

LEEDS AFRICAN COMMUNITIES CHARITY TRUST (LACT)



ANNUAL REPORT & INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

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

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 *advance 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; and prevent or relieve 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 in 2019, 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.

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.

Be a catalyst for community cohesion and development.

To become the African voice – providing a larger and stronger participation and representation of all things African.

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

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

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

GOVERNANCE

In the financial year ended 31st March 2024, the Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust (LACT) was governed and managed by a Board of Trustees and co-opted Trustees comprising of:

Abdul Rashid Thomas – Chair

Victoria Ajayi – Vice Chair

Lucy Ndlovu – Communications Officer

Sekou Toure (Ivory Coast Community)

Mohamed Dawo (Sierra Leone Community)

Yankuba Sawo (Gambian community)

Paul Njoroge – (Kenyan community)

Brouch Boggon – (Zimbabwean community) Secretary

Hawa Bah (Guinean community)

Aissatou Turay (Ivorian Community)

Mingson Mingina (Congolese Community)

In this financial year 2023/2024, the Board of Trustees continued to provide oversight of and accountability for the funds received by the Trust. It also ensured that the activities of the Trust are consistent with the objectives that are stated in its constitution, as 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 work of the Trust and manage its affairs.

Many of the trustees listed above are elected chairpersons or representatives of their respective African community organisations in the city.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023 / 2024 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Little London Community Food Pantry

The Leeds African Communities Charity Trust was successful in its request to the Leeds City Council for capital grant of over £35,000 to purchase and convert a 40 feet shipping container for use as a community food pantry, located in the car park of the Little London Community Centre.

In this financial year, the Little London Community Food Pantry provided groceries and essential non-foods household items to over 1,800 residents of the Little London, Woodhouse and neighbouring communities that were experiencing hardship, due to the rising cost-of-living crisis and the economic impact of the Covid pandemic.

This signifies an increase of 600 beneficiaries from the previous financial year.

A key objective of the Little London Food Pantry Project is to improve the quality of life for people in the community, by helping to minimise the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on people's health and well-being.

Managed by the Leeds African Communities Charity Trust, with the assistance of local volunteers, including Local Ward Councillors, the Food Pantry continues to deliver its services every Friday between 12pm and 2pm.

The Food Pantry members paid a one-off membership fee of £1, along with a weekly contribution of £4 (paid every Friday) towards the costs of running the pantry. In return, they received a bag of groceries and other non-food items which would normally cost about £30 to £40 in the supermarkets.

The Food Pantry Welcome Space Project

With funding from the Voluntary Action Leeds' Welcome Space Programme, the pantry provided free refreshments every Friday, between 12pm and 2pm - including hot meals, for service users and their families.

The Food Pantry Café brought together people of diverse social backgrounds to interact, share stories and experiences. This has helped to combat isolation and loneliness; as well as improving the mental wellbeing of people in the communities we serve.

The Pantry Café has also helped in building community cohesion and promoted social inclusion.

The Little London Climate Action Project

In March 2024, the Leeds African Communities Charitable Trust and Together for Peace (T4P), amicably and jointly agreed to bring the Little London Climate Action Project to a close, so as to explore sustainable management strategies for the project.

As a result, LACT refunded all underspend to T4P. LACT had acted as the employer for the Project Worker and managed the project funding on behalf of the community-led project Steering Group.

The aim of the Little London Climate Action project was to engage the local community in the climate emergency, by delivering community-led activities that bring sustainable change beyond the duration of the funding.

In this financial year ended 31st March 2024, LACT received a total of £10,716 funding from T4P, for the employment of the Little London Climate Action Hub Worker and cover project overhead costs.

Until the project was brought to an end in June 2024, LACT supported the Hub worker in delivering the Little London Climate Action Project; kept comprehensive financial records; and submitted quarterly reports to T4P throughout this financial year.

Listening Well Project

LACT received funding of £1,100 from Voluntary Action Leeds to help compile a report on the perceptions of people in Leeds, regarding their local community and the changes they would like to see in order to create a better society.

LACT conducted face to face interviews with 30 users of the Food Pantry and completed questionnaires. A short report was then produced for Voluntary Action Leeds.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

	2022/2023	2023/2024
OPENING BALANCE - 1 APRIL	5,107.20	29,291.00
LEEDS CITY COUNCIL GRANT	28,050.00	4007.43
LEEDS CHRISTIANS CHARITY	9,000.00	14950
VAL - WELCOME SPACES		4550
T4P - CLIMATE ACTION	11,530.84	10716.26
FOOD PANTRY SALES	4,522.00	9302.48
CASH DONATIONS	350.00	
REFUNDS	119.96	343.52
LORD MAYOR DINNER	850.00	
BARCA - GRANT	750.00	
OBLONG GRANT	1,500.00	1500
VAL LISTENING WELL		1,100.00
VAL HSF FOOD PANTRY		2000
Total Income at 31 March	61,780.00	77,760.69
EXPENDITURES:		
FOOD PANTRY SALARY	1,728.00	3288
PANTRY VOLUNTEER EXPENSES		200
CLIMATE ACTION SALARY	3,809.60	8705.07
FOOD PANTRY GROCERIES/SANITARIES	10,667.56	21198.62
FOOD TRANSPORTATION CONTAINER	737.50	2461
PURCHASE/CONVERSION	8,763.00	13191
PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE	119.19	123.44

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT / HOSTING	529.44	460
LACT PUBLICITY	150.00	
ZOOM LICENCE	144.00	244.54
COMMUNITY EVENTS	1,310.00	
CLIMATE ACTION PURCHASES	1,401.66	
MEETINGS - FOOD / DRINKS	735.00	175
ACCOUNTING PACKAGE TRIAL	4.08	12.96
PANTRY FIXTURES & FITTINGS		761.45
PANTRY CAFÉ	528.17	279.6
PANTRY SIGNBOARD		410.99
PANTRY DESK/CHAIRS		180
PANTRY BANNER		150
PANTRY LAPTOP PURCHASE		456.97
PANTRY CLEANING		220
LORD MAYOR DINNER	700.00	
PARENT TODLER GROUP		
SALARY/EXPENSES		164
VAL - WELCOME SPACES		3000
CLIMATE ACTION - UNDERSPEND		
REFUND		5988.76
CLIMATE ACTION EXPENSES		301.86
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	31,327.20	61,973
SURPLUS INCOME AS AT 31 MARCH	30,452.80	15,787.00
CLOSING BANK BALANCES AS AT 31 MACRH 2024		
BARCLAYS CURRENT ACCOUNT	361.66	
COOP CURRENT ACCOUNT	425.57	
COOP SAVINGS ACOUNT	15,000	
TOTAL CLOSING BANK BALANCE	15787.23	

OUR CURRENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES (2024/2025)

Mr Abdul Rashid Thomas – Chairman

Mrs Victoria Ajayi – Vice Chair

Mr Yankuba sawo – Assistant Treasurer

Dr Mohamed Dawo – Chair of Sierra Leone Community

Ms Aissatou Toure – Ivorian Community

Mr Paul Njoroge – Kenyan Community

Mr Achim Pashi – Chair of Congolese Community

Mr Sekou Toure – Ivorian Community

Mrs Kaddy Jabang – Gambian Community

Mrs Hawa Bah – Guinean Community

Dr Innocent Tasara – Chair of Zimbabwean Community of Leeds

Mr Jamal Ali – Chair of Eritrean Community of Leeds

Dr Jennifer Grace Irabor – Safeguarding Policy Officer

Ms Sarata Sawo

Mr Ben Izuagie – Chair of Nigerian Community of Leeds

Mr Alie Mahgoub – Chair of Leeds Refugee Forum

Mrs Chloe Hudson

OUR GRAND PATRON

**LORD MAYOR OF LEEDS (2024/2025) – COUNCILOR ABIGAIL MARSHALL
KATUNG**

OUR SECRETARIAT

Mrs Vivian Agbi

SIGNED:

Mr Abdul Rashid Thomas

Chairman, LACT

1st December 2024

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S STATEMENT

I can confirm that I have examined the bank statements, monthly income and expenditure statements for the year ended 31st March 2024, as well as this End of Year Report and Accounts for 2023.2024, and am satisfied that they are a true reflection of the charities financial affairs in the period ended 31st March 2024.

SIGNED:

Mrs Miatta Tucker (MA)