



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

Period start date				Period end date			
From	1	5	2022	To	30	4	2023

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

The Gathering Place

Other names charity is known by

The Gathering Place UK

Registered charity number (if any)

1189467

Charity's principal address

18 Queen Street

Neath

Wales

Postcode

SA11 1DL

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Kenneth Arrington	Director / Chair		
2	Susan Rees			
3	Martyn Greenway			
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

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Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution enacted 1 January 2020
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	CIO Constitution
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Trustees are appointed for 2 year terms at end of year returns meeting / review

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Volunteers and volunteer counsellors are vetted based on experience, education, and agreement with principles set out in all related charity documents, including Wales safeguarding procedures, and additional documentation and statements of belief.

The director oversees day to day aspects and duties of running the charity, including the power to do anything which is calculated to further its objects or is conducive or incidental to doing so. The director moves and works under the auspices of voting trustees and also seeks guidance and views of volunteers in deciding activities to be undertaken and run for the public benefit.

Safeguarding policies are in place and checks are taken out on those dealing directly 1:1 with the public at large.

The Gathering Place partners with local associations, churches, help houses, councils, homes for the elderly, mental health wards, and hospitals in order to provide tangible products, care packages, and resources for the betterment of public health.

All trustees and volunteers give their time voluntarily and received no remuneration or other preferential benefits

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The prevention, relief and support of those trapped in poverty cycles and those in need throughout Neath / South Wales by providing items, resources, and counselling services. We encourage and train volunteers and local leaders and network with regional organisations to directly impact the local community.

In planning our activities for the year, The Gathering Place, its director, trustees, and volunteers kept in mind the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit at our meetings and within our communications.

The planned activities upon listing as a registered charity were as follows:

- Prevention, relief, and support of those trapped in poverty cycles and those in need by offering free clothing, toiletries, food, drink, and dry goods procured via donations and purchase
- Vehicular delivery of needed goods such as clothing and food to those in need, the hospitalised, isolated, elderly, the disabled, the impoverished, and the general public; as well as to other charities or voluntary bodies
- Offering a safe and warm space for sanctuary at our 18 Queen Street, Neath, SA11 1DL location, free teas/coffees/refreshment, warm hub, recharging of devices, as needed counselling services, and care package pickup – including sleeping bags, tents, shoes, coats, and gear
- Free general counselling / weekly meetings across multiple spectrums provided by approved volunteer counsellors – women's outreach, homeless outreach, general outreach, and personal fulfilment
- To provide free hosted dinners and luncheons for our women's outreach and homeless outreach, stirring interest through signposting, social media, and word of mouth. These meetings provide counselling and volunteer opportunities to gauge the needs of the public and provide essential immediate services to those in need
- A bi-weekly programme of adult oriented events, trainings, and activities designed to inspire creativity, music, and art; and provide a safe space and equipment free of charge to do so. We believe it is through discovering one's creative nature that one can aspire to changing their lives and reality and that anyone that is in need can find hope and companionship through listening ears and willing hearts.

These activities benefit those in need within our community by providing them with essential goods, services, counselling, and training to better their lives, induce self-confidence, and most importantly provide help in times of dire need. These activities also provide opportunities for volunteer and leadership growth, helping volunteers to become leaders, and those receiving services to become volunteers.

We serve all people who may need our services regardless of age, gender, religion, or personal circumstances.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

We are grateful for the hours that our volunteers have contributed to listening, offering ideas, and taking the weight of the charity upon their shoulders to see objectives through. Without the valuable contribution of our volunteers' time, creative thinking, energy, and focus we would not have been able to re-adjust and achieve so much in so short a period.

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Section D Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

1st Quarter (May – July 2022)

The first quarter of our 3rd year charity started with a flourish. Relocating our offices to 18 Queen Street Neath Town Centre SA11 1DL, and due to our continued growing relationship with our funders, we immediately set to work. Throughout April and May we continued to work with local charities and other organisations to meet the needs of our community while preparing to move into our new facility. Due to the amount of forecasted work and outreach to be done on the new charity office, we made a number of temporary fiduciary policy shifts for the year. Prior to this year, any expenditure over £500 was required to have a signed receipt from the director to be submitted for approval. For 2023, this number was shifted to £5,000 due to the amount of building materials needed to remodel the new facility. This temporary adjustment was a unanimous decision, with the decision made that at the completion of the year and of moving into the new facility, the policy would shift back to the £500 approval policy. Additionally, after meeting with the new property's solicitors, we entered into agreement to pay a lump sum payment at the beginning of the year for the main floor rental of £11,500, removing the pressure of paying monthly payments. As we took possession of the building in late May, we agreed to pay the remainder of 2022's rent payment at £6991.89. It was forecast that the remodel of the building would take approximately 2 months, through the majority of 2nd quarter 2022, with the majority of work undertaken by the director, volunteers, and occasional day labour when fitting. Additionally, as the charity offices underwent extensive remodelling, we would still fulfil our mission by delivering items to those in need and by working with other local charities.

2nd Quarter (August – October 2022)

2nd quarter brought the opening of our new Gathering Place facility in Neath Town Centre. With the remodel moving at an accelerated pace, we

opened our doors in early August to host a kids' camp for children ages 5 to 15, offering children from all backgrounds and financial statuses access to the Gathering Place, providing kids' activities, games, social opportunities, and more. This was an opportunity to introduce Neath to our "Project:Heal Backpack Programme," primarily focusing on pre-teen and early teens school needs, offering backpacks filled with pens, pencils, rubbers, hi-liters, pencil bags, notepads, activity books, glue sticks, rulers, protractors, and activewear, and made available free of charge at our community hubs in Swansea before the start of term (and afterward by request via individuals, schools, councils, or other charitable organisations with whom we work). We would also resupply each "Backpack of Hope" throughout the year. The turnout for this programme was an undoubtable success, bringing awareness to Neath of our soon official opening.

In October, we officially opened the Gathering Place outwardly to the public. The front facing shop where "everything is free" provides resources to the community free of charge - clothing, toiletries, and other items. The primary demographic of these facilities were impoverished women, young mothers, and children. Additionally, we brought in coffee mornings on Wednesday, inviting others into our facility to deepen the sense of community. These measures brought a great deal of success and interest to the Gathering Place, with numerous news agencies contacting the Gathering Place for interviews.

While the shopfront got people in the door, it was our counsellors and volunteers who were the shining stars. Opening up a variety of projects to the public including free movement and exercise clinics, abuse counselling, young mother assistance, mindfulness groups, homeless assistance, and much much more, the Gathering Place quickly became known as a holistic community centre, whose excellent services were provided absolutely free of charge to those in need.

3rd Quarter (November – January 2023)

The 3rd quarter of our 3rd year provided a new opportunity for the Gathering Place, that of becoming Neath's first officially registered Warm Hub with both the Welsh and Neath Port Talbot county government. With this recognition, the Gathering Place began serving more than 100 visitors per week and distributing more than £750 in personal heating items per week to homes in need in the form of "Warm Packs" in addition to providing the public coats, gloves, scarves, clothing, and more (valued at over £1,000 p/wk). With rising fuel costs placing a bind on impoverished homes, we began distributing packs designed to reduce energy consumption in the homes of those we serve. These packs included flat fan heaters, draught protectors, window insulation, foam insulation, hand warmers, flannel blankets, and much more. Additionally, we handed out on average more than 300 clothing, toiletry, and food items per week to those in need in our community through our shopfront. Again, our 3rd Q focus was on women and children in need, providing necessary items for home and school, additionally expanding our homeless outreach. Additionally, we began to explore options to open up our facility to be used by smaller micro-organizations for the public benefit, offering therapeutic art classes, writing courses, training, and the like.

During this period, The Gathering Place made the national news (Wales Online), bringing increased attention to our programmes and bringing a dramatic increase in grants and awards and expansion of programmes.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Donations in the form of clothing and toiletries increased exponentially, and soon we began to provide surrounding charities and churches with clothing, food, and toiletries

Negatively, at the end of Q3, the facility above the Gathering Place's location (due to a tip from volunteers from the Gathering Place) was raided as an illegal cannabis factory. While we assisted the police department in its investigation, our power was shut off due to finding the illegal growers were siphoning off of our power supply. Our electric supplier and National Grid quickly reattached our power supply, however we would enter into a long dispute with EDF over payment of the siphoned electricity. While siding in our favour, EDF stated they would start a new account for the Gathering Place (which they did), and delete the old account. However, instead of deleting the old account, it was somehow sent to a debt collector. We are still in process in having this old account that EDF stated we were not responsible for deleted.

Even with the commotion of the take down of the illegal grow lab above us, the Gathering Place was still able to expand its mission focus outwards to the community, opening our computer lab to the public and beginning a Home Education and After School youth programme, providing community children from all walks of life access to tutors and teacher volunteers.

4th Quarter (February – April 2023)

Quarter 4 was undoubtedly our most successful quarter as a charity up to that date! With the expansion of programmes we brought on two new official Programme Directors - Rachel Edwards and Clare Bell. As the weight of work began to outweigh a single director (Ken Arrington), programme specific work began to be handed off to Rachel and Clare, with Rachel focusing on health and wellness directives and Clare handling all community relations. Clare, being a Neath native, quickly fell into a groove and began to shift to becoming the front face of the charity within the community. During this time, we additionally began to put an expansion in focus in place, beginning assessments to potentially bring on new trustees in 2023/2024 and new directorship as well, as Ken Arrington announced he would be relocating late 2023 to open a new charity opportunity. Additionally, we were approached by Neath Council to begin working in coordination with them to meet the needs of the community. Due to our immediate and increased success in meeting the needs of the community, meetings were held to allow Neath Port Talbot council use of our facilities free of charge, expanding service programmes to various groups such as adoptive mothers, mothers who have lost their children, trafficking and addiction recovery, providing school uniforms free of charge to children in need, and much more. This provides an even greater opportunity and holistic approach, addressing individuals' underlying needs by creating a supportive network that boosts their confidence, self-esteem, and sense of purpose within often overlooked communities. We empower them to break free from cycles of poverty, enhancing their access to vital services and opportunities, thereby enabling them to realize their full potential.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

At close of the day 30/4/2023, cash on hand at the bank was £3,597.71 in unrestricted funds. Due to relocation and massive outreach needs, we agreed to temporarily shift our reserves policy from 2 months/£6,000 reserves policy in 2022 to 1 month/£3,000 in 2023, with a return to a 2 month/£6,000 reserves policy in 2024.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Not applicable

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

In 2023 our primary sources of funding have been grants and donations (98.5%). We use the majority of our general funds towards our outreach programmes. As 2023 was a time of exponential growth for the Gathering Place, this was also time of massive expansion of our programme offerings, including all of our Project:HEAL programmes, Home School and After School offerings, health and wellness, lending library, official Warm Hub status, mindfulness programmes, and much more. The remainder of our general outreach funds go to upfitting our "in-needs" area which is designed to supply new coats, clothing, hats, scarves, shoes, and other related resources to any who may need assistance. We also provide teas/coffees/refreshment to anyone who wishes to stop by and come off the streets, as well as counselling and a listening ear.

Our primary funder continues to provide an annual £20,000 grant on January 5th and has agreed in principle to renew annual funding indefinitely as long as we can demonstrate we are committed to the established aims of our charity. These funds go to the operational costs of the charity (17.1% of our expenditures during this year in question) and training and resources (2.7%), with the remainder going towards outreach programmes and general support (75.6%).

The remainder of other funds raised (such as through the Lottery foundation) go to further funding of pilot programmes to meet the public benefit and reinforce programmes currently underway.

This year we received grants from the following foundations and grant making agencies:

Community Fund Wales
Arnold Clarke
Morrisons
The National Lottery Foundation
The Moondance Foundation
Leathersellers
Foyle Foundation
NPTCBC
LocalGiving
Community Matters

As we do not have any paid volunteers, staff, or trustees, funds received are maximised for public benefit.

Section F

Other optional information

Future Plans and Developments for The Gathering Place

Introduction The year 2023 has been transformative for The Gathering Place, marked by significant achievements and challenges that have shaped our future plans and strategies. As we look ahead, we are focused on building upon our successes, addressing ongoing needs, and expanding our impact in

the community. This report outlines our key initiatives and goals for the upcoming period based on the experiences and outcomes of 2023.

Facility Expansion and Community Outreach Our move to the new facility at 18 Queen Street, Neath Town Centre has provided us with an expanded platform to deliver essential services and support to our community. Building on the success of our initial programs, we will continue to offer a wide range of initiatives, including our programmes for homeless outreach, at-risk youth, young mothers, and support for abused women.

Warm Hub Initiative and Free Resources Shop One of our major focuses will be continuing to establish The Gathering Place as a "Warm Hub" during the winter months. This initiative aims to address rising energy costs and provide essential heating resources to low-income households. Additionally, our free resources shop will expand its offerings, providing clothing, toiletries, and other necessities to those in need.

Youth and Education Programs We are committed to supporting youth development and education. We will continue to supply educational resources to disadvantaged youths, ensuring they have the tools they need for academic success. Additionally, we will launch new initiatives, such as after-school programs and tutoring services, to enhance learning opportunities.

Men's Group and Addiction Recovery Recognizing the specific needs of at-risk men in our community, we will establish a dedicated men's group focused on providing support, counseling, and resources for addiction recovery. This initiative aims to address the unique challenges faced by men in seeking help and creating a safe space for healing and growth.

Health and Wellness Services Expanding our health and wellness services will be a priority in the coming year. We will introduce new clinics and counseling programs to address mental health, abuse recovery, and overall well-being. These services will be provided free of charge, promoting holistic healing within our community.

Partnerships and Collaboration Collaboration with local organizations and government bodies will remain crucial to our success. We will strengthen existing partnerships and seek new collaborations to maximize our impact and reach more individuals in need. This includes working closely with Neath Port Talbot Council on joint initiatives and utilizing our facilities for community benefit.

Leadership and Governance As part of our growth strategy, we will review our governance structure and consider adding new trustees and directors. This will ensure effective leadership and management as we continue to expand our programs and services.

Financial Sustainability and Grants Securing financial sustainability is vital for our long-term success. We will actively pursue grants, donations, and support funding from various sources to sustain and grow our operations. This includes leveraging our increased profile and successful programs to attract funding opportunities.


Conclusion The Gathering Place is poised for a dynamic year ahead, with a clear vision and strategic plan to make a positive impact on our community. By focusing on key initiatives, partnerships, and financial sustainability, we are confident in our ability to continue serving those in need and fostering a supportive, resilient community.

Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)



Full name(s)

Kenneth Arrington

Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)

Chair

Date

14-01-2024



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
The Gathering Place

No (if any)
1189467

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
5/1/2022

To

Period end date
4/30/2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants & Donations	71,084		-	71,084	33,978
Refunds from purchasing public benefit goods	1,156	-	-	1,156	1,260
Foyle Foundation	-	5,000	-	5,000	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	72,240	5,000	-	77,240	35,238
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	72,240	5,000	-	77,240	35,238
A3 Payments					
Outreach - Women, Youth, Homeless Support	58,088	5,000	-	63,088	22,759
Training / Reference Library	2,237	-	-	2,237	1,927
Fundraising (inc travel fees for conference)	967	-	-	967	1,151
Operational Costs (inc utilities)	14,261	-	-	14,261	5,519
Office Needs (inc technology upgrades)	1,599	-	-	1,599	89
Remittance	1,315	-	-	1,315	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	78,468	5,000	-	83,468	31,444
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	78,468	5,000	-	83,468	31,444
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 6,228	-	-	- 6,228	3,794
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	9,825	-	-	9,825	-
Cash funds this year end	3,597	-	-	3,597	9,825

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash at Bank	3,597	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	3,597	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK


	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	none	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	none		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Car	Unrestricted	-	1,770
	Computer & Media Equipment	Unrestricted	-	9,245
	Office Furniture - Décor	Unrestricted	-	
	Clothing - Shelters - Trailer - Toiletries for distribution	Unrestricted	-	-
	~1,000 clothing items inc shoes, boots, coats, womens, mens, kids	Unrestricted	-	-
	Library and Resources	Unrestricted	-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	none		-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Kenneth Ray Arrington	1/3/2024



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

THE GATHERING PLACE

On accounts for the year
ended

30 April 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1189467

Set out on page

1-2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the period ended 30 April 2023.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 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:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

02 April 2024

Name:

Chaweevan Williams FCCA

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body :

Chartered Certified Accountants

Address:

Verdant Accountants Limited

20-22 Wenlock Road, London N1 7GU