

LEEDS AFRICAN COMMUNITIES CHARITY TRUST (LACT)



TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT & INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022

DRAFT

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust (LACT) is a legally constituted voluntary community-based organisation in Leeds, West Yorkshire, established for the purpose of serving as the umbrella body for the diverse range of African community groups that are operating across the City of Leeds.

It was registered with the UK Charity Commission on 20th October 2020 as a **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)**, and granted Charity Status Number **1191879** to pursue the following objectives:

(1) The advancement of education for the public benefit, in particular but not exclusively, by providing information, advice, and guidance for people of African origin or descent in Leeds.

(2) The prevention or relief of poverty for people of African origin or descent in poverty or need due to their economic and social circumstances in Leeds by providing food items, clothing and toiletries, as well as advice and guidance in particular but not exclusively, for the

public benefit in collaboration with other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty.'

The Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust, previously known as the Leeds African Communities Network, was born after a series of meetings organised by a group of concerned Africans, who initially came together under the auspices of Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung to discuss the spate of xenophobic violence in South Africa against African migrants from other parts of the continent.

Our Values

We are a values-based organisation. Respect for human rights and the protection of personal and collective freedoms underpin our standards of behaviour, and we are strongly committed to upholding the following values:

Integrity: We strive to consistently do the right thing, guided by a strong personal and collective moral compass. We endeavour to be fair, honest and truthful in everything we do.

Accountability: We take our mandate seriously and engender accountability mechanisms in our decisions, behaviours and their outcomes, acting in the best interest of our members.

Respect: We inculcate self-respect and are mindful of the feelings, beliefs, views and cultural expressions of others, even when they differ from our own.

Altruism: We give of our time, expertise, talents and material contributions in pursuit of the greater good of others and will make the sacrifices necessary for the achievement of our goals.

Professionalism: We uphold the highest standards of behaviour and draw from our combined mastery of various fields to provide an exceptional service to our people.

Ubuntu: We work in the African spirit of Ubuntu, steeped in the understanding of the interconnectedness of all human beings. We merit collaboration, promoting the spirit of mutual respect as we take a holistic approach to delivering exceptional value to our people.

STRATEGIC AIMS

The Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust is striving to achieve the following:

To provide a dynamic, supportive and innovative service for the wellbeing of our African communities:

- Work with community leaders to identify areas of concern for members, understand their pervasiveness and relevance.
- Identify priorities and prepare targeted action plans with respect to these priorities.
- Offer training and support as required in response to community needs.
- Identify relevant services and increase uptake of targeted initiatives through strategic promotion, networking and collaboration.
- Work in collaboration to find holistic solutions to issues facing African communities in Leeds.

Be a catalyst for community cohesion and development:

- Seek opportunities to maintain and develop intra and inter community interaction.
- Engage with existing strategic networks for collaborative networking and develop new ones where appropriate.
- Promote and share best practice with relevant community, voluntary and statutory sectors.

To become the African voice - providing a larger and stronger participation and representation of all things African:

- Utilising our vast grassroots membership base to ensure that relevant issues are effectively tabled and heard by authorities on behalf of our members.
- Making sure the views and concerns of our members are adequately presented and catered for in key political, legislative, social and economic decisions.
- Raising awareness of and engage with local and national policy matters affecting the African continent and work in collaboration to inform these where necessary.

To promote good citizenship and make a positive contribution to society:

- Encourage members to participate in relevant local and national debates.
- Support members to integrate and build meaningful relationships with others in what is becoming an increasingly multicultural society.
- Contribute to local and national initiatives, working with other communities to engender positive and sustainable change for all.
- Educate and train members on their rights and responsibilities and encourage meaningful engagement with and contribute to relevant issues of local and national interest.

Draw attention to contributions made by the African diaspora, leveraging these for the empowerment of members and their communities:

- Hold awareness campaigns aimed at promoting member activities and contributions in the UK and abroad.
- Design, host and participate in events that honour member contributions in various fields including STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), theatre and the arts, business and commerce, academia, public service, sports, tourism, etc.
- Promote a view of Africa that goes beyond 'tribal' cultures, natural resources and catastrophes.
- Empower members to work together to provide a more meaningful contribution to various fields through collaborative work practices, networking, mentorship programmes, scholarships, and funding of shared initiatives.

To grow a strong and sustainable organisation in service to all members:

- Build sustainable revenues through a variety of income streams and use these for the benefit of members and the wide community.
- Develop and embed a research-based framework for the identification, prioritisation and actioning of issues and initiatives.
- Develop and implement monitoring and evaluation tools and systems for impact measurement.

- Ensure sound governance through an appropriately skilled executive team and advisory board, promoting accountability through appropriate reporting structures.
- Recognise staff and volunteer expertise and provide opportunities for continued professional development.
- Maximise organisational effectiveness through actively seeking collaborative working opportunities.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The African communities in Leeds is highly diverse and is made of almost 15,000 people of African origin, most of whom are under 65 years old.

According to the 2011 census conducted by the Office of National Statistics and published in the Leeds Observatory, there were **141,771** people of minority ethnic background in Leeds; over 10% of whom - **14,894** are **Black Africans**, compared to **22,492 Pakistani**, **16,130 Indian**, **9,256 Other Asian**, **6,728 Black Caribbean**, **5,933 Chinese**, and **4,432 Bangladeshi**.

Despite the Black African population forming the third largest ethnic minority community in Leeds after the Pakistani and Indians, Black Africans are the least represented in terms of employment opportunities, self-employment, education achievements, quality of housing, and health outcomes.

It is estimated that over 60% of Black Africans living in Leeds are unemployed, despite many having several academic qualifications. There are fewer Black African businesses across the city; and a disproportionately higher number of Black Africans living in poor housing. There is evidence to suggest that many young Black African boys and girls are being failed by the education system.

But there is encouraging news. Despite the disproportionate impact of racism and discrimination experienced by people of African origin in Leeds, there are many individual examples of excellent personal career successes and achievements within the African community - across several professions, including - medicine, healthcare, law, academia, science, engineering, and technology.

We need to replicate these successes across all of our African communities in the city, and they must become visible and recognised for what they have achieved. They must also be seen as role models for younger Africans.

Most Africans in Leeds believe that the African community is the least represented, least visible, and most marginalised within the civic, economic, and political space of the City and the Yorkshire region.

They believe that because of institutionalised racism, Black Africans are disproportionately discriminated against and likely to languish at the bottom of the economic and social ladder.

A key measure of the progress achieved by an ethnic minority community is the extent to which they have succeeded in acquiring community assets, such as a community centre or facility, dedicated for social and cultural use, which brings the community together.

It is worth noting that all of the ethnic minority communities listed above, with the exception of the African community have a community social centre they call 'home', despite Black Africans forming the third largest ethnic minority group in the City of Leeds.

It is in the above context that the Leeds African Communities Trust was established, to formalise itself into a legally constituted body, to represent and articulate the voice of the diverse African community groups in the city, as well as to develop and deliver viable projects and programmes, aimed at addressing the economic and social inequalities experienced by the Black African community.

In March 2020, a Board of Trustees was formed to take forward the work of registering the Leeds African Communities Network with the UK Charity Commission as a legally constituted **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)**, known as the Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust (LACT).

In October 2020, the Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust (LACT) received its charitable status and number – **1191879** to raise funds and operate in pursuit of the objectives stated in its Constitution.

Since its formation and registration as the umbrella body for the diverse African communities in Leeds, the Trustees of the Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust (LACT) have held monthly Board meetings to discuss the work of the Trust and review progress in achieving its aims.

Since October 2020, the LACT Trustees have also held quarterly zoom meetings with the elected representatives of the various African community groups in Leeds, that are driving the work of the Trust.

GOVERNANCE

In the period 20th October 2020 to 31st March 2022, the Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust (LACT) was governed and managed by a Board of Trustees, made up of the following individuals:

Mr. Abdul Rashid Thomas – Chair

Mrs. Victoria Ajayi – Vice Chair

Mrs. Lucy Ndlovu – Acting Secretary / responsible for Communications

Mr. Yankuba Sawo – Treasurer

Mr Sekou Toure

Ms Ndidi Nkwopara (Resigned)

Mrs Brenda Sesay (Resigned)

Mrs Tuiya Tembo (Resigned)

The Board of Trustees is responsible for providing oversight of and accountability for the funds received by the Trust and how it is spent. It is also responsible for ensuring that the activities of the Trust are consistent with the objectives that are stated in its constitution, approved by the Charity Commission.

The Board of Trustees is the Executive Team that oversees the strategic management as well as day-to-day running of the Trust. Currently, these are all appointed volunteers drawn from various communities bringing their expertise together to develop the Trust and manage its affairs.

The plan is to invite all elected chairpersons of the various African community organisations in Leeds to join the Board of Trustees. This will be achieved by the end of June 2022.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

COVID-19 Community Response

On 17th April 2020, the Trustees of LACT established a multi-ethnic food bank at the Little London Community Center, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, as many Africans in Leeds had lost their jobs or were at risk of serious malnutrition due to loss of earnings.

The project was delivered over a period of 16 weeks and ended on 31st July 2020, during which, 945 people received food aid from the project. A total of 246 families benefitted from the project, including 506 children.

Twenty-five students also received food assistance.

Although LACT was established to support the needs of African communities in Leeds, however, the enormity of the humanitarian challenge posed by the Covid-19 pandemic was such that the LACT COVID-19 Community Response Project had to extend its support to people from diverse communities across the city.

These are examples of the ethnic origins of people that benefitted from the project:

Nigeria, Algeria, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Nepal, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, Sierra Leone, India, White British, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Angola, Guinea Conakry, Ghana, Gambia, Eritrea, Cameroon, Portugal, Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Congo DRC.

The project was funded by the Leeds City Council, the West Yorkshire Masonic Charities, and financial donations from individuals, including Trustees of LACT. In-kind donations were also received from charities and private sector organisations, with tremendous support from many volunteers who helped with food distribution.

Webinars and Community Information Sessions

The Trustees of LACT organised three webinars in July and August 2020, and in February 2021. The first webinar was about – ‘Covid-19: Why are BAME communities at greater risk?’ This webinar was presented by African medical doctors and health specialists who spoke about the Covid-19 virus, its transmission, and how it could be prevented.

The second webinar was about racism in education and the experiences of African students in Leeds. The webinar was hosted by Jermaine Jackman - a popular young African Caribbean community activist based in London. Speakers included – Hillary Benn MP, Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung, and several young African students who spoke about their experiences of racism, both at school and at university. Teachers from across various schools in Leeds participated in the webinar.

The third webinar which was held in February 2021 was about the Covid-19 vaccines and why it is important for people of African origin to take the vaccine. The webinar was organised by the Trustees of LACT in partnership with the Nigerian Community of Leeds (NCL). The discussions were moderated by Dr Babatunde Gbolade (Consultant Gynaecologist at the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust), and key speakers were – Dr Fawzia Iyamide Hardy (a GP based in Leeds), Dr. Amonia Gasper (a GP based in London), and Councillor Abigail Marshall Katung of Leeds City Council.

In March 2021 LACT received £9,300 in funding to re-establish the community Food Hub to address the growing demand for food aid as the impact of the Covid pandemic worsened.

This second wave of food support for communities came to an end on 2nd July 2021, after serving 80 families a week – a total of 1,600 families throughout the five months of operation.

Since August 2021 the Trustees of LACT started planning and re-organizing to restart an expanded Food Bank at the Little London Community Centre (Housing Office) as a Food Pantry, in anticipation of opening doors in April 2022.

LACT ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD 20TH OCTOBER 2020 TO 31ST MARCH 2021

OPENING BANK BALANCE

£4,012.55

INCOME / FUNDING RECEIVED:

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL GRANT	£9,300
DONATION	£500

TOTAL INCOME
£13,812.55

EXPENDITURES:

SALARIES	£154.07
FOOD BANK GROCERIES	£780.22
FOOD TRANSPORTATION	£260
FOOD FREEZER PURCHASE	£218.95
PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE	£119.99
WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT / HOSTING	£441.39
EVENTS & PUBLICITY	£70

TOTAL EXPENDITURE
£2,043.82

SURPLUS INCOME
£11,768.73

CLOSING BANK BALANCE
£11,768.73

END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL
2021 TO 31ST MARCH 2022

OPENING BANK BALANCE
£11,768.73

FUNDING RECEIVED:

(LEEDS CHRISTIAN COIMMUNITY TRUST) £1,900.00

TOTAL INCOME
£13,668.73

EXPENDITURES:

SALARIES £1,633.87

GROCERIES £3,061.52

TRANSPORTATION £1,797.00

MISCELLANEOUS (TAXIS, ETC) £30.15

ZOOM HOSTING £115.10

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE £119.99

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT / HOSTING £1583.86

EVENTS & PUBLICITY £340.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURE
£8,681.49

SURPLUS INCOME
£4,987.24

CLOSING BANK BALANCE
£4,987.24

SIGNED:

Mr Abdul Rashid Thomas
Chairman, LACT