statutory procedures; to ensure our service users have fair access to legal services, healthcare, education, and embed the skills to cope with everyday challenges and integrate into the community. We respond to more than 4,000 enquiries per year with our range of services. Service user attendance figures are shown in Appendix 1.

We provide facilities for education, recreation, and other activities with the objective of improving the quality and condition of the lives of ARC members and assisting their inclusion into the wider community. Asylum seekers and refugees bring with them a wealth of experience, skills and qualifications; at ARC we seek to support each person to use and develop their potential both within ARC, the community and in wider society through accessing education, volunteering, training and/or employment. This will enable them to develop skills, access opportunities to support themselves and their families and contribute to society.



Working with a wide range of partners in the community we work to maximise access to all services available which are vital for supporting everyday life and successful rebuilding of lives in a new culture and society. ARC fosters a positive attitude of respect and tolerance within a community of people from many different backgrounds; this promotes mutual understanding, an inclusive culture and encouragement for involvement and working with others both within and beyond the community.

### **Local Partnerships**

We have received positive feedback across the board from our local partners, showing that our existing and new partnerships are flourishing. Some examples of this feedback are shared below.

### **Housing**

We work closely with Housing Needs and Support at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to support refugees with issues arising from housing; the deputy manager attends our weekly drop-in event to offer support and guidance. We have direct contact with the asylum accommodation providers, Serco, and when necessary, we make contact regarding any property issues such as maintenance of heating systems; damp; broken appliances. This year we have made links with a new local organisation, Kairos, in order to address emergency temporary housing needs of single men.

### **Education**

We refer newly arrived families to the admissions team at the council, and vice versa. The International New Arrivals Officer visits our drop-in session regularly to set up individual appointments.

*“Since Covid I do all my meetings at the ARC drop-in and office instead of home visits. It’s really beneficial and 5 mins down the road from my office. It means the families get out and they also can get support with any other needs, or they can be signposted by the ARC case work team to the right provider. Sometimes families are not aware of ARC – so it is really good for them to come there through me.” (International New Arrivals Officer – BwD Council).*

We have registered our English Club learners with the local ESOL Hub which is run by the local council. This has developed the organisation, monitoring and standardisation of ESOL teaching and learning in line with other local ESOL providers. It has enhanced our professional performance in ESOL teaching and learning and thus benefitted the ARC English club learners and teachers.

*“Great....I’m always welcome to any event and we are regularly meeting up and discussing things – so there is ongoing good communication. I’ve just set up some CPD sessions for our \ESOL partners and there has been good take up from ARC ESOL teachers.” (ESOL Lead – Integration & Community Engagement – BwD Council)*

We continue our close links with Blackburn College, referring service users on to more advanced English Classes, IT, Maths and other courses.



### **Destitution**

We have been able to continue with referrals to Rummage Rescuers and to Children's Storehouse, when the needs arises, for clothing, household goods and nursery equipment such as cots and pushchairs. This year we have set up an excellent link with The Trussell Trust Blackburn Foodbank in order to address food poverty of our service users. This has worked well and freed up our time and resources to concentrate on casework and other activities.

### **Mental Health**

Over the year, we have significantly developed our response to mental health needs in the asylum and refugee community. All of our service users have suffered a degree of mental and emotional trauma leaving their home countries and building their lives in a new country. On top of this, the Covid pandemic has put extra financial and social strain on them, often causing a decline in their mental health. The employment of a Mental Health Counsellor through Lancashire Women has been very successful. We have also introduced a new 10-week wellbeing course, 'Focus and Fly', which aims to improve self-esteem and confidence.

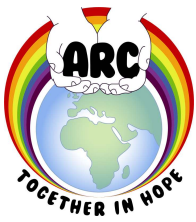
*"Love it.. it's brilliant... it's such a joy everyone wants to help...there's flexibility, always a member of staff to support the learners.. we get fed!! - 5 stars! ....There should be something like this as often as possible for people to come in, have fun, make friends – such an antidote to dealing with all the issues of survival, all the waiting .. and feeling in tatters. There needs to be this balance, this equilibrium in people's lives." (Focus and Fly Facilitator)*

In addition, we have attended coffee mornings with a small group of female service users at Humraaz, an organisation supporting women facing domestic issues.

A new initiative this year by Lancashire Mind, has been mental health training sessions for staff. Staff have found this to be very beneficial in understanding how to better support service users.

We have provided opportunities for our service users to learn about how spending time outdoors can greatly enhance their mental health. Lancashire Wildlife Trust 'MyPlace Greenhouse Project' has enabled our service users to partake in guided walks, learn about growing food, and visiting local parks with likeminded people.

*"I'm very happy with our working relationship – good communication, good understanding and respect. We have mutual challenges and understandings - engaging clients is sometimes difficult and there are cultural challenges." (MyPlace Project Officer)*



### ***Money Management***

In this current climate of austerity and rise in the cost of living, our service users, and those with asylum seeker status in particular, are struggling to make ends meet. To address this, we have linked with other organisations and a local mosque, Nural Islam, who make voluntary contributions to our organisation. We have engaged with Inspire Motivate Overcome (IMO) and Utilita Energy to run money management and energy workshops.

### ***Health***

We have made links with Healthwatch related to Covid research, in addition to a Covid vaccination team attending our drop-in to administer the vaccinations. An NHS Sexual Health nurse, and Hepatitis C and TB nurse, visit our drop-in monthly to carry out screenings and offer advice.

### ***Police Engagement***

We have continued this year to offer educational awareness raising placements to police in training. Ongoing engagement with community police, who visit the drop-in and support any more serious incidents of conflict, is continuing to develop bridge between the police and the community. Their advice and support provides our service users the reassurance they need to feel safe in their homes, neighbourhoods and in the wider community.

### ***Other Community Links***

We are continuing to develop our links with local schools and the wider local community. This year, after re-opening post pandemic, Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School have been providing hot lunches from their school kitchen to our Tuesday social drop-in on a weekly basis. We also continue to receive donations and/or Eid/Christmas gifts from Blackburn High School, Ribblesdale School and Clitheroe Grammar School. We continue to offer one week work experience placements to 6<sup>th</sup> form students. An important aspect of our links with the schools is the awareness sessions we offer on asylum and refugee issues which involve input from service users. Additionally, we have received Christmas donations/toys from Secret Santa, Cash4kids and donations of food and money from local churches and mosques.

The Bureau, a local arts project ran a Lantern making session which led to our service users taking part in the borough's impressive Festival of Light in mid-December. The Early Years Music project and 'Little Lancashire Village' have provided activities for mums and toddlers. We have continued our strong link with Blackburn Rovers which gives service users the opportunities to attend football matches and enjoy this important part of local culture.

### ***Additional Funding from Local Organisations***

Opportunities for additional funding have been identified throughout the year and, as a result of the lottery funding, we have had the capacity to apply for additional grants to run small projects.

Through our local networks, we have been able to secure small pots of funding allowing us to put on additional activities. Funding from the ASDA foundation has allowed us to run a



weekly cooking club providing service users with ideas for healthy meals on a budget. Active Lancashire funding has allowed us to run weekly exercise classes aimed at empowering women.

### **Networking**

We continue our strong link with Blackburn CVS which is a great support to the work of ARC. Contact with them through email and social media allows us to network with a wide variety of local organisations in the voluntary sector. Information sharing through these channels means we know about any events, activities and trainings which will benefit our service users, staff and volunteers such as the CVS employability sessions and the CVS Upskilling Project for staff training. The CVS Volunteer Awards allows us to celebrate our most committed volunteers. The network CVS has been an effective channel for advertising our staff and volunteer vacancies.

*“ARC Enables us to send asylum seekers and refugees for support that is beyond our remit and which we know is good quality and will help people out. It has provided a community venue for us to offer to our own wrap around support around employability and digital skills. It’s enabled us to reach this group which we would not be able to in our own venue.” (CVS Assistant Executive Director)*

### **Darwen Asylum and Refugee Enterprise (DARE)**

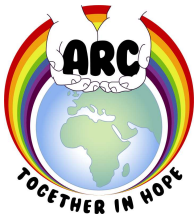
We have a strong link with DARE, our sister project in Darwen. Some of our service users visit both projects for support and one of our volunteers and trustees supports both organisations on a weekly basis. Information sharing, inviting service users to shared events and trips, and joint initiatives e.g., preparation for Refugee Week are all beneficial to service users and for raising awareness in the wider community.

### **3. What is unique about the support and benefit ARC Blackburn offers?**

The lottery grant has allowed us to make some big changes to the way we work which have been of great benefit to staff, volunteers and the service users. Office management, staffing and activities have all been significantly developed. Firstly, re-opening after the Covid pandemic was a huge challenge to build up confidence and engagement again with community members.

*“Quick re-opening after the lockdown and the ability of the staff to get back service users to drop in – the speed amazed me.... Most people didn’t understand the magnitude of effect Covid and social isolation had on people. AS & R were already disadvantaged then Covid came on top of that...it has a huge effect on people.” (Volunteer J.)*

Feedback from staff, volunteers and partners highlight the main features of the unique support ARC offers as: welcoming, safe and friendly; non-official and non-judgemental; flexibility in provision in order to accommodate people’s needs and circumstances; holistic, overall support in one place; diverse activities; the multi-cultural, multi-language



environment and staffing cutting across differing socio-economic backgrounds; signposting where appropriate rather than re-inventing the wheel; highly committed, high quality staff/volunteer team, mainly employed from the group we serve. Examples of lived experience stories can be found in Appendix 2.

Our partners affirmed the unique benefit of ARC to asylum seekers and refugees:

*“A safe space where people are understood, accepted and welcomed – there are very few places like that. They can get specific support relevant to their needs. They meet other people who have gone through similar, they can share survival stories and learn new skills.”* ( Focus and Fly leader)

*“The ARC team have all the skills, experience and language skills needed to support people in the AS and R community. Staff/volunteers understand about all people have gone through and have to go through- several of them also have lived experience. They would find it difficult in any other organisation to access all they need to get their needs met. Newly arrived people especially- taken away from their country and their family can find wrap around care and support such as practical help in the case work office, social drop in, English Club, trips etc – it’s a very wide offer. Other services you might get one to one support on one specific issue but not the holistic support or friendships and a community to be part of. It is very unique and unusual for an organisation to offer both practical support and also a community to be part of.”* (ESOL Lead – Integration & Community Engagement – BwD Council)

*“ARC is really successful in engaging a very diverse group of people – multi-generational and multi-ethnic - children, women , young men, men all together -all can get their needs met, feel welcome and mix well together. Also a breadth of people amongst staff and volunteers – those who have volunteered for a long time, new people, diverse backgrounds, also from a breadth of different social & economic backgrounds, not just middle class.”* (MyPlace Project Officer)

*“English classes are really good. I encourage parents to join the classes- it’s flexible so they can join anytime. Even when children are waiting to join a school they can go with parents to English classes. Tuesday drop in is fantastic - families can be introduced to each other and up meet up with each other.”* (Council Schools Placement Officer)

*ARC make every one feel like they are family for ever.... they follow up and check in with people all the time. Like it’s an ongoing relationship not just about one issue that day. Staff and volunteers make sure that people are going on ok... checking in on them time to time....seeing what anybody needs.* (Staff W.)

We have included some examples of flyers and posters for our events in Appendix 3.



#### **4. What changes have we made based on our learning experiences?**

##### **Office Management**

We have put in a tremendous amount of effort of time and resources to move to digitalisation of the casework and registration for English Club. All our staff and volunteers in the casework office have had Lamplight training in order to input client details and record every support session. This has streamlined our work, saved time, stores data more securely and aids swift analysis of numbers/ types of support etc. It has also upskilled our staff and volunteers with skills that are transferable.

##### **Staff**

We have recruited a new manager after a 6-month hiatus between managers. This, as we opened after the Covid pandemic, has had a very positive effect on the smooth running of ARC, staff and volunteer support, innovation and introduction of new activities.

*“Getting the right manager in has made a big difference. Very nice with people, listens....very polite and joins in, open mind, very respectful” (Volunteer H.)*

*“Getting the right manager in has made a big difference. She is inventive and positive. Looks at how it can be done rather than how it can’t. Opens up potential for the organisation. Clients are getting a good service and extra possibilities of things to do. “ (Volunteer A.)*

Thanks to lottery funding we now have four paid staff, two of whom have lived experience. Both these two caseworkers were recruited this year; one from Iraq and another from El Salvador. They both arrived in the UK through the asylum seeking route themselves. Their first-hand experience greatly enhances the support we offer and increases the understanding of staff and volunteers who are of a white ethnic background. They speak the same language as some service users and come from the same cultural background of some. We have over 30 volunteers currently enrolled at ARC who are responsible for a variety of roles including casework, teaching English, and kitchen assistants. In the casework office, the full-time reception role is fulfilled by an asylum seeker from Iraq.

Overall, we have been successful in recruiting three staff members from the community itself. All three had previously developed their skills and experience at ARC as volunteers and so they have brought a wealth of knowledge and understanding to their jobs from the onset.

##### **Volunteers**

This year a young woman refugee from Nigeria began helping to run the refreshments at the social drop-in and a young man from the Ivory Coast oversees the drop-in as a whole. This particular volunteer is in the 11<sup>th</sup> year of seeking asylum, so he has a deep empathy and understanding of the issues people face.



Two of our volunteers from the community attend events such as the Lancashire Wildlife Trust MyPlace Greenhouse Project. We have previously signposted service users to activities like this but involving our volunteers from the community has made our service users more confident and willing to try new things.

Pre-Covid our volunteers from the community visited schools, churches and other organisations from time to time to raise awareness in wider community about asylum seekers and refugees. We aim to restart this work as other organisations are now more willing. Community members who are not volunteers are involved in the work of ARC by helping at various events and activities, for example, supporting in the setup for our social drop-in, Eid and Christmas parties, and often helping to prepare/provide food and care for children.

We are proud, this year, to have invited J., one of our long-standing volunteers, an asylum seeker himself, to join the ARC Blackburn Board of Trustees. J. brings a wealth of understanding borne from his own long and difficult experience of seeking asylum and managing to survive in that context. He also brings his deep understanding of his fellow asylum seekers and refugees as well as over 10 years of experience volunteering for ARC Blackburn.

Seeing fellow asylum seekers and refugees in these positions of responsibility as volunteers and staff has attracted an increased number of asylum seekers and refugees to the drop-in and other ARC activities. Our staff and volunteers are also involved in the activities which have started this year. For example, our reception volunteer attends 'Focus and Fly' wellbeing sessions which greatly encourages others. On his suggestion, we made the change of providing food after the sessions. This boosted numbers attending and encouraged people to chat and share with each other in English – improving English language and building friendships.

*“At ARC multi- ethnic and multi- cultural volunteers and staff – helps to understand the clients and also to be understood. That’s what makes ARC different. The clients they trust me because I speak their language, same background, same religion – they tell their issues even their secrets. They feel comfortable with me.” (Staff Q)*

*“ ..it’s a very multilingual team so they can walk in and talk to anybody. Staff are very kind and tolerant. They feel like they are coming home a place of safety. (Volunteer J.)*

Service users (SU) were unanimously positive about all ARC staff and volunteers:

*“So kind, and very helpful.” (SU C.)*

*“ English teachers I love. At Drop in – people were so kind....help me so much.” (SU D.)*



*“Good people, very nice and show respect and they smile. Makes me feel good.” (SU F.)*

*“Who is working here amazing people.” (SU G.)*

All staff and volunteers express feeling happy, fulfilled and well supported and valued. The staff recruited this past year testify to this and it is clear that this sets an ethos and environment of warmth, respect, cooperation where all are working together to provide the best support for all those in the ARC community.

*“I like the team work ethos amongst the case workers. People are looking to work together to get the best results for clients.” (Volunteer B.)*

*“I like to help a charity which is helping people. I learn a lot of things about different cultures and advantages for me too. Meet new people , new things..... In Blackburn first 2 months just sleeping . I didn't have anything to do . I didn't know anybody. Stress, heating bills, depression, lonely feeling..... I can now encourage people because I have been through these things.... [for example] I brought girl from Focus and Fly to English club and I speak Arabic so I can help many people.*

*I get good support. working closely with them, learning learning. I never use Lamplight before....Who is working here amazing people.” (Volunteer K.)*

*“ 2 months I've been working here and I feel so settled in the team that I feel like I've been working here for years.....it is like family to me. I like to help others like ARC helped me. I know how hard it is to be an asylum seeker... To see the gratitude on peoples faces .... we are making a real difference in peoples lives. Other staff they say to me.....well done you did well ...that they take the time to tell me. I feel very valued in every sense.” (Staff V.)*

*“its life changing actually. Before start volunteering my life was a mess. I was feeling depressed, useless, no goals in my life. Contact with people, seeing their problems and other challenges even more difficult than mine. I thought - yes I need to change. Very good now I have job with the team... I like.” (Staff Q.)*

### **Addressing Mental Health**

Many of our service users experience poor mental health including depression, anxiety and PTSD due to pre- and post- migration experiences. Many of their experiences are not improving due to poor housing, separation from family and difficulties with the asylum process. We discussed this as a team and decided to reach out to other organisations and private therapists in the community to explore ways in which they deliver mental health counselling to vulnerable groups with English as an additional language. As a result of this consultation we made the decision to work collaboratively with Lancashire Women to employ a counsellor. The project is still in its early stages, however the feedback from both the therapist and service users has been very positive.



Additionally, all our staff have attended the Lancashire Mind Mental Health First Aid accredited training and we are part of the Orange Button Scheme in Lancashire.

### **GDPR**

We recognised that we needed to improve and have more robust processes in place for handling and storing personal information; GDPR. We have purchased Lamplight, which is a complete data management system, and we are aiming to be paperless by the end of 2023. Our staff have received high quality training on the system which continues aiming to improve our processes further by the end of the year. Our staff members will additionally soon be attending GDPR training provided by Blackburn CVS.

### **Volunteers**

Most volunteers shared that they would appreciate being kept more informed about other events and changes at ARC, in addition to more training opportunities. As a result of feedback, we now hold monthly volunteer meetings for information sharing and for addressing specific focus points learning more about the asylum process, and what to do in a mental health crisis. It is also an opportunity for volunteers to share their views and suggestions on a more regular basis. This year we have strengthened our volunteer recruitment procedures and support and begun to hold regular meetings for volunteers. They do have some suggestions for further strengthening the team and the work of ARC including: improved communications and information sharing; better functioning IT resources; more formalised support and appraisal; recruiting more interpreters; better volunteer management; more tailored staff and volunteer training; more mental health support for staff/volunteers.

## **5. Feedback from the Community**

We asked the community to share their experiences with us, and how we have helped them to settle in Blackburn.

Most service users mentioned the weekly Social Drop-in and the English Club as activities they had most enjoyed. Those who attended Focus and Fly wellbeing sessions, Cookery Club and trips out also gave very positive feedback. People found kindness, friendship, a place for their children to play, opportunity to learn English, information, access to health advice/vaccines and a relaxed enjoyable atmosphere.

*“I like English and Drop in – people were so kind. At Drop in I can meet people. I get info about the Fire course”. (SU C. M. 25 yrs)*

*“Learning English very good. Meeting people at Drop in. Good meet my friends. Children they like play....I Loved the cooking course....Covid vaccinations very good.. I had 2nd vaccine here....more convenient here and they explain more than my first at the Doctor” .(SU B. F. 36 yrs)*



*“...going to park, trips . Mainly I like the social activities. English classes.... the more relaxed atmosphere and I can help too.” (SU M. 43yrs)*

*“ Focus and Fly so good. Before I never like to stand in front of people and talk. At the beginning a bit shy but now I am comfortable to talk in front of many people. My relationship with others in group is very strong after F and F. I get to know people more”. (SU G.- M. 21 yrs)*

People mentioned many aspects of practical help to manage everyday life: a place to come, friendship, learning English, learning new skills – cooking, help for children’s schooling, food parcels, legal signposting, counselling. Changes people see in themselves as a result of engagement with ARC this year included feeling happier, less lonely, increase in self-confidence, feeling more comfortable, more energy, more ability to speak English, feeling/being more independent, improved mental health, less tired and bored.

*“Practical help, friendship, learning cooking. Different countries different dishes. I am feel happy now. I would feel lonely without going ARC. Arc helped me with a lot of things – appointments, ... I feel more confident.” (SU A.)*

*“Before I had no papers but now I have status. Universal credit account, forms for child benefit. I feel comfortable and I feel independent.” (SU B.)*

*“Meet new people, help people and learn different languages not just English. Making friends. Learning English. Showed me GP, solicitor, made calls to Migrant Help. Helped me with letters, filling form for council class 2 months ago. Before I came here I was tired and bored. Now I feel happier, fresher, more energy and feeling good I can help other people. I feel more confident and I can manage my life much better. I can make people understand what I need in other offices.” (SU F.)*

*“Counsellor was very helpful....it helps my mental health.” (SU E.)*

Staff and volunteers have seen the positive effect that ARC support has had on people.

*“English club is very helpful to people because college you have to wait until Sept. here you can come and start whenever you like their kids can come. Focus and Fly really helps the mental health – its what I see on peoples faces. When I talk to them in drop in they talk more – they are more open to talk.” (Staff V.)*

*“Focus and Fly – a lot of work around improving self confidence/self esteem. They are engaging and smiling and having fun.” (Staff P.)*

*“Drop ins. I notice the change in people – more happy because they can meet people. Cooking – I did my recipes first then they suggested they would try their recipes.... and more people are coming. Cookery – to meet as a small group and share. Different dishes another country , meeting , chatting , it makes us all feel*



*good. At home don't like to cook but here it's different - you are sharing with others... it feels good. Focus and Fly – people need that support – I see they are more confident and trust themselves more.” (Staff Q.)*

## **6. Suggestions**

### **From Community Members:**

Feedback shows that service users are overall very satisfied with the support they get from ARC. However they did have suggestions for change – more English classes, more drop-in days, provision of free bus passes, more trips outside.

*“No problems. Everything is good.... I would like bus tickets for AS. A bit of money. We stay Douglas place , a long way to come....the weather very bad.” (SU A.)*

*“Most people thinking about bus tickets. Blackburn college have contact to transportation company. In Germany they have tickets very cheap. 10 Euros a month to go anywhere.” (SU G.)*

*“In nice weather every month have a picnic – trips out. More options – more days drop-in, 3 days English.” (SU F.)*

### **From Staff and Volunteers:**

The main suggestions were the provision of free bus passes; more opportunities to share their respective cultures; trips out into nature; occasional parties; consistency re. case work outside the office hours; the importance of sharing food and time together in breaks, addressing social isolation more and more engagement and consultation with service users to encourage them to come and attend activities regularly.

*“ Most people thinking about bus tickets. Blackburn college have contract with transportation company. Asylum seekers need more support – make more contact with the council and getting more support like bus tickets.”*

*“More trips like in the nature places. I feel so relax, happy in nature place.” (Volunteer G.)*

*“We really make feel welcome but maybe some activities where they feel even more welcome and valued like sharing their cultures. Cooking club is a good start. So that they know we are really interested in them and their cultures.” (Staff V.)*

*“Have a party for everyone..... music – make the people happy, forget the bad things! “(Volunteer H.)*



*“Occasional evening events for adult refugees and supporters – music, poetry, dance, snacks.” (Volunteer O.)*

*“[re. consistency] Tuesdays [drop-in]– they [caseworkers] helped some people but not others with phone and casework. I felt like they helped woman but not man.” (Volunteer H.)*

*“Round the edges stuff is important like having food together in breaks- both for language and social contact.” (Volunteer F.)*

*“...Are we doing enough about socialising? ...I think we need to do more to address social isolation.” (Volunteers B & A.)*

*“Consultation focus groups with service users for their ideas for new activities.” (Volunteer A.)*

*“We need to encourage people more to come to Drop-in. We can do like a lottery – give a question on FB, then you come, give the right answer - get a gift like chocolates. That will bring a lot of people!” (Volunteer G.)*

*“There used to be a good focus on children and young people like sending out craft things.... A youth club.” (Staff K.)*

### **Suggestions for Organisational and Staff Development:**

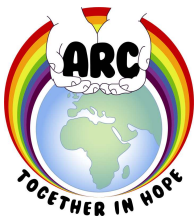
As previously outlined, ARC benefits from having a team of staff and volunteers who are highly committed, who love their work and who feel well valued by one another and service users. All volunteers stated that they would recommend volunteering with us to their friends and family.

*“IT.... we are managing but we could be more efficient and get more done in the time.” (Volunteer A.)*

*“There is an issue re. people passing on info to staff and volunteers. Passing it once to one group of people isn't enough. Friday staff/volunteer meetings can be beneficial.” (Volunteer B.)*

*“ARC has become more professional – it has taken a step up. It is more like a professional organisation than a small project. This is good because we need to support many people and have many activities going on...but communication*

*between staff needs to improve...staff need more training to develop leadership skills.”*



*“Watching videos for training - like youtube. Appraisal review every few months looking at Targets and achievements....so that staff feel they are engaged and developing professionally.” (Staff K.)*

*“Some management training which is specifically relevant for my role. That’s already been a conversation and wasn’t available in the past.*

*Counselling or therapies for staff themselves would be good.” (Staff P.)*

*“....more volunteer support. I can give a talk at drop in – my experience as a volunteer... maybe this is encouraging others. I think we need more volunteer training - like lamplight, how to talk to people, boundaries...this needs to be more formalised. Even simple.. like exits for fires.....regular volunteer meetings like one a month.” (Staff V.)*

*“ ....manuals to read, policies to tick off, basics about the asylum system, all the terminology.” (Volunteer F.)*

*“separate volunteer meetings for a) English Club volunteers b) other volunteers....too much time taken talking about English Club issues.” (Volunteer B.)*

*“Maybe we need a board with peoples face and names on and role – a nice welcome in different languages and the name of everyone.....A volunteer evening every now and again – social – like a Jacob’s join and music.*

*A Refugee week planning group.” (Volunteer O.)*

## **7. Main challenges**

### **a) Funding**

This was the main challenge identified by staff, volunteers and partner organisations. Funding needed for providing extended mental health support – both counselling service and wellbeing session such as Focus and Fly and mental health training and support. + other relevant trainings for staff and volunteers. Additionally, bus passes for asylum seekers and more trips out.

*“ being able to employ a counsellor is vital. Options are limited in the local area and there are huge waiting lists. All have been through some kind of trauma. Feedback has been that people are really grateful....it’s really helped them and improved their mental health. People feel safe here having this help in a familiar environment. They may not feel confident [in other venues] due to trust issues.” (Staff P.)*

*“Try to train more volunteers - funding and resources are an issue. Resources have now shrunk so badly ...even from the council I got 67 certs in 4 yrs! And now there are few opportunities. Without these trainings I would not be able to do what I do*



*now as a lead volunteer. Start with some in house training for the most committed volunteers.”(Volunteer J.)*

### **b) Service user Engagement**

It has taken time, since opening up all services and recruiting new staff post pandemic, to build ARC back up and get people coming back but attendance numbers for case work, drop in and English club are now very encouraging. New activities do take longer to attract people on a continuing basis. We use a variety of strategies to promote our projects; existing and new, including social media and direct contact. Client engagement is a challenging area in which we aim to further develop our skills. We have recently been successful in gaining free access to Canva for Teams, an online design and publishing tool, and our team are due to receive free Canva training via Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council. We hope this will improve our ability as a whole team to produce engaging promotional material and share with our target audience.

*“Identifying the needs of clients and then encouraging them to keep attending sessions put on to address their needs is challenging.” (Volunteer B.)*

*“Engaging people and trying to motivate them to join different activities we run is very hard work needing constant communication. There are language barriers, cultural differences and understandings - it takes time.....” (Staff P.)*

### **c) Government policy**

Volunteer F explains the challenges:

*“ We’re at the mercy of new government policies etc. and we don’t know yet how many additional numbers of people are coming in the near future.”*

## **8. How the feedback and learning will change what we will do in the future**

If financially possible, we would like to improve the accessibility of our mental health counselling service by introducing interpreters and/or a language line interpretation service. We currently have over 20 different spoken languages and would like to be able to refer any service user needing support, regardless of their ability to speak English. We believe that by supporting the emotional wellbeing of our service users, we can help them to address issues and offer them healing opportunities. As a result, our service users can live healthier, happier lives.

Additionally, we aim to promote and boost employee wellbeing. We are committed to meeting the financial needs of our staff during the cost-of-living crisis by introducing free healthy basic meals and snacks. We will also have monthly team meetings in a location away from the office such as a local coffee shop. We have booked a ‘Gong Sound Bath’ meditation session for the whole team which helps to the brain and body to reach deep relaxation. Increased staff wellbeing can improve performance and job satisfaction, which



can lead to reduced staff absence and turnover, increase productivity and promote staff engagement. We would also like to consider the added support of therapy for our staff.

We are working closely with the integration team at Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to prepare for an increase in asylum seekers arriving in Blackburn. We have discussed provision for transport including bus fares for service users living a distance from the centre of Blackburn. We have also discussed how the council can work more closely with our organisation to provide additional ESOL provision, for those who would like it.

We aim to continue our work with MyPlace Greenhouse Project to deliver projects during the warmer months, with the opportunity to attend trips outdoors which include picnics and outdoor cooking. We have also applied for additional funding to run an allotment project in Blackburn which will allow our service users to take responsibility for planting, growing and caring for seasonal plants including fruits and vegetables. We are still awaiting a decision on the funding application.

CVS Community are providing a variety of training opportunities for our staff, this includes leadership and management training for senior members of staff. We believe this will equip them further with the skills necessary for continuing to improve our organisation in all areas.

As we continue to move towards paperless and becoming digitalised, our volunteer recruitment documents will be digitally shared with all volunteers going forward. These will be accessible at all times by volunteers, including up-to-date policies and procedures.

## **9. Finance Report and Amended Budget**

From the time the original proposed budgets for this grant period were prepared, much has changed at ARC Blackburn. Partially due to the last throes of Covid and the resignation of our manager, on health grounds, Christmas 2021, our expected expenditure changed to a marked degree. We did not feel it was safe to recommence all our pre-covid activities for the first couple of months of 2022.

This dictated that we could not start to replace our two employees, lost during Covid, until March when we also started to look for a new manager. During this period, we maintained a very basic service for our service users due to the loyal support of our remaining employee, a number of our volunteers and our trustees. We were not able to recruit the two new caseworkers we needed until May and a new manager was only identified to start work in June.

The result of this was that our staff costs for the year were reduced by a substantial amount. As all our new staff were offered 3-year contracts we would be grateful if you would allow us to roll this money over, to be used for four months after the Lottery grant ends to cover these contractual obligations. However, if this is not acceptable, we should



be grateful you would allow us utilise this cash to further develop our Mental Health service, which will this year cost us £36000.

It is worth noting that we are advised we should expect an increased number of asylum seekers to be placed in Blackburn in the foreseeable future and this means we may well need to appoint an additional caseworker to accommodate this development. This would also mean we need to find more funds to purchase additional IT/telephone equipment and rent more space in our building.

We continued to approach funding organisations last year, but with limited success. We were pleased to receive £10000 from the Awards for all fund to support our Focus and Fly project. A number of large funds were unable to help but we did receive several modest amounts for revenue expenses and several small amounts for a number of new services/innovations we wished to introduce. We are soon to approach Lloyds Bank for their support. We are at the point now where we wish to build up some sensible reserves and are hoping the local Methodist churches will soon let us have the £25000 promised some time ago, which could be an initial sum to be retained for this purpose.

We are including with this report a copy of our audited accounts for the year ending 31 August 2022. (*Appendix 5.*) These represent a period very much affected by Covid and therefore do not give a true representation of our required current operating expenditure needs and the progress we have made since becoming a registered charity in April 2020. We are extremely pleased by the way we have emerged from Covid, this being due to good stewardship of our resources, the excellent staff we have been able to recruit, our loyal team of volunteers and a committed and diverse group of trustees. We are very optimistic about what we are planning and hope to achieve in 2023.

**We trust the accompanying table of expenditure and budget for 2023 (Appendix 4) is sufficient for this report, but will be happy to provide more information if required.**

Holly Morgan  
ARC Blackburn Manager

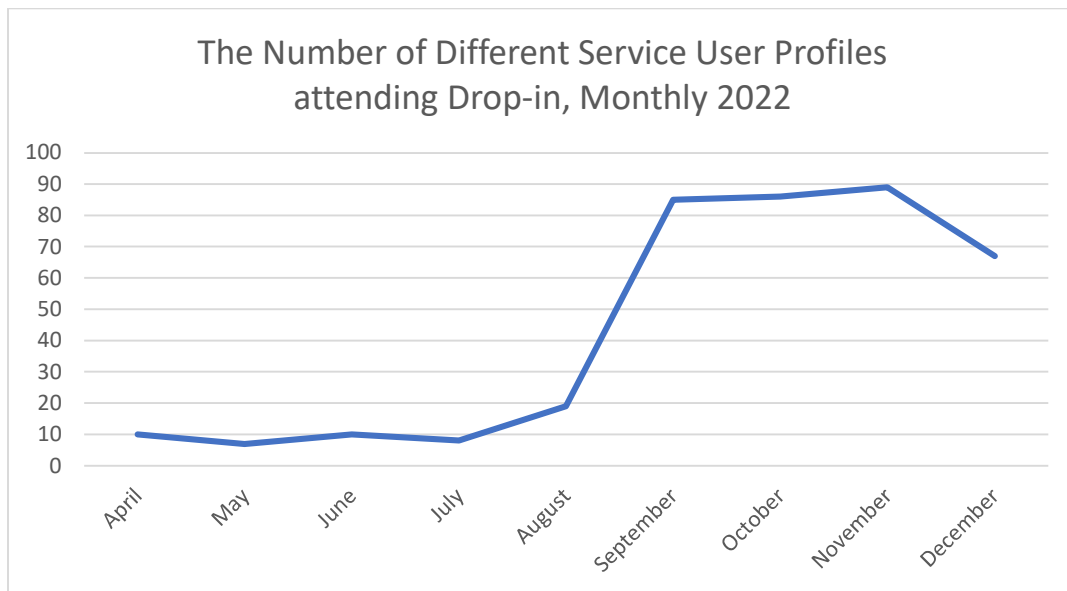
January 31<sup>st</sup> 2023

H. Morgan

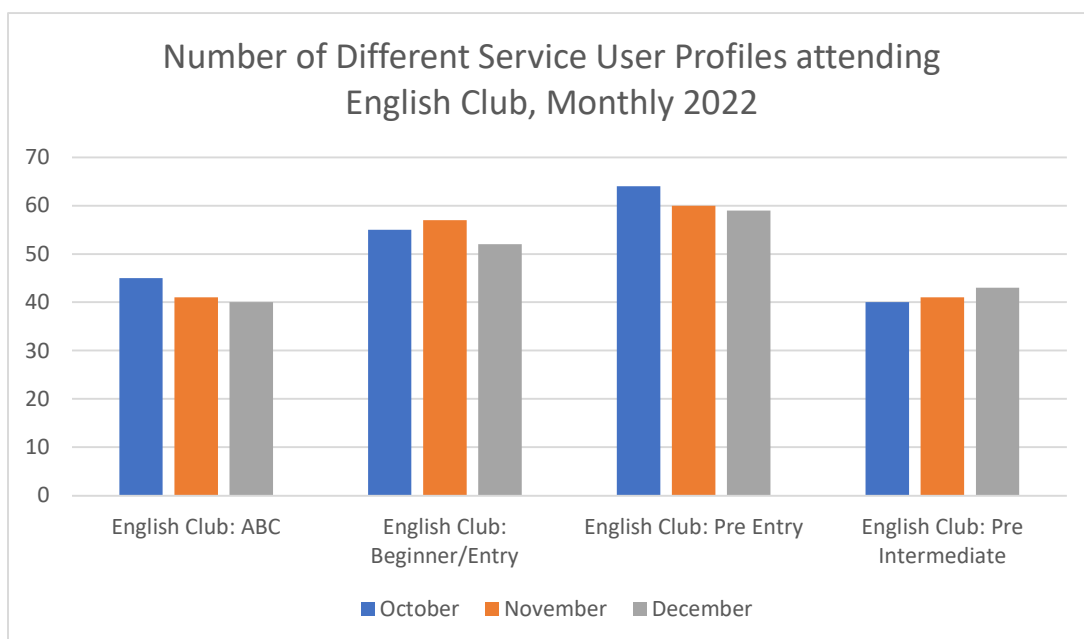
## 10. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Graph – Service User Attendance Figures

The graph below shows the upward trend in the number of different service users attending the weekly drop since April (during December the office was closed between 24.12.22 and 3.1.23).

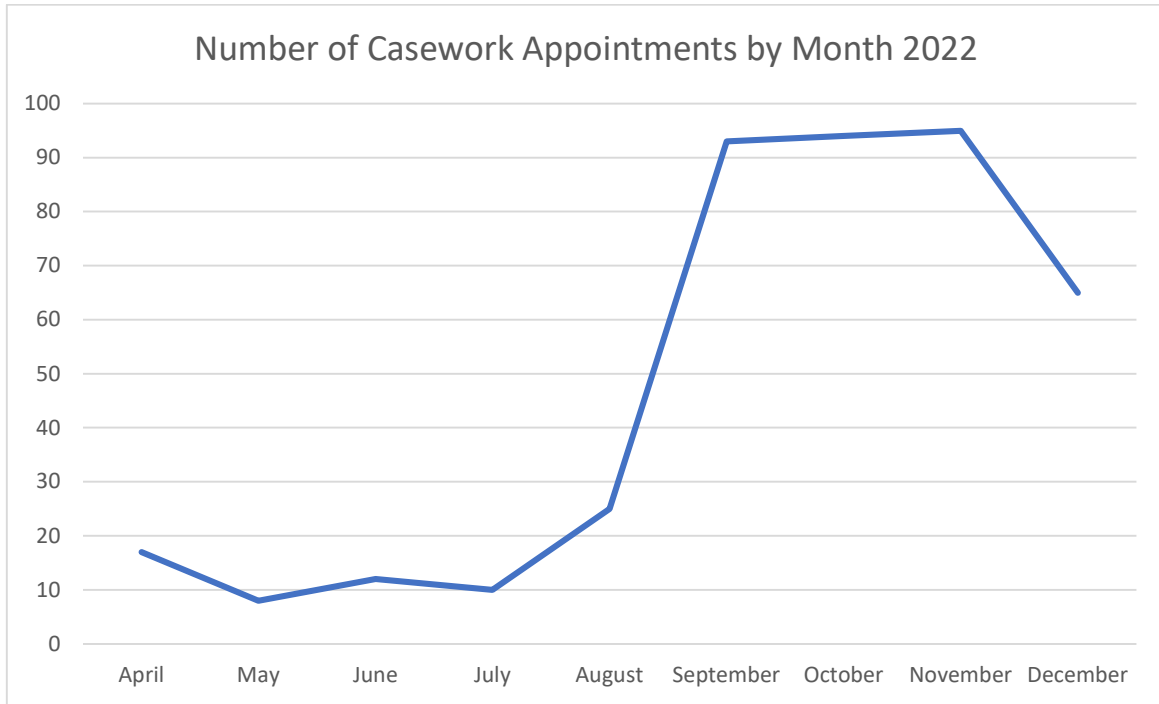


The graph below shows a steady, consistent attendance at our twice weekly English Club, since we began recording this information on our new case management system, Lamplight (during December the office was closed between 24.12.22 and 3.1.23).





The graph below shows an increase in the number of casework appointments by month (during December the office was closed between 24.12.22 and 3.1.23)





## **Appendix 2: Lived Experience Stories**

### **1. A family from El Salvador seeking asylum**

I was an asylum seeker from El Salvador, then a volunteer and now a staff member at ARC. I helped a Salvadorean family in an urgent situation who needed to be signposted. They had been here 18 months but with no solicitor. So the Home Office suddenly decided to close the case and stop their housing and money support. They live in Burnley – we are not funded to support people outside of Blackburn. We contacted an organisation in Burnley and now they have started helping them. They don't have any stress now – they are allowed to stay in their home... they now have some money. Before Home office told them to leave the house they knew nothing. Because I speak their language, share their culture was myself and asylum seeker they trusted me and I could interpret well for them. They feel more secure now.... more confident.

### **2. S- a young mother from Syria seeking asylum**

Sometimes we are required to give urgent support to a service user liaising with several organisations over a short period, in this case – one day. S. a young woman from Syria in her late 20s came to ARC in a distressed state. She had been experiencing domestic violence over a long period and had finally plucked up the courage to seek support. The case worker began by giving her reassurance that she would try to help her. She began by contacting several women's refuges. After a long wait on the phone to Migrant Help it was clear that none of these could accept her because she was a failed asylum seeker with no recourse to public funding. This was a huge barrier to come across and it took most of the day to start to resolve. Eventually the case worker managed to get through to the Serco area manager who then managed to find another property for her. All this was very time consuming involving numerous phone calls/waiting and emails. The case worker then took her to her children's school where the perpetrator then turned up. They were unable to leave until he was escorted from the area. The case worker spoke with the school liaison who was aware of the ongoing issue. The case worker finally was able to take her to the newly allocated house and wait for housing officer. The case worker finally arrived home at 9pm. The next day she phoned social services to brief them. That incident caused us to review and improve our safeguarding protocols.

### **3. C. a woman in her 40's from Eritrea - refugee**

We often works with service users over several years. C, in her 40's, from Eritrea, has, even after 5 years in UK, limited English and appears to have a degree of learning difficulties. C. therefore needs a lot of support in accessing all services vital for managing everyday life such as housing, universal credit, all the utilities, schools/college for her son. Additionally we support her with job searching and communication with potential employers. C. is unable to manage any of these tasks independently so without the support of ARC she would stuck. She is vulnerable and has been subject to exploitation even from a family member for which she has come to ARC for advice and emotional support. We have liaised with schools and Blackburn college to help her get support to encourage her son to attend regularly. It has been particularly challenging as it is hard to access an interpreter for Tigrinya so we have needed to do our best, occasionally contacting a former ARC employee to translate. All the support C. has been able to access



at ARC has meant that she is living independently and feeling safe and finding friendship at drop-in. This support has helped her to rebuild her life and, more latterly, find, interview for and hold down a regular cleaning job.

#### **4. A. a newly married man from Sudan - refugee**

We have been giving support to A. , young man from Sudan, for over 5 years. A. has a degree of learning difficulties which means he has really struggled to manage the affairs of everyday life such as managing money, utilities bills, keeping on top of rent and council tax and applying for the benefits he is entitled to. He comes to the case work office almost every week and the case workers need to phone him once a month to remind him to pay his rent or he gets into debt. Before we took this step, at one point his debt situation became very complicated and he was in danger of being evicted. Our case workers have spent hundreds of hours working with him over the years and are still continuing. More recently we supported him with family reunion to bring his wife over to join him- a very complicated process which he could not have attempted to do himself. Our case workers helped to get accommodation for them and furnishings, helped set up all the utilities payments and universal credit. When his wife became pregnant and they had a baby they had some support from social services as they are classed as vulnerable. At ARC we looked at what support we and social services could put in for the family. We had monthly meetings with the children's support worker from social services. We were able to access nursery equipment and baby clothes from Children's Storehouse. We regularly provide them with food parcels especially throughout the Covid pandemic. Communication with the GP and hospital was difficult for them resulting in missed appointments for both A. who was suffering from stomach pain and for the baby who had a leg brace. We were able to give them to sort out this issue by liaising with the health providers. The family have ongoing encouragement to take part in social activities like coming to the social drop-in and walks with Lancashire Wildlife Trust and playing football at Witton Park with Creative Support. A's wife comes every week to Drop- in with her baby and to English classes. She is picking up English really quickly. Our Arabic speaking volunteers and staff give them invaluable support with interpreting for all their needs.



### Appendix 3: ARC Blackburn Flyers



**ARC Blackburn**  
Asylum and Refugee Community

 Wesley Hall, Feilden Street  
Blackburn BB2 1LQ

 01254 690282



**Cooking Together**

Every Wednesday  
12pm - 2.30pm



Join us for cooking club every Wednesday. You'll learn to make a variety of healthy dishes, from scratch.



## ARC Counselling

**Safe & confidential mental health support**

**Together, we can work through ways to deal with:**

- Stress, worry or anxiety
- Depression or low-mood
- Health and long-term conditions
- Trauma
- Relationships



*Book an appointment:*  
**0300 330 1354**  
Or through your  
ARC Caseworker

**Person-centred,  
1-1 mental health  
support in  
Blackburn with  
Darwen**

ARC, Wesley Hall, Fielden Street,  
Blackburn, BB2 1LQ



We are  
**LANCASHIRE  
WOMEN**



**Want to be part of a new group and learn new skills?**

**Want to meet new friends?**

**Come to Focus & Fly confidence building course!**

**Every Thursday**

**ARC Blackburn, Wesley Hall**

**10.30am - 2pm**

**Breakfast and lunch included**

**Weekly prizes**

**£50 Asda voucher at the end of the course**





# ARC Blackburn



Asylum and Refugee

Community



Wesley Hall, Feilden Street  
Blackburn BB2 1LQ



01254 690282



## LADIES ONLY

# Zumba Dance & Exercise Class Every Friday 12pm - 1pm

ARC Blackburn & Diva Dance & Fitness will be running a LADIES ONLY exercise class for asylum seekers and refugees.

Every Friday from 12pm-1pm at Wesley Hall, Blackburn.

If you are interested, come and join us on Friday!

Refreshments provided.



# Interfaith Wildlife Project

Do you like spending time outdoors?



Have you always wanted to learn how to plant or grow your own food?

Are you looking to make new friends?

When?  
Starts 6th February  
Every Monday\*  
10am-1pm  
**FREE MINIBUS**



Please contact Andy Mather on  
07720 208424 to book your place.  
\*February and March only.





# MAGIC FOR SMILES

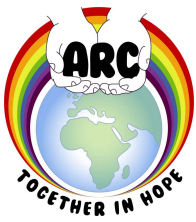


**JAMIE JIBBERISH  
AT**

**ARC BLACKBURN  
TUESDAY 26TH JULY  
12PM**

**Humanitarian magician for children and adults**





# MINI LIGHTS

## Early Years Event

### Sat 10th December

10.30am - 1.30pm

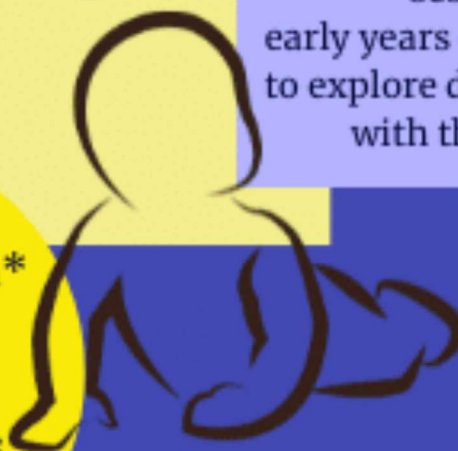


Light themed creative sessions for early years children aged 0-4 to explore different art forms with their families!

Free Admission\*  
Free Parking  
Snacks and Refreshments

\*Donations very welcome to help cover costs

Small parade outside at the end so wrap up warm!



## Arts and Crafts

## Dance

## Music

## Face Painting

## Sensory Room

The Bureau Centre for the Arts  
Penny St, Blackburn,  
BB1 6HQ

Book tickets online at: [www.bureaublackburn.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.bureaublackburn.co.uk/whats-on)

Contact 07837253184



YOUTH MUSIC



Supported using public funding by  
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



# BLACKBURN

## FESTIVAL OF LIGHT



**Tuesday 13th December  
11.30am at ARC, Wesley Hall**



# Interfaith Wildlife Project

Do you like spending time outdoors?



Have you always wanted to learn how to plant or grow your own food?

Are you looking to make new friends?

When?  
Starts 6th February  
Every Monday\*  
10am-1pm  
**FREE MINIBUS**



Please contact Andy Mather on  
07720 208424 to book your place.  
\*February and March only.



The Wildlife Trust for  
Lancashire  
Manchester &  
North Merseyside

**NEAR  
NEIGHBOURS**



# SHARED SOUNDS



Weekly sessions full of songs, rhymes and musical games for young children with their parents/carers

The Bureau Centre for the Arts, Outreach Programme



**Interactive musical play sessions  
for children from birth to 4 years**

**Tuesday mornings 10.30am - 11.30am**

**Jan 17th, 24th, 31st, Feb 7th**

ARC Wesley Hall, Fielden Street, Blackburn, BB2 1LQ

[info@arcblackburn.org.uk](mailto:info@arcblackburn.org.uk)

For more information e-mail [sorrel@bureaublackburn.co.uk](mailto:sorrel@bureaublackburn.co.uk)

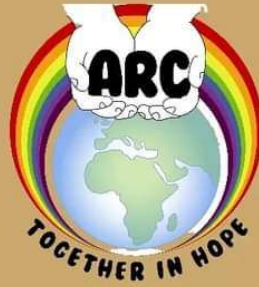
Shared Sounds Sessions are led by qualified musicians with training and experience in early childhood development.

**We are currently able to offer free and subsidised sessions at The Bureau Centre for The Arts due to funding support from The National Foundation for Youth Music. Please get in touch if you are interested in trying a session with your child. Booking is essential.**

Find us on social media [/bureaublackburn](https://www.facebook.com/bureaublackburn)



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



# CHRISTMAS PARTY

AN EVENT FOR ALL THE FAMILY TO ENJOY

FOOD, REFRESHMENTS, CRAFTS, GAMES, SANTA'S GROTTO

ARC BLACKBURN, WESLEY HALL

TUESDAY 20TH DECEMBER

11.30AM-2PM





# JOIN US ON A DAY TRIP!

EXPLORE BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN WITH  
LANCASHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST AND THE ARC PROJECT

Monday 24th October 2022  
10am till 2pm

Limited places  
Book a place with Holly at ARC  
Bring food for lunch  
All abilities welcome



## FREE MINIBUS

Pick up and drop off from  
Wesley Hall, Feilden Street, Blackburn, BB2 1LQ



The Wildlife Trust for  
Lancashire  
Manchester &  
North Merseyside



## Appendix 4 Budget

	Year 2022						Year 2023
	Revenue			Capital			
	Budget	Actual	Difference	Budget	Actual	Difference	Budget
Salaries (inc. on-costs such as NI and pensions)	£128,060	£ 63,181	£64,879			£0.00	£97,392
Contracted Mental Health professional	£25,000	£ 10,019	£14,981			£0.00	£36,000
Overheads/Utilities	£2,000	£ 2,895	-£895			£0.00	£3,500
Rent/Accommodation	£12,500	£ 12,921	-£421			£0.00	£15,000
Professional Fees	£6,500	£ 6,697	-£197			£0.00	£7,750
Office Costs (inc. digital costs)	£2,250	£ 2,251	-£1			£0.00	£2,000
Training	£500	£ 330	£170			£0.00	£2,000
Volunteer Costs	£500	£ 482	£18			£0.00	£800
Travel	£500	£ 10	£490			£0.00	£300
Equipment	£1,000	£ 328	£672			£0.00	£3,000
Youth Group	£1,250		£1,250			£0.00	
Removals	£1,000	£ 50	£950			£0.00	£500
Catering	£1,000	£ 512	£488			£0.00	£1,000
Miscellaneous	£2,000	£ 2,775	-£775			£0.00	£3,500
New Client Services/Projects	0	4691	-4691				£5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£184,060</b>	<b>£107,142</b>	<b>£76,918</b>			<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£177,742</b>

**Asylum and Refugee Community, Blackburn**  
**Registered Charity No: 1188910**

**ACCOUNTS &**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**for the year ended 31 August 2022**

**Aslyum and Refugee Community, Blackburn  
Registered Charity No: 1188910**

**Index to the Financial Statements**

**Year ended 31 August 2022.**

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Asylum Refugee Community Blackburn

Registered Charity No : 1188910

Income & Expenditure Account

Year Ended 31 August 2022

	£	£	2021	
			£	£
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Grants</b>		124,474.10		72,065.00
<b>Donations</b>		8,681.72		5,075.95
<b>Miscellaneous Income</b>		208.76		0.00
		<u>133,364.58</u>		<u>77,140.95</u>
<b>Less Expenses and Overheads</b>				
<b>Staffing Costs</b>				
Staff Wages & Salaries	49,947.93		46,006.45	
Staff NIC	0.00		0.00	
Pensions	934.67		787.48	
Staff Training Costs	3,256.00		50.00	
Pension Fees	105.00		0.00	
Staff & Volunteer Expenses	1,458.10		125.52	
		<u>55,701.70</u>		<u>46,969.45</u>
<b>Tinta Appeal Expenses</b>		0.00		0.00
<b>Administration &amp; Marketing</b>				
Stationery & Inks	848.09		30.00	
Client, Socials and Charity Expenses	578.68		750.10	
Lamplight Training & Database	3,720.00		0.00	
Memberships	30.00		30.00	
Advertising	295.00		0.00	
Postage	117.48		0.00	
Accountancy, Payroll & Examination of Accounts	748.90		647.60	
Funding Application	727.00		1,325.00	
Professional Fees	0.00		150.00	
Bank & Card Fees	93.00		76.50	
Travel Expenses	0.00		63.59	
Website Fees	10.79		400.07	
		<u>7,168.94</u>		<u>3,472.86</u>
<b>Establishment Expenses</b>				
Rent, Electricity & water	8,899.56		0.00	
Insurance	998.78		1,022.65	
Telephone	3,811.66		2,331.59	
Computer Expenses	195.64		179.15	
Alarm & Security	0.00		0.00	
Repairs & Sundry Equipment	2,160.89		219.67	
Equipment Hire	0.00		0.00	
Due Diligence Checks	700.00		0.00	
Sundry Expenses	330.54		81.10	
Cleaning Expenses	75.00		0.00	
Depreciation of Assets	497.00		712.07	
		<u>17,669.07</u>		<u>4,546.23</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<u>80,539.71</u>		<u>54,988.54</u>
<b>(Loss) Surplus Generated from Operations</b>		52,824.87		22,152.41
<b>Profits (Losses) transferred to Revenue Reserves</b>		<u>52,824.87</u>		<u>22,152.41</u>

Asylum Refugee Community Blackburn

Registered Charity No : 1188910

Balance Sheet

31 August 2022

	£	£	2021	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Laptops & Printers	1,655.00		2,367.07	
Less : Depreciation	497.00		712.07	
	<u>1,158.00</u>	1,158.00	<u>1,655.00</u>	1,655.00
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at bank-3840	92,395.07		37,280.07	
West Pennine Methodist Circuit (Debtor)	0.00		2,186.41	
Petty Cash in Hand	0.00		0.00	
	<u>92,395.07</u>		<u>39,466.48</u>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>				
Accrued Charges	425.00		350.00	
Wages	0.00		0.00	
Pensions	580.20		215.72	
PAYE & NI	1,127.24		0.00	
	<u>2,132.44</u>		<u>565.72</u>	
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		90,262.63		38,900.76
		<u>91,420.63</u>		<u>40,555.76</u>
<b>Less : Restricted Funding re Tinta Ali</b>		(1,740.00)		(3,700.00)
		<u>89,680.63</u>		<u>36,855.76</u>
<b>Represented by</b>				
Reserves brought forward		36,855.76		
Capital Introduced				
HSBC (share of Balance)			4,280.95	
Methodist Circuit Current Account			10,422.40	
		<u>0.00</u>	<u>14,703.35</u>	14,703.35
Add: Surplus (Deficit) for the year		52,824.87		22,152.41
		<u>89,680.63</u>		<u>36,855.76</u>

**For the year ended 31 August 2022**

## **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Accounting Principles**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and with applicable Accounting Standards.

### **Depreciation**

Depreciation has been calculated to write off the net book values of fixed assets over their expected economic lives at the following annual rates.

Computer Equipment                      30 % on reducing balance

## **2. TURNOVER**

Turnover for the year was £133,364 and represents various charitable grants and donations received in the year

## **3. CORPORATION TAX**

Corporation tax is charged in the accounts in the period to which it relates.

The amount of Corporation tax due on Non-Charitable trading activities for the year was £ Nil.

## **4. CONTINUING OPERATIONS**

None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued during the year.

## **5 TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES**

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the loss for the financial period detailed herewith

## **Independent Examiner's Report**

### **To the Trustees and Members of Asylum and Refugee Community, Blackburn**

I report on the Accounts and Financial Statements on pages 1 to 2 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 3.

#### **Responsibilities of the Trustees and Committee.**

It is the charity's committee's responsibility to prepare accounts and financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the committee are required to :

- i) Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- ii) Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- iii) Prepare the accounts and financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The committee is also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the charity and to enable to them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking responsible steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### **Respective responsibility of Trustees and Examiner.**

As described above the charity's trustees and committee are responsible for the preparation of accounts and financial statements. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

#### **Basis of Independent Examiner's report.**

My examination was conducted in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. The examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts and financial statements presented with those records and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the charity as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. These procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

#### **Independent Examiner's Statement of Opinion**

In connection with my examination it is my opinion that;

- a) The financial statements are in agreement with the books and records kept by the charity and that the accounting records have been maintained in accordance with section 145 of the 2011 Act

b) Having read only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records the accounts and financial statements have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in the 2011 Act;

No matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect of the requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met.

No matter has come to my attention, to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Bennett', with a large, stylized initial 'G'.

**Graham Bennett FFA. FAIA.**  
**Bennett & Co. Accountants**  
**Spring House 194-196 Union Road**  
**Oswaldtwistle**  
**Accrington BB5 3EG**

**11 January 2023.**

**ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY BLACKBURN**

**Registered Charity No: 1188910**

**ACCOUNTS &**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**for the year ended 31 August 2023**

**Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn**

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**For the period ended 31 August 2023**

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**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees**

Charity Name  
Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31 August 2023	<b>Charity no (if any)</b>	1188910
----------------	--------------------------------	---------

**Set out on pages**

3 to 5  
(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 / 08 / 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.

Signed: 

Date: 18/04/2024

Name: David Marriott FCA

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

ICAEW

<b>Address:</b>	Suite 10B The Beehive, Lions Drive
	Shadsworth Business Park, Blackburn
	BB1 2QS

**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.**

## Income &amp; Expenditure Account

Year Ended 31 August 2023

	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>			
Grants	41,027.90		
Donations	26,915.41		
Miscellaneous Income	<u>2,176.34</u>		
			70,119.65
<b>Less Expenditure and Overheads</b>			
<b>Direct Restricted Expenses</b>			
Equipment & Consumables		860.80	
External Services		10,000.00	
Lamplight Training & Database		444.00	
Memberships		2,200.00	
Other Expenses		2,812.53	
Accountancy Fees		937.30	
Rent		18,143.77	
Room Hire		486.64	
Staff Wages		51,592.80	
Stationery		811.16	
Sundry Expenses		361.43	
Telephone & Internet		3,442.97	
Travel Expenses		914.00	
Workshop Fees		<u>6,951.00</u>	
			99,958.40
<b>Administration Expenses</b>			
Staff Wages		29,292.34	
Staff Training Costs		0.00	
Pension Fees		180.00	
External Services		8,998.00	
Staff & Volunteer Expenses		193.31	
Client, Socials & Charity Expenses		3,166.46	
Advertising		0.00	
Postage		0.00	
Accountancy Fees		652.00	
Funding Application Expenses		0.00	
Bank & Card Fees		60.00	
Travel Expenses		93.31	
Website Fees		0.00	
Rent, Electricity & Water		387.95	
Insurance		0.00	
Computer Expenses		67.50	
Repairs & Sundry Equipment		125.72	
Due Diligence Checks		60.00	
Sundry Expenses		499.39	
Depreciation of Assets		<u>500.28</u>	
			44,276.26
<b>Total Expenses</b>			<u>144,234.66</u>
<b>Surplus (Deficit) Generated from Operations</b>			(74,115.01)
<b>Profits (Losses) transferred to Revenue Reserves</b>			<u><u>(74,115.01)</u></u>

**Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn Charity No : 1188910**

**Balance Sheet**

**Year Ended 31 August 2023**

	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Computer Equipment	2,012.99	
Less: Depreciation	<u>997.28</u>	
		1,015.71
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash at bank	65,290.25	
Petty Cash in Hand	<u>18.74</u>	
		65,308.99
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accrued Charges	852.00	
Deferred Grant Income	48,517.28	
Pensions	0.00	
PAYE & NI	<u>1,389.80</u>	
		50,759.08
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>14,549.91</u>
		15,565.62
<b>Less : Restricted Funding &amp; Grants</b>		0.00
		<u>15,565.62</u>
<b>Reprersented by :</b>		
Revenue Reserves brought forward		89,680.63
Capital Introduced		0.00
Surplus (Deficit) for the year		(74,115.01)
		<u>15,565.62</u>

Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the period ended 31 August 2023

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Accounting Principles**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 with applicable Accounting Standards.

**Depreciation**

Depreciation has been calculated to write off the net book values of fixed assets over their expected economic lives at the following annual rates.

Computer Equipment	33% on reducing balance
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**2. INCOME**

Turnover for the year was £118,637 (2022 £133,365) and represents the £77,905 restricted and £40,732 unrestricted funding grants and donations received from various sources and during the year.

**3. CORPORATION TAX**

Corporation tax is charged in the accounts in the period to which it relates.

The amount of corporate tax due on non-mutual trading activities for the year was £ nil.

**4. CONTINUING OPERATIONS**

None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued during the year.

**5. TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES**

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the profit for the financial period detailed herewith.

**ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY BLACKBURN**

**Registered Charity No: 1188910**

**ACCOUNTS &**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**for the year ended 31 August 2023**

**Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn**

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**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees**

Charity Name  
Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31 August 2023	<b>Charity no (if any)</b>	1188910
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**Set out on pages**

3 to 5  
(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

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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
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Signed: 

Date: 18/04/2024

Name: David Marriott FCA

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

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<b>Address:</b>	Suite 10B The Beehive, Lions Drive
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	BB1 2QS

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

## Income &amp; Expenditure Account

Year Ended 31 August 2023

	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>			
Grants	41,027.90		
Donations	26,915.41		
Miscellaneous Income	<u>2,176.34</u>		
			70,119.65
<b>Less Expenditure and Overheads</b>			
<b>Direct Restricted Expenses</b>			
Equipment & Consumables		860.80	
External Services		10,000.00	
Lamplight Training & Database		444.00	
Memberships		2,200.00	
Other Expenses		2,812.53	
Accountancy Fees		937.30	
Rent		18,143.77	
Room Hire		486.64	
Staff Wages		51,592.80	
Stationery		811.16	
Sundry Expenses		361.43	
Telephone & Internet		3,442.97	
Travel Expenses		914.00	
Workshop Fees		<u>6,951.00</u>	
			99,958.40
<b>Administration Expenses</b>			
Staff Wages		29,292.34	
Staff Training Costs		0.00	
Pension Fees		180.00	
External Services		8,998.00	
Staff & Volunteer Expenses		193.31	
Client, Socials & Charity Expenses		3,166.46	
Advertising		0.00	
Postage		0.00	
Accountancy Fees		652.00	
Funding Application Expenses		0.00	
Bank & Card Fees		60.00	
Travel Expenses		93.31	
Website Fees		0.00	
Rent, Electricity & Water		387.95	
Insurance		0.00	
Computer Expenses		67.50	
Repairs & Sundry Equipment		125.72	
Due Diligence Checks		60.00	
Sundry Expenses		499.39	
Depreciation of Assets		<u>500.28</u>	
			44,276.26
<b>Total Expenses</b>			<u>144,234.66</u>
<b>Surplus (Deficit) Generated from Operations</b>			(74,115.01)
<b>Profits (Losses) transferred to Revenue Reserves</b>			<u><u>(74,115.01)</u></u>

**Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn Charity No : 1188910**

**Balance Sheet**

**Year Ended 31 August 2023**

	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Computer Equipment	2,012.99	
Less: Depreciation	<u>997.28</u>	
		1,015.71
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash at bank	65,290.25	
Petty Cash in Hand	<u>18.74</u>	
		65,308.99
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accrued Charges	852.00	
Deferred Grant Income	48,517.28	
Pensions	0.00	
PAYE & NI	<u>1,389.80</u>	
		50,759.08
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>14,549.91</u>
		15,565.62
<b>Less : Restricted Funding &amp; Grants</b>		0.00
		<u>15,565.62</u>
<b>Reprersented by :</b>		
Revenue Reserves brought forward		89,680.63
Capital Introduced		0.00
Surplus (Deficit) for the year		(74,115.01)
		<u>15,565.62</u>

Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the period ended 31 August 2023

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Accounting Principles**

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**Depreciation**

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**2. INCOME**

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**3. CORPORATION TAX**

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The amount of corporate tax due on non-mutual trading activities for the year was £ nil.

**4. CONTINUING OPERATIONS**

None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued during the year.

**5. TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES**

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the profit for the financial period detailed herewith.

**ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY, BLACKBURN**

England & Wales - Charity number 1188910

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# Accounts

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## **ARC Blackburn - Casework Update 2022**

Given the current situation of increased numbers of people fleeing Afghanistan, we expect to support a total of 13-15 families initially who have recently arrived in our area and are currently living in hotels. We will need to work intensively with an individual or family over a period which may stretch over several years. We anticipate that many of the men who used to work for the British Army/DfID projects as interpreters are likely to secure permanent employment in the near future with the fast track intensive support of ARC Job Club. It is likely that many females will require additional support with English language and job seeking over a longer period. ARC will tailor the needed intensive social support to Afghan families who will already have refugees status, such as initial orientation for everyday survival: shopping, transport, mental and physical health support, children's and adult education, cultural orientation and leisure activities. We are fortunate in already having several Afghan families in the ARC community who will be a good link for newly arrived families. Some of these have the language skills and experience to provide interpreting services.

ARC case work office is open 3 days weekly, provides vital day to day survival support assisting all asylum seekers and refugees (AS&R) to navigate complex procedures related to legal status, job seeking, benefits, housing, disability, education and health as they settle into UK life. Case work sessions average 1 hour but complex issues often related to Universal Credit and housing can require over 2 hours especially with increasingly long waits by telephone. A weekly Drop-In allows individuals and families to meet socially building vital friendships and a strong sense of community. Other local organisations and services access the Drop-in to initiate the various support they can provide to AS&R. In addition ARC provide twice weekly English classes, free of cost, for newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees, (Blackburn College charge £350 for beginners course). ARC also runs a Job Club to prepare refugees to seek and obtain employment including CV preparation, job search, interview skills and visits to local employers.

The casework support forms the backbone to the ARC programme. In addition to the paid staff, ARC relies upon a strong volunteer team, many of whom have several years of experience in dealing with the issues of this client group. The volunteers include interpreters, several of whom themselves initially received support through ARC and are keen to support others and to educate the wider community about the experiences and needs of AS&Rs, eg through schools and colleges. ARC has a strong working relationship developed over time with all the relevant agencies/services in the Borough that AS&R come into contact with. Public service offices such as the Council and The Job Centre often signpost clients to ARC, knowing that they will be respectfully supported in a professional way.

We have many case stories which highlight how ARC has helped clients, eg a Sudanese woman 8 months pregnant with a disturbed 2 yr old girl arrived in Blackburn with no family connections, traumatised from leaving family to flee from danger, with little English and no idea about how to get any help. ARC immediately helped her to register with a GP and ante-natal care, photocopied documents for her asylum application, arranged for interpreters for all appointments, signposted for housing, baby equipment, gave emergency food when needed, enrolled her in English class and introduced her to others at the social Drop In which meets on Tuesdays. ARC, by quick, vital action, helped her (and many others like her) overcome the destitution 'gap' and helped her access income support and child benefits. For other case stories see ARC website: [www.arcblackburn.org.uk](http://www.arcblackburn.org.uk) and Health Watch report on ARC website.

The main outputs of ARC are helping clients integrate into UK society, providing

timely help and support to people according to their individual needs, many of whom are initially desperate, confused, frightened and traumatised by the upheaval they have faced. Many speak of ARC as their FAMILY - a place where they feel safe, included, befriended, supported and valued and where they can support each other through also volunteering their time. The specialist work that ARC will undertake with newly arrived Afghan families will ensure that they are quickly able to settle happily in the local area and within the ARC community.

**Asylum and Refugee Community, Blackburn**  
**Registered Charity No: 1188910**

**ACCOUNTS &**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**for the year ended 31 August 2022**

**Index to the Financial Statements**

**Year ended 31 August 2022.**

	<b>Page</b>
Income & Expenditure Account	1
Balance Sheet	2
Notes to the Financial Statements	3
Independent Examiner's Report	4

Asylum Refugee Community Blackburn

Registered Charity No : 1188910

Income & Expenditure Account

Year Ended 31 August 2022

	£	£	2021 £	£
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Grants</b>		124,474.10		72,065.00
<b>Donations</b>		8,681.72		5,075.95
<b>Miscellaneous Income</b>		208.76		0.00
		<u>133,364.58</u>		<u>77,140.95</u>
<b>Less Expenses and Overheads</b>				
<b>Staffing Costs</b>				
Staff Wages & Salaries	49,947.93		46,006.45	
Staff NIC	0.00		0.00	
Pensions	934.67		787.48	
Staff Training Costs	3,256.00		50.00	
Pension Fees	105.00		0.00	
Staff & Volunteer Expenses	1,458.10		125.52	
		<u>55,701.70</u>		<u>46,969.45</u>
<b>Tinta Appeal Expenses</b>		0.00		0.00
<b>Administration &amp; Marketing</b>				
Stationery & Inks	848.09		30.00	
Client, Socials and Charity Expenses	578.68		750.10	
Lamplight Training & Database	3,720.00		0.00	
Memberships	30.00		30.00	
Advertising	295.00		0.00	
Postage	117.48		0.00	
Accountancy, Payroll & Examination of Accounts	748.90		647.60	
Funding Application	727.00		1,325.00	
Professional Fees	0.00		150.00	
Bank & Card Fees	93.00		76.50	
Travel Expenses	0.00		63.59	
Website Fees	10.79		400.07	
		<u>7,168.94</u>		<u>3,472.86</u>
<b>Establishment Expenses</b>				
Rent, Electricity & water	8,899.56		0.00	
Insurance	998.78		1,022.65	
Telephone	3,811.66		2,331.59	
Computer Expenses	195.64		179.15	
Alarm & Security	0.00		0.00	
Repairs & Sundry Equipment	2,160.89		219.67	
Equipment Hire	0.00		0.00	
Due Diligence Checks	700.00		0.00	
Sundry Expenses	330.54		81.10	
Cleaning Expenses	75.00		0.00	
Depreciation of Assets	497.00		712.07	
		<u>17,669.07</u>		<u>4,546.23</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<u>80,539.71</u>		<u>54,988.54</u>
<b>(Loss) Surplus Generated from Operations</b>		52,824.87		22,152.41
<b>Profits (Losses) transferred to Revenue Reserves</b>		<u>52,824.87</u>		<u>22,152.41</u>

Asylum Refugee Community Blackburn

Registered Charity No : 1188910

Balance Sheet

31 August 2022

	£	£	2021	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Laptops & Printers	1,655.00		2,367.07	
Less : Depreciation	497.00		712.07	
	-----	1,158.00	-----	1,655.00
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at bank-3840	92,395.07		37,280.07	
West Pennine Methodist Circuit (Debtor)	0.00		2,186.41	
Petty Cash in Hand	0.00		0.00	
	-----		-----	
	92,395.07		39,466.48	
	-----		-----	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>				
Accrued Charges	425.00		350.00	
Wages	0.00		0.00	
Pensions	580.20		215.72	
PAYE & NI	1,127.24		0.00	
	-----		-----	
	2,132.44		565.72	
	-----		-----	
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		90,262.63		38,900.76
		-----		-----
		91,420.63		40,555.76
<b>Less : Restricted Funding re Tinta Ali</b>		(1,740.00)		(3,700.00)
		-----		-----
		89,680.63		36,855.76
		=====		=====
<b>Represented by</b>				
Reserves brought forward		36,855.76		
Capital Introduced				
HSBC (share of Balance)			4,280.95	
Methodist Circuit Current Account			10,422.40	
	-----	0.00	-----	14,703.35
<b>Add: Surplus (Deficit) for the year</b>		52,824.87		22,152.41
		-----		-----
		89,680.63		36,855.76
		=====		=====

**For the year ended 31 August 2022**

## **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Accounting Principles**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and with applicable Accounting Standards.

### **Depreciation**

Depreciation has been calculated to write off the net book values of fixed assets over their expected economic lives at the following annual rates.

Computer Equipment            30 % on reducing balance

## **2. TURNOVER**

Turnover for the year was £133,364 and represents various charitable grants and donations received in the year

## **3. CORPORATION TAX**

Corporation tax is charged in the accounts in the period to which it relates.

The amount of Corporation tax due on Non-Charitable trading activities for the year was £ Nil.

## **4. CONTINUING OPERATIONS**

None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued during the year.

## **5 TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES**

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the loss for the financial period detailed herewith

**Independent Examiner's Report  
To the Trustees and Members of Asylum and Refugee Community, Blackburn**

I report on the Accounts and Financial Statements on pages 1 to 2 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 3.

**Responsibilities of the Trustees and Committee.**

It is the charity's committee's responsibility to prepare accounts and financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the committee are required to :

- i) Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- ii) Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- iii) Prepare the accounts and financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The committee is also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the charity and to enable to them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking responsible steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**Respective responsibility of Trustees and Examiner.**

As described above the charity's trustees and committee are responsible for the preparation of accounts and financial statements. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

**Basis of Independent Examiner's report.**

My examination was conducted in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. The examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts and financial statements presented with those records and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the charity as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. These procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**Independent Examiner's Statement of Opinion**

In connection with my examination it is my opinion that;

- a) The financial statements are in agreement with the books and records kept by the charity and that the accounting records have been maintained in accordance with section 145 of the 2011 Act

b) Having read only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records the accounts and financial statements have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in the 2011 Act;

No matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect of the requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met.

No matter has come to my attention, to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graham Bennett', with a large, stylized initial 'G' and 'B'.

**Graham Bennett FFA. FAIA.**  
**Bennett & Co. Accountants**  
**Spring House 194-196 Union Road**  
**Oswaldtwistle**  
**Accrington BB5 3EG**

**11 January 2023.**

# ARC NEWSLETTER

- ANNUAL EDITION 2021 -



## DEAR FRIENDS,

Last year we experienced such a different scaled-back celebration, no-one can deny there's a growing excitement that we'll be able to spend time with or loved ones. However, at the time of writing this, increasing numbers of Covid cases as well as the threat of the Omicron variant reminds us that we are not out of the woods yet!

At ARC the festive period brings together many people from different faiths, culture and background, **all bound together with one mission- to renew our love and compassion towards those who make perilous journeys and to educate** and increase understanding to the wider community about those seeking sanctuary.

But what a year it has been!

**Here at ARC, our work never stops.** Through the filter of Covid 19 we continued to provide support to our service users remotely and most recently in September this year, the office reopened to deal with queries face to face, as well as welcoming back our ESOL learners. It is no exaggeration when I say that our workload increased by 200% and staff and volunteers have shown such fortitude and positive spirit during such challenging times. We have all had to adapt to new ways of working, developing new skills along the way, however whilst not easy we have tackled each challenge together as a team.

**We were pleased when we restarted our weekly Drop In sessions as service users enjoyed meeting up with friends in a safe environment.** The pandemic and local restrictions has been a difficult time as many service users felt socially isolated and this impacted on their mental health and well-being. With the help of local specialist agencies, we are able to support service users to process what has happened to them and to develop coping mechanisms to help them to rebuild their lives and mental resilience.

With funding from WEA, we were able to launch **the ILHAM project to empower refugee women into employment through focus based training and development.** Fifteen participants joined the group in November to learn new skills, develop inter-personal skills, confidence and self esteem.



And finally, this will be my last edition with you as I will be leaving ARC at the end of December 2021. It has been an amazing experience. **I've met some incredible people along the way and shared some special moments which I will always treasure.** The highlight of the year for me has to be when ARC's very own Volunteer Extraordinaire- Ali Tinta won the One Voice 'Man of the Year' award (see feature). I feel so blessed to know this incredible young man, someone who has waited patiently for over 10 years for a decision from the Home Office, we could all learn about patience and resilience from this truly remarkable person.

**My deepest gratitude also goes to the wonderful team at ARC for their hard work and support over the years- you are all STARS!**

My thanks always to you all for your ongoing support of ARC (long may it continue) and I hope you enjoy this edition with some wonderful features that you will agree brings into focus the work of ARC Blackburn.

Wishing you a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.  
Love & Light.

**SAIDA SOGE (SYD)**  
**ARC BLACKBURN MANAGER**

# NEWS OF THE YEAR

*This year was a year of much good news. We had great things happen to many of our clients and team members - from winning awards to gaining positive decisions after 6 years of waiting.*

## HIGHLIGHTS



**240**

refugees seen on average, per month



**102**

asylum seekers seen on average, per month



**650**

food parcels provided

## MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD - TINTA!

Saturday 9th October evening was a special evening for us all. Our one and only Tinta won the Man of the Year Award at the One Voice Annual Awards for the exceptional work he does for our community in Blackburn and Darwen and beyond.

Over the past 10 years, Tinta has supported many vulnerable people and groups. He has been a volunteer with various charities, undertaking interpreting and casework. During the Covid-19 pandemic, he also volunteered with the local council as well as with the police.

Additionally, at ARC Tinta has been the backbone of the team - always present as a helping hand. We can't think of anyone who deserves it more than he!

Congratulations Tinta and we hope to see you continue all the great work you do.



## POSITIVE DECISIONS

We are pleased to share that clients from the following countries gained positive decisions this year! We wish them the very best of luck.



Iran



Iraq



Afghanistan



Sudan



Bangladesh



Pakistan



Albania



Russia



El Salvador

# CORE PROJECTS

## CASE WORK

ARC case work office is now open 3 days weekly, providing vital day to day survival support. It is available for all asylum seekers and refugees (AS&R) to navigate complex procedures related to legal status, job seeking, benefits, housing, disability, education and health as they settle into UK life. Case work sessions average 1 hour but complex issues often related to Universal Credit and housing can require over 2 hours especially with increasingly long waits by telephone.

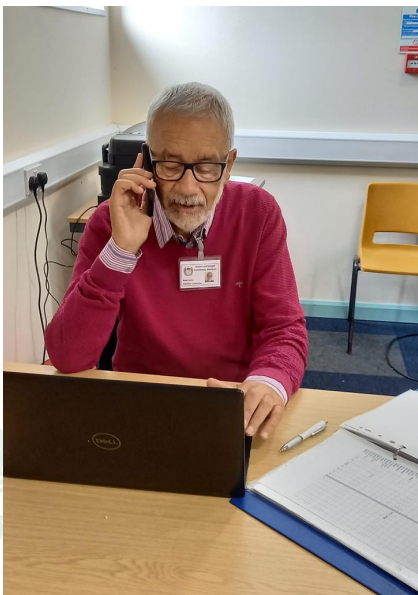
### THE CASEWORK SUPPORT FORMS THE BACKBONE OF ARC.

In addition to the paid staff, ARC relies upon a strong volunteer team, many of whom have several years of experience in dealing with the issues of this client group. The volunteers include interpreters, several of whom themselves initially received support through ARC and are keen to support others and to educate the wider community about the experiences and needs of asylum seekers and refugees, e.g. through schools and colleges. ARC has a strong working relationship developed over time with all the relevant agencies/services in the Borough that AS&R come into contact with. Public service offices such as the Council and the DWP often signpost clients to ARC, knowing that they will be respectfully supported in a professional way.



### A CASE WE WORKED ON

A Sudanese woman, 8 months pregnant with her 2 year old daughter arrived in Blackburn with no family connections, traumatised from leaving family to flee from danger, with little English and no idea about how to get any help. ARC immediately helped her to register with a GP and ante-natal care, photocopied documents for her asylum application, arranged for interpreters for all appointments, signposted for housing, baby equipment, gave emergency food when needed, enrolled her in English class and introduced her to others at the social Drop In which meets on Tuesdays. ARC, by quick, vital action, helped her (and many others like her) overcome the destitution 'gap' and helped her access income support and child benefits.



The main outputs of ARC are helping clients integrate into UK society, providing timely help and support to people according to their individual needs, many of whom are initially desperate, confused, frightened and traumatised by the upheaval they have faced. Many speak of ARC as their FAMILY - a place where they feel safe, included, befriended, supported and valued and where they can support each other through also volunteering their time.

We give thanks to all who seek our help and support and the trust they place in us during this difficult period in their lives

# CORE PROJECTS

## ENGLISH CLUB

During the coronavirus lockdown, teaching continued on-line using 'zoom'. During this time three groups emerged. The original beginners' group made extraordinary progress and became the pre-intermediate group. A new beginners' group was set up and by the summer term of 2021 another new 'absolute' beginners group accessed this on-line teaching. Classroom teaching restarted in September 2021 and gradually numbers have increased as learners are re-establishing their family routines in order to access the teaching.

### Absolute Beginners' Class

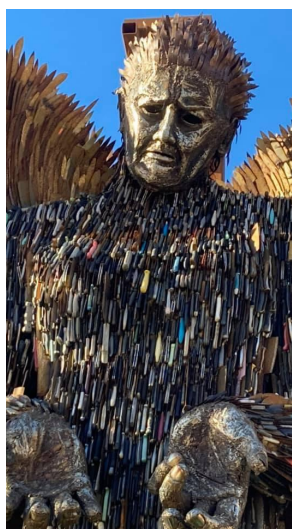
There are about 7 to 10 who are now accessing this class. There is capacity for more to join this class. Three learners have their young babies with them, this is no problem to me as a mum of four and grannie of five. I find that I can satisfactorily teach with this group and in fact there is a joy and a sharing as the mums with older children take an interest and the babies give a relaxing dimension to the lessons.

More important even than the learning of English, is that the learners gather with those who are struggling with the same issues of new culture, new language, and an unfamiliar environment.

As confidence grows speaking English is learnt almost incidentally, and group cohesion and friendships are made.



LIZZIE BELL



EC students trip to see the Knife Angel

### Beginner, Elementary and Pre-Intermediate

It is a joy to engage with the enthusiasm of our learners as they get to grips with the English language. The classes have always been popular with many learners staying with us to progress from one level to another.

In the short time since returning to in-person teaching and learning after the pandemic lockdown, the numbers have slowly been growing, both with new students and returners.

We try to develop reading and writing skills alongside speaking and listening; many of our learners progress onto college courses and are well aware of the difficulties presented in placing a learner when someone has fluency of speech but very limited literacy skills.

The learners are always very polite and thankful for this opportunity to improve their English. The classes enable them to learn in a supportive environment with others in similar situations. Often new learners arrive with little self-confidence and are very shy to speak but, with the warm welcome, they soon begin to make friends, gain confidence and start to smile!

JANE FARMER  
CATHERINE SMITH

# NEW PROJECTS

## THE ILHAM PROJECT

This November, ARC launched the ILHAM Project (which means 'to inspire' in Arabic) - a unique and innovative project funded by WEA. The aim of the ILHAM Project is to create pathways for refugee women to rebuild their lives with dignity and make a positive contribution in the community. This project is made up of empowerment activities as well as accredited qualifications to support refugee women to develop their confidence skills in employment. By creating a welcoming and supportive place for learning, refugee women will improve their social networks and feel empowered.



## ARC FOOTBALL CLUB

With support from Blackburn Rovers Community Trust, 12 members of the ARC community were able to join weekly football sessions at Witton as part of the social inclusion programme. Alongside Creative Football and Blokes United, ARC members played several matches, learned new team building skills as well as improving their physical and mental health & well-being.

## SUMMER CONVERSATION CLUB

Over the summer break ARC delivered conversation clubs for learners. These sessions were led by volunteers for refugees and asylum seekers to practice their English language skills. Each session was topic based with themes such as Travel, Health, Money. The sessions helped learners to boost their language skills and confidence and to practice using the language in various settings, i.e ordering food and drink in a Cafe.



# 2021 AT A GLANCE

As the Covid restrictions slowly eased, ARC was finally able to open our doors again. We were back in full swing this year with our regular activities such as the Drop-ins and a host of new projects too!



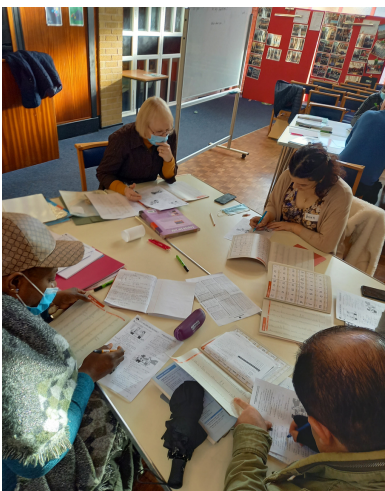
Various high schools dropping off winter gifts



PCSO Husna Mayet with Little Ahmed at our Drop in



Family day trip to Southport



On-site English Club back in full swing



Weekly food distribution



Wrap Up Lancashire donating winter clothing



Boxes of food donations from Blackburn Rovers for clients



Donated baked goodies from TIGHS



ILHAM project art work



Easter egg gifts for our young clients



A standard Tuesday drop in

# THANK YOU!

ARC would like to thank these following organisations for all the help and support they have given throughout the year.



...and all our local individual supporters.

The **Methodist Church** 

*A special THANK YOU to the Methodist Church, in particular West Pennine Moors Circuit for their continued support to ARC.*

**And finally...a huge thank you to all ARC staff and volunteers who have worked tirelessly throughout the year!**

food parcels handed out this year

**TO DONATE OR FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ARC BLACKBURN, FIND US AT**

[www.arcprojectblackburn.com](http://www.arcprojectblackburn.com) | Facebook: @ARCProjectBlackburn | Email: [arcprojectblackburn@gmail.com](mailto:arcprojectblackburn@gmail.com)

CONTRIBUTORS: Rachel Warner, Rachel Hodge, Lizzie Bell, Jane Farmer, Catherine Smith, Thasneema Naushad

**ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY, BLACKBURN**

England & Wales - Charity number 1188910

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# Accounts

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# **Asylum and Refugee Community Blackburn Annual Report 2020-2021**

## **Charity Purposes**

The purpose of the ARC Project is to address the needs of newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees (AS&R) in Blackburn, who are one of the most disadvantaged groups in this area of high deprivation. Blackburn with Darwen (BwD) became a Home Office dispersal area in 2004. The ARC Project, run by the Methodist Church responded to this need from 2004 until April 2020 when the newly formed independent charity, ARC Blackburn, was formed and now continues this work.

Joint Needs Assessment identifies that the Borough has high levels of deprivation, low skills, poor health and significant economic inactivity affecting the life of its communities; this is challenged by austerity, government welfare policy changes, increasing unemployment and an increasingly Home Office 'hostile environment'. Asylum Seekers and Refugees(AS&R) fall into the above categories of deprivation when they arrive with nothing, mostly no or little English language skills, poor physical and mental health due to trauma of fleeing their country and many have no recognised qualifications or skills. Even highly qualified AS&R such as civil engineers, doctors and teachers are highly disadvantaged and suffer great stress from being uprooted. They face long periods of unemployment due to discrimination in the labour market and /or the need to improve English language and the process of re-training and qualifications not being recognised, often having to resort to low skilled work.

ARC Blackburn is well placed to deliver this project as it is located in Wesley Hall Methodist Church which is in the centre of Blackburn and which has excellent space and facilities for running the ARC Blackburn charity. Through local community and church links ARC Blackburn is able to recruit the considerable volunteer resources needed to support the project. Many staff and volunteers bring skills and experience from a professional/voluntary background of work in pastoral/counselling, education, health, social services and charities. ARC Blackburn, being in the town centre, is well placed to network and build meaningful links with other key faith and community organisations as well as with nearby Blackburn College, legal bodies and health and local council services. This is vital as ARC service users come from a wide range of backgrounds and faiths with multi-layered social needs.

ARC Blackburn is highly regarded nationally, both by the Government and by the Methodist Church headquarters and regionally by several foundations and trusts as a flagship project serving the needs of asylum seekers and refugees which is demonstrated by the ongoing funding support by these bodies.

## **What the charity has done to carry out those purposes**

ARC casework office is open 3 days a week and meets the needs of AS&R by

providing help and support at a critical moment, especially when they arrive, through both emergency and planned appointments. Their basic food and temporary housing needs are met through the Home Office National Asylum Support Service (NASS). However there are continually vital issues which need to be urgently resolved; accommodation is often problematic with issues such as damp, boiler breakdown, inadequate furnishing, kitchen equipment etc. ARC casework involves assisting AS&R to register with GPs and make appointments, find solicitors to help with their asylum appeals, facilitate school placement for children as well as providing links and signposting to the many community organisations and services vital to meeting their individual needs. ARC also provides interpreting support and free language learning support through the English Club two days a week. Additionally, learners are taken on educational trips to Blackburn's library, museum and cathedral. The weekly social Drop-in session addresses the issue of loneliness and social isolation as well as helping to build a strong community providing a social space, refreshments and sports activities and recreational trips, including regular trips as guests to Blackburn Rovers matches. Other local organisations and services access the Drop-in to initiate the various support they can provide to AS&R. The transition from Asylum Seeker to Refugee status with 'leave to remain' is a very vulnerable period. NASS payments cease and mainstream benefits such as Universal Credit and Child Benefit do not kick in for several weeks, leaving people destitute. ARC assists refugees to apply for housing after notice to quit NASS accommodation.

Single young men are often in the poorest accommodation such as hostels. They become particularly vulnerable to loneliness, being the victim or perpetrator of crime and/or succumbing to negative societal influences which can lead to addiction, financial troubles and/or destitution. ARC Drop-in and Youth Club have been vital in addressing this situation. Many speak of ARC as their FAMILY-a place where they feel safe, included, befriended, supported and valued and where they can support each other through also volunteering their time.

We have many case stories of AS&R which highlight how ARC has supported clients; during this reporting period, a Sudanese woman 8 months pregnant with a disturbed 2 yr old girl arrived in Blackburn as an asylum seeker with no family connections, traumatised from leaving family to flee from danger, with little English and no idea about how to get any help. ARC immediately helped her to register with a GP and ante-natal care, photocopied documents for her asylum application, arranged for interpreters for all appointments, signposted for housing, baby equipment, gave emergency food when needed, enrolled her in English class and introduced her to others at the social Drop-in which meets on Tuesdays. ARC helped her, (and many others like her), to overcome the destitution 'gap' whilst transitioning to refugee status by acting in a timely manner to help her quickly access income support and child benefits.

Given the current situation of increased numbers of people fleeing war torn countries, we expect to support around 900 cases per year. AS&R average monthly actions for casework were maintained at around 80. We work with an individual or family repeatedly over a period which usually stretches over several years. Case work sessions average 1 hour but complex issues often related to Universal Credit and housing can require over 2 hours especially with increasingly long waits by telephone.. By continuing English classes/club, in both individual and group sessions, we anticipate, that though few are likely to secure

permanent employment due to language and competition in the job market, more clients will obtain temporary work (currently 90 English Club participants).

## **Covid**

Throughout this reporting period ARC Blackburn has been greatly challenged by keeping services running in a way that kept service users, staff and volunteers safe whilst maintaining vital support.

During the lockdown periods we offered virtual casework support and social interaction through phone and Whatsapp. We met service users face to face only in emergency situations and with scaled back staff cover. Post lockdown periods when more people were entering the building, we implemented extensive Covid safe measures based on careful risk assessment. During lockdowns the English Club continued on-line using zoom in three different level groups.

Unfortunately the highly attended weekly social drop-in was regarded as too high risk for infection so was cancelled. This was a period of great stress and loneliness for our beneficiaries. ARC staff and volunteers rallied around to make regular 'well-being calls' to keep in touch and be able to assess any urgent needs. Regular 'Covid safe' health messages and vaccination information was sent out by Whatsapp.

During the lockdown periods ARC ran a weekly food parcel distribution both outside the charity building and also home delivery for families and individuals in desperate need.

## **Charity Regulation and Guidance**

ARC Blackburn Trustees have been meeting at least monthly to ensure smooth management and oversight of the charity. Decisions are made taking full account of and with regard to charities regulation (2008) and Charity Commission Public Benefit Guidance. All trustees are aware of the guidance provided by the charities regulation statement 2008 and carry out their duties in accordance with this. All actions are approved and carefully minuted.

# ASYLUM AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY, BLACKBURN

## Accounts for the year ending 31 August 2020

### Income

Donations 5009

### **Grants**

Dept Communities & Local Government Controlling

Immigration Fund 21161

National Methodist Connection 20000

Lancashire Methodist District 11000

West Pennine Moors Methodist Circuit 10229

Clitheroe Parish Church 2150

Duchy of Lancaster 2000

Lancashire Community Foundation 5000

Tinta Appeal \* 760

**77309**

### Expenses

Telephone 1870

Petty Cash 900

Rent 6648

Stationary 751

Sundries 2575

Insurance 595

Salaries 69376

**82715**

**-5406**

Bank balance B/fwd 20110

Bank Balance 31 August 2020 14704

### **Tinta Appeal \***

This is a public appeal to cover legal expenses in challenging a decision by the Home Office to refuse asylum for Tinta who has been a much valued member of our ARCB family for several years - total raised as at 31 October 2020 - £8950

Auditors certificate for these accounts is held

**Asylum and Refugee Community, Blackburn**  
**Registered Charity No: 1188910**

**ACCOUNTS &**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**for the year ended 31 August 2021**

**Index to the Financial Statements**

**Year ended 31 August 2021.**

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Asylum Refugee Community Blackburn

Registered Charity No : 1188910

Income & Expenditure Account

Year Ended 31 August 2021

	£	£
Income		
Grants		72,065.00
Donations		5,075.95
<b>Miscellaneous Income</b>		0.00
		-----
		77,140.95
<b>Less Expenses and Overheads</b>		
<b>Staffing Costs</b>		
Staff Wages & Salaries	46,006.45	
Staff NIC	0.00	
Pensions	787.48	
Staff Training Costs	50.00	
Staff Expenses	125.52	
		-----
		46,969.45
<b>Tinta Appeal Expenses</b>		0.00
<b>Administration &amp; Marketing</b>		
Stationery & Inks	30.00	
Charity Expenses (Food Packages)	750.10	
Memberships	30.00	
Postage	0.00	
Accountancy, Payroll & Examination of Accounts	647.60	
Funding Application	1,325.00	
Professional Fees	150.00	
Bank & Card Fees	76.50	
Travel Expenses	63.59	
Website Fees	400.07	
		-----
		3,472.86
<b>Establishment Expenses</b>		
Rent, Electricity & water	0.00	
Insurance	1,022.65	
Telephone	2,331.59	
Computer Expenses	179.15	
Alarm & Security	0.00	
Repairs & Sundry Equipment	219.67	
Equipment Hire	0.00	
Sundry Expenses	81.10	
Cleaning Expenses	0.00	
Sundry Donation	0.00	
Depreciation of Assets	712.07	
		-----
		4,546.23
<b>Total Expenses</b>		-----
		54,988.54
		-----
<b>(Loss) Surplus Generated from Operations</b>		22,152.41
<b>Profits (Losses) transferred to Revenue Reserves</b>		=====
		22,152.41

Asylum Refugee Community Blackburn

Registered Charity No : 1188910

Balance Sheet

31 August 2021

	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Laptops & Printers	2,367.07	
Less : Depreciation	712.07	
	<hr/>	1,655.00
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash at bank-3840	37,280.07	
West Pennine Methodist Circuit (Debtor)	2,186.41	
Petty Cash in Hand	0.00	
	<hr/>	
	39,466.48	
	<hr/>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accrued Charges	350.00	
Wages	0.00	
Pensions	215.72	
PAYE & NI	0.00	
	<hr/>	
	565.72	
	<hr/>	
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		38,900.76
		<hr/>
		40,555.76
<b>Less : Restricted Funding re Tinta Ali</b>		(3,700.00)
		<hr/>
		36,855.76
		<hr/> <hr/>
<b>Represented by</b>		
Capital Introduced		
HSBC (share of Balance)	4,280.95	
Methodist Circuit Current Account	10,422.40	
	<hr/>	14,703.35
<b>Add: Surplus (Deficit) for the year</b>		22,152.41
		<hr/>
		36,855.76
		<hr/> <hr/>

**For the year ended 31 August 2021**

## **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Accounting Principles**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and with applicable Accounting Standards.

### **Depreciation**

Depreciation has been calculated to write off the net book values of fixed assets over their expected economic lives at the following annual rates.

Computer Equipment                      30 % on reducing balance

## **2. TURNOVER**

Turnover for the year was £77,141 and represents various charitable grants and donations received in the year

## **3. CORPORATION TAX**

Corporation tax is charged in the accounts in the period to which it relates.

The amount of Corporation tax due on Non-Charitable trading activities for the year was £ Nil.

## **4. CONTINUING OPERATIONS**

None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued during the year.

## **5. TOTAL RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES**

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the loss for the financial period detailed herewith

## **Independent Examiner's Report**

### **To the Trustees and Members of Asylum and Refugee Community, Blackburn**

I report on the Accounts and Financial Statements on pages 1 to 2 which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out on page 3.

#### **Responsibilities of the Trustees and Committee.**

It is the charity's committee's responsibility to prepare accounts and financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the committee are required to :

- i) Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- ii) Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- iii) Prepare the accounts and financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The committee is also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the charity and to enable to them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking responsible steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

#### **Respective responsibility of Trustees and Examiner.**

As described above the charity's trustees and committee are responsible for the preparation of accounts and financial statements. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

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

#### **Basis of Independent Examiner's report.**

My examination was conducted in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. The examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts and financial statements presented with those records and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the charity as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. These procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

#### **Independent Examiner's Statement of Opinion**

In connection with my examination it is my opinion that;

- a) The financial statements are in agreement with the books and records kept by the charity and that the accounting records have been maintained in accordance with section 145 of the 2011 Act

b) Having read only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records the accounts and financial statements have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in the 2011 Act;

No matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect of the requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met.

No matter has come to my attention, to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Bennett', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

**Graham Bennett FFA. FAIA.**  
**Bennett & Co. Accountants**  
**Spring House 194-196 Union Road**  
**Oswaldtwistle**  
**Accrington BB5 3EG**

**7 April 2022.**