

LANCASHIRE FIRST CIO

Charity Number 1197245

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ended 31ST December 2023



www.lancashirefirst.org

Lancashire First CIO

Year ended 31st December 2023

Reference and administrative details

Trustees	Mohammad Iftakhar Moazzam Ali Mohammed Ismail
Principal address	15 Dover Street Nelson Lancashire BB9 7RF
Bankers	HSBC 12 Manchester Road Burnley Lancashire BB11 1JH
Registered Charity Number	1197245
Independent Examiner	M R Heaton FCCA FCIE DChA KM Chartered Accountants 1 st Floor, Block C The Wharf Manchester Road Burnley BB11 1JG

Lancashire First CIO

Year ended 31st December 2023

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31st December 2023.

The charity was converted from the former Community Interest Company of the same name on 16th December 2021.

OBJECTS

The objects of the charity are:

For the public benefit, to relieve the needs of individuals with learning disabilities and by extension their families and carers living in Lancashire in particular but not exclusively by the provision of appropriate workshops, events and activities.

Activities

This has been a busy year of activities and the detailed annual review which accompanies this report shows the impact we have made on so many lives and continue to do so.

Public benefit

The trustees confirm that we have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

The Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities are on page 6.

The main source of income this period has been that of the Gladrags shop which alongside raising funds provides valuable work experience to our beneficiaries.

Balances at the year-end amounted to £172,731 all unrestricted.

The charity aims to hold 3 months expenditure in unrestricted funds – at the end of 2023 the amount was significantly higher than the target, however the trustees are mindful of potential need to relocate and as a result incur higher rents or possible purchase of a property.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Trustees

The trustees as listed on page 2 served throughout the period and are in office as of the date of this report.

Governing document

Governed by the Constitution adopted on the 16th December 2021.

Lancashire First CIO

Year ended 31st December 2023

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

Structure

The trustees meet regularly to discuss matters relating to governance and management, also to steer the direction of Lancashire First.

Risk management

The Trustees have introduced a risk management process to assess business risks and are implementing systems to mitigate these risks. Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures or authorisation of all transactions and projects and to ensure consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the Charity. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to the premises. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still met the needs of the Charity.

Safeguarding of vulnerable adults is undertaken with appropriate policies and procedures in place.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 30th October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Moazzam Ali

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF LANCASHIRE FIRST CIO

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st December 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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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

M R Heaton FCCA FCIE DChA
KM
1st Floor, Block C,
The Wharf
Burnley
Lancashire
BB11 1JG

30th October 2024

LANCASHIRE FIRST CIO
Year ended 31st December 2023
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £
Receipts		
Shop sales	109,852	-
Grants		9,449
Fundraising and donations		2,451
	109,852	11,900
Payments		
Staff	36,398	11,900
Rent	7,150	
Other costs (project costs/volunteers etc)	34,073	
	77,621	11,900
Net receipts/(payments)	32,231	-
Funds at 1 st January 2023	172,730	
Funds at 31 st December 2023	140,499	-
	Unrestricted funds £	Total 31.12.23 £
CASH FUNDS		
Bank current accounts	<u>172,730</u>	<u>172,730</u>

Approved by the trustees and signed by:

Moazzam Ali - Trustee
30th October 2024

LANCASHIRE FIRST CIO

Year ended 31st December 2023

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

- 1 Basis of preparation
These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities Act 2011.
- 2 Fund Accounting
 - (a) Unrestricted funds are those that can be expended at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the objects of the charity
 - (b) Restricted funds are those that may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor.
- 3 Taxation
The charity is not liable to tax on its charitable activities.
The charity is not registered for VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the expense to which it relates.
- 4 Transactions with trustees
No remuneration nor expenses were paid to trustees, or any persons connected with them during the year or previous year.
- 5 Restricted funds
The purpose of this restricted funds is explained in the Trustees Annual Report.



ANNUAL REPORT

JAN 2023 – DEC 2023



LANCASHIRE FIRST CIO

2 Yorkshire Street | Burnley | BB11 2DJ

About Us

Lancashire First CIO is a registered not for profit, Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), set up to benefit the residents of Lancashire. As an organisation we strive to find opportunities for people with learning disabilities that are determined through working together to also support each other, so they can improve their life skills and future prospects.

Lancashire First CIO manages and operates a charity shop called Gladrags, which is located in the town centre of Burnley. The members and volunteers associated with the Gladrags charity shop have experienced staff to support them in their various roles.

Our prime focus is the community; supporting and helping local people to help themselves. We aim to find new opportunities and offer new experiences that help educate as well as ease the minds of our beneficiaries.

It has been six years since Lancashire First CIO began operating, and during that time we feel honoured to have helped over 250 people with learning disabilities, whether that is through the volunteering opportunities at the shop or through the tailored activities we provide.

Even though the charity is based in Burnley, we support people from all areas of East Lancashire and beyond by offering a safe and accessible environment to people with a range of learning disabilities, ranging from 15 to 69 years of age.

The aim is to give individuals the chance to explore, develop, socialise and grow their ideas and goals through a wide variety of educational, social and practical activities.

We intend to empower individuals to enable them to contribute to their communities in a positive way, reducing social isolation and loneliness, as well as increasing their confidence and improving their physical and mental health.

Lancashire First CIO provides a safe, loving and warm environment where people come to learn and develop new skills. Most importantly, through this journey they are making new friends and forming long lasting and important relationships.

The charity is actively involved within our local community and contributes regularly in a meaningful way, helping to develop a strong community presence and build a positive image of people with learning disabilities, allowing for better integration and acceptance for all.

We would welcome you to visit the Gladrags charity shop where you can meet our volunteers and members with learning disabilities every Monday to Friday from 9.30am until 4.30pm and on Saturdays from 10am until 4pm, situated at 2 Yorkshire Street, Burnley, BB11 2DJ.



The Year in Review: Jan 2023 – Dec 2023

Pantomime

On Sunday 15th January 2023, we took a group of 30 members and volunteers with learning disabilities to watch Cinderella in pantomime at the Colne Municipal Hall.

All of our members and volunteers had a splendid time and enjoyed their ice cream and drinks, gifted kindly to us from the lovely staff at Colne Municipal Hall.

The show was brilliant and our group were full of joy after watching it. The feedback received was very positive and we cannot wait to be back again in 2024.



A few of our hardworking members & volunteers lined up outside the Municipal Theatre in Colne, ready to watch Cinderella in pantomime.



A group of members and volunteers sat waiting for the performance to start.

Happy Chinese New Year

On Sunday 22nd January 2023, it was the start of the Chinese New Year. For our weekly arts and crafts drop in sessions, we began getting creative and making some fantastic pieces to celebrate the occasion and to learn all about how the Chinese people welcome the new year.

Here is our beautiful display created by our amazing attendees, including volunteers with learning disabilities who attend the weekly drop in sessions.

They all love to try out new techniques and learn about new methods of creativity.

Our weekly drop in sessions help and support adults with learning disabilities to achieve peace and mental health therapy through the aid of art and socialising with other people.



The creations made collectively by our attendees for the Chinese New Year display.



Our attendees with learning disabilities creating lanterns, dragons and abstract art pieces to make a beautiful display, celebrating the Chinese New Year.

Stitch, Trips and Socialise Project

On Wednesday 8th February 2023, we launched the stitch, trips and socialise project with funding from the NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (LSCICB) and administered by Burnley Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service (BPRCVS).

The first of eight sessions in total saw the start of the sewing classes where participants were provided with skills in hand stitching, embroidery, upcycling, cushion cover making and using sewing machines. A big thankyou to tutor Fatima for facilitating these sessions and providing the training. All participants really enjoyed learning and improving their sewing skills.

*Starting Wednesday
8th February 2023*

*Contact us
01282 832344*

«Striving to find opportunities for
people with learning disabilities»

Embroidery & Sewing

Learn to hand stitch, embrioder and sew for free!

**Join us for 8 weeks of hand stitching,
upcycling material and creating some
fun pieces to take home with you.**

Supported By:

 **Wednesday - 10.30am till 1.00pm**
THE SWITCH, BURNLEY
BB11 2DL

 **Lancashire and
South Cumbria
Integrated Care Board**



WWW.LANCASHIREFIRST.ORG

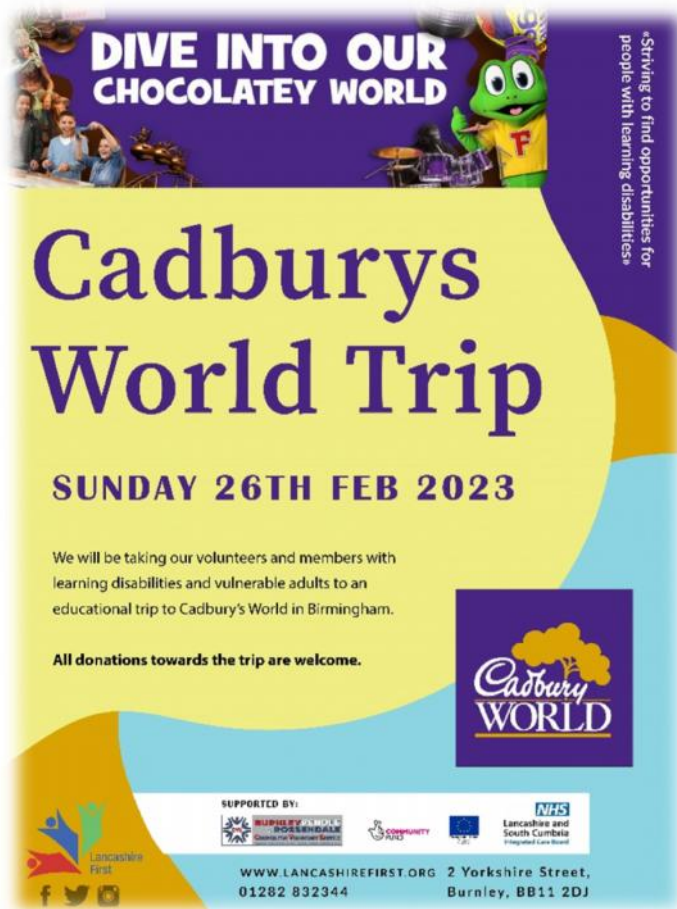
Cadbury's World Trip

On Sunday 26th February 2023, we took 48 people including members and volunteers with learning disabilities to Cadbury's World in Birmingham to learn all about chocolate.

All attendees got to see how chocolate is made, what it is made from including the sugar content, the history of Cadbury's and where it all started for one of the most popular chocolate brands in the world. The day was full of interactive learning and chocolate tasting.

The trip was extremely beneficial for the attendees who all felt they had improved their mental health since visiting and also felt more confident speaking to new people.

We thank the NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (LSCICB) and Burnley Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service (BPRCVS) for funding this project.



One of our service users pictured with the mascot on stilts.



Photo above shows the full group lined up ready to get onto the coach to visit Cadbury's World in Birmingham.



On the left: One of the attendees is pictured with his chocolate creation made entirely by himself using Cadbury's melted chocolate.

Above: The 4D cinema screen ready to be viewed by the trip attendees.



The group is gathered at the entrance and is fascinated by the juggler on stilts.



Waiting to watch the 4D Cadbury's film featuring all our favourite Cadbury's chocolate characters.



The group outside the main entrance with big smiles after their fun packed day at Cadbury's World.

Celebrating Special Birthdays

On Wednesday 1st March 2023, we celebrated one of our service user's special birthdays.

The amazing Samantha Smith turned 50 and her birthday was celebrated at the weekly drop in session where there were lots of treats for everyone to enjoy.

Samantha is a valued member of Lancashire First CIO. She was gifted chocolates, a cake, a birthday card and a big birthday badge to celebrate the day.

She was very overwhelmed by the gesture. Here at Lancashire First CIO we know many of our service user's are vulnerable, lonely and isolated so we aim to help celebrate their birthdays as one big family. It is great that we can provide some joy on their special day.

March 2023 was a busy time with birthdays at our Gladrags charity shop.

A huge happy birthday to the lovely and hardworking Kimberley Clark and the fantastic and kind, Amy. Both ladies were treated to boxes of chocolates and birthday cards, to celebrate the special occasion. We hope to celebrate their birthdays for many years to come.

At Lancashire First CIO we are so grateful to all of our amazing members and volunteers for their commitment and dedication in helping to run the Gladrags charity shop.



Novelty Caterpillar cake for Samantha's 50th Birthday.



Samantha with happy tears after receiving her surprise cake and presents.



The stitching group sings happy birthday to their friend.



Samantha cuts her 50th birthday cake.



Holly with her chocolates and birthday card, gifted to her by Lancashire First CIO.



Kimberley with her chocolates and birthday card, gifted to her by Lancashire First CIO.

Sewing Classes in Full Swing

Over the past couple of months, our lovely volunteers and members with learning disabilities have been busy sewing and embroidering as part of our 'stitch, trips and socialise' project.

With the project nearing the end, new embroidery techniques have been learnt, some upcycling has been taking place and finishing off the pieces they have started.

Lettica was a real star as well as Samantha. With assistance, Lettica was able to make a hair scrunchie and a small dolls blanket using the sewing machine. We also upcycled material from a child's item of clothing to make our pieces. Samantha was able to finish her embroidery piece having struggled initially due to stiffness in her hands. She overcame this with certain techniques, meaning she was able to take full part in the activities.

We have seen how much our attendees have flourished over the weeks and here is some of their progress. They have made handbags, cushions and learnt to use the sewing machines too.

Through the funding received we were able to purchase a total of three new sewing machines which enabled the users to gain hands on experience of using a sewing machine and to create some amazing final pieces with the sewing techniques learnt.



Stitch, Trips and Socialise Project

Below are some photos taken during the eight week sewing drop in sessions:



Easter Celebrations

We wrapped up our Easter celebrations by gifting Easter eggs donated kindly by the Boohoo distribution centre in Burnley, to our volunteers and members with learning disabilities.

They enjoyed their Easter eggs and were ever so grateful for the lovely gesture.

Boohoo support us all year round with donations of all kinds. Their kindness and generosity support our work and make the activities we provide possible. Asda in Blackburn, Tesco in Burnley and Morrison's in Nelson were all kind enough to donate Easter eggs to us, which we also distributed to our volunteers and members.

With these generous donations, we were able to show gratitude to all the amazing individuals who put in a lot of hard work, to help run our charity shop and support Lancashire First CIO.



Left to Right: Community Champion Lynne with Iram Sayeed showing the Easter egg donation from Asda in Blackburn.



Easter egg donation from Morrison's in Nelson for the volunteers and members of Lancashire First CIO.



Volunteer Scott with our Easter egg donation from Boohoo Distribution Centre in Burnley.



Easter egg donation from Tesco in Burnley presented by Billie; the community champion.

Easter Themed Arts & Crafts

Lancashire First CIO hosted a special Easter themed arts and crafts drop in session during April 2023 for our volunteers and members with learning disabilities.

Our attendees created many fantastic pieces; including decorations, Easter bonnets, Easter cards, egg heads and produced some Easter inspired embroidery too.

We loved seeing all their creativity come to life. A special thankyou to the Boohoo distribution centre in Burnley for their continued support, which allows us to organise activities like this.



Volunteer Samantha showing the Easter card she made in the arts drop in session.



Parveen decorating an egg for our Easter window display.



Sharon's Boris Johnson egg head, made using a variety of different materials.



Maxine's baby chick in an egg. This cute creation was also displayed as part of the Easter window display.

King's Coronation Preparation

During April and May 2023, we were busy getting prepared for our King's Coronation celebrations.

During our arts and crafts drop in sessions we created cushions, art pieces, mini King figurines and also some shiny crowns all ready to be showcased at our tea party on Monday 8th May 2023. Everyone involved, enjoyed preparing for this memorable occasion.

Below are some photos taken during the arts and crafts drop in sessions:



Union Jack cushion making for the King's Coronation tea party.



Trying on the crowns they have made to wear at the party.



Sharon feeling proud with the cushion she has stitched using the sewing machine.



Foil art scratching is being produced to decorate the crowns.



LH feeling delighted with her crown on, after decorating it.



Our very own little King's being created for the table displays.

The King's Coronation Tea Party

On Monday 8th May 2023, we hosted an afternoon tea party celebrating the King's Coronation for our volunteers and members with learning disabilities and their carers.

The celebration was held at The Pavilion in Thompson Park, Burnley with over 70 people in attendance, who all had a joyful time and enjoyed plenty of food, drinks, desserts and snacks.

We even had His Majesty, The King in attendance; in cutout form.

A huge thank you to our donors Boohoo; without who this would not have been possible, to Burnley Borough Council for their financial contribution, our customers for their donations, Billie-Jean Horne from Tesco Extra for their food donations, to LèSweet Et L'Indien for the great food and service and last but by no means least Al Hamza Banqueting Hall in Accrington for loaning us their beautiful throne for the day, so that our attendees could take some great photos. It was a great get together and a wonderful day for everyone.

Wrapping up the Coronation party updates with information about the fundraising which took place on the day and prior. From the raffle held on the day, we raised an amazing £145 and a further £45 was raised from customer donations in our Gladrags charity shop. These funds raised helped support the ongoing work of Lancashire First CIO and our core aim which is 'striving to find opportunities for people with learning disabilities'. Thank you to everyone for their dedication, commitment, passion and support...they are all truly amazing.



The table set up for our volunteers and members.



The dessert table set up, all Union Jack themed.



Our scrumptious pastries for the party, from Le Sweet.



The raffle prize table set up for the games played.

Below are some photos taken during the King's Coronation Party:



National Science and Media Museum Bradford

On Sunday 21st May 2023, we took 45 volunteers and members with learning disabilities and their carers to the National Science and Media Museum in Bradford.

They enjoyed a day of learning about media, the internet, TV advertising, sound, light and the solar system. We also treated them to two informative documentaries at the IMAX cinema and a session of gaming in the games lounge. Our trip attendees enjoyed both the Antarctica 3D and Hubble 3D docu-films, feeling a lot more knowledgeable after having watched them.

A big thank you to our funder Lancashire County Council and County Councillor Lian Pate, for enabling us to provide activities for the vulnerable and socially isolated.



Group of 45 volunteers and members, lined up outside the Science and Media Museum, ready to go in.



Our volunteers Scott and Connor experimenting in the Science area of the Museum.



The group enjoying themselves whilst playing arcade games in the games area.



Our members Paul and Bernie, sat at the 3D cinema screening of Antarctica.



Our volunteers and members seeing how sound vibrations work.



Chris; our volunteer having a play with the optical illusion apparatus and learning how it works.

Mayor's Tea Party

On Tuesday 30th May 2023, we were delighted to be invited to the Mayor of Burnley; Raja Arif Khan's Tea Party at Burnley Town Hall.

Raja Arif Khan hosted a stunning tea party with lots of fantastic guests including other mayor's from across the county. It was great that Lancashire First CIO were involved in this event.

Our volunteers and members; Sharon, Sam and Kimberley had a great afternoon and really enjoyed meeting the mayor and his family. We got an insight into his life and the amazing work he does with various local charities, as well as his future plans for the town of Burnley.

Thank you to County Councillor Lian Pate for the invite and Mayor Arif Khan for his hospitality.



The Mayor of Burnley pictured with our hardworking volunteers; Kimberley, Sam & Sharon.



Sam, Sharon and Kimberley, delighted to be in the company of so many influential people.



The set up nicely created for the guests who attended the Mayor's Tea Party.



All the local past and presents, mayors and mayoress' seated on the VIP table congratulating the new mayor.



Summer Dance Classes

We were excited to announce the launch of our 'Dance Classes' on Tuesday 6th June 2023.

The aim of these classes was to help people with learning disabilities get active through dance.

Our classes ran every Tuesday from 11am till 12pm at the Vanguard Centre in Burnley and featured a dance instructor providing a free weekly dance session.

With our professional instructor, our attendees were able to get fit and have fun whilst dancing. Whether a beginner or a professional, our dance classes were worth a go.



**Vanguard Community Centre
Burnley, BB11 4SD**

**FOR INFO CONTACT:
01282 832344**



**"Striving to find opportunities for
people with learning disabilities"**

Get fit with us!

**Join us for
7 weeks of
dance classes
with a professional
instructor.**



Tuesdays - 11am till 12pm

WWW.LANCASHIREFIRST.ORG

Dance Classes in Full Swing

Our dance classes with the lovely Personal Trainer Elizabeth, were in full swing over the summer and our members were absolutely loving them.

Just after week one alone, all participants felt energised and fitter.

We love to offer a range of activities to adults with learning disabilities and these sessions provided a positive impact on their lives.

We were able to see the positive impact the dance fitness classes had on their moods, mental health and confidence. Week on week they became more sociable and confident in themselves. All those involved in this activity really enjoyed every dance class.

Our dance classes ran every Thursday from 11am till 12pm at the Vanguard Centre in Burnley. People with learning disabilities were welcome to join in free of charge.



Photographs from several different dance classes, showing the participants confidence grow week on week.



Sam's 40th Birthday

A huge happy 40th birthday to our amazing volunteer and restoration man...Sam!

We celebrated his birthday at our arts and crafts drop in session with a box of delicious cupcakes. Sam was gifted a birthday card signed by all of his friends and colleagues and a box of chocolates to celebrate his special day. Wishing Sam all the best for the future.

We hope he had a fabulous day and would like to thank him for all of his hard work.

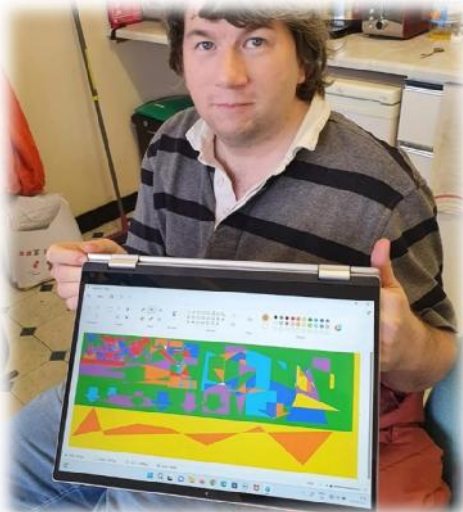


Sam; our hardworking volunteer, featured above with his birthday card and box of chocolates.

He can also be seen blowing out the candles on his birthday cupcakes which were later shared out at the arts drop in session, with his friends and colleagues.

Sam is a role model volunteer who is eager to always improve his personal skills and works well both independently and as part of a group.

Sam; our hardworking volunteer, featured below with some of his great pieces of work.



Leoni...Celebrating One Year

On Saturday 5th March 2022, the very talented Leoni joined us as a volunteer at our Gladrags charity shop. When Leoni joined us, she was shy and quiet and did not have the experience of working with the general public or people with learning disabilities.

During her time with us she acquired several skills, including organising the shop floor and book corner, hanging clothing, pricing, tagging and steaming clothes, assisting customers who needed access to restricted areas (e.g: glass cabinets or objects displayed in the shop window) and working on the till. Leoni has worked so hard and improved so many of her skills.

Leoni said, "Working at Gladrags has improved my confidence when being in the presence of others." She added; "Teamwork is also an area in which I believe I have improved. When completing shifts at Gladrags everyone has been very welcoming and a pleasure to work with." Leoni loved working on the till and her role in customer services, Leoni explained, "This is because I was able to interact with others and brighten their day whilst doing so."

After working with us for one year and four months, Leoni left us on Saturday 29th July 2023, to pursue her studies in policing. Lancashire First CIO organised a leaving meal for her at the Banny's restaurant, where her friends and colleagues celebrated her time with us. She will be missed but we are very proud of the person she has become. All the best to the lovely Leoni, we think you will make a fantastic Police Officer. Wishing you the best for the future.



Leoni featured here on the last shift at the Gladrags charity shop with her work friends.



Leoni's work friends and colleagues say bye with a leaving meal at Banny's restaurant.



A very happy volunteer, presented with chocolates and a thank you card.



Leoni and Emma have a photo together having worked together for a year.



Working on the till, serving customers; something Leoni was great at.

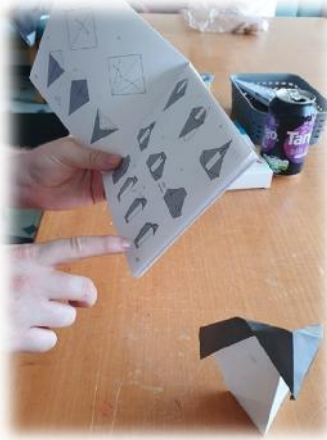
Arts Drop In Sessions

Our talented volunteers and members busy being creative. With Halloween around the corner we had some of them making a start on their Halloween party creations, whilst others were getting creative with foil art, paints and sequins. We love seeing the beautiful pieces our attendees produce during the drop in sessions. They are always so unique and fun to look at.

Art provides real therapy for our service users and beneficiaries, who we find become very open about matters concerning their lives, whilst they work away on their artistic creations and projects. We thank Boohoo for helping us organise our arts and crafts drop in sessions, through their generous donations and ongoing support. Arts and crafts are something all our volunteers and members enjoy. We have so many amazing budding artists, some of them like to draw, some like to stitch whilst others like to paint, or create using diamond or foil art.



Our group getting creative in our arts & crafts drop in session. Laura making a start on a shark themed scratch art piece.



Sam's origami penguin, he made by carefully following the instructions. Samantha showing us her sequin art piece.



Helen using a magazine cut out to inspire her drawing.

The weekly arts and crafts session in full flow.

Fashion Show

A huge congratulations to Age UK Lancashire for putting on a fantastic charity fundraiser and fashion show on Wednesday 4th October 2023 at Mitton Hall in Clitheroe.

It was great speaking with the fabulous businesses present at the event including Soul Purpose Jewellery, Selene Candles, Tropic Skincare by Nicola, AIRE, SpiritSmith, Only The Good Stuff and Willow Tree. Their products really were fantastic and so unique. Willow Tree put on an amazing fashion show where they showcased a range of items with detailed voice over descriptions. We were so pleased to support this local charity and event.



The Mitton Hall in Clitheroe, where the event took place.



The seating with Age UK goody bags for guests.



The amazing models showcasing their individual outfits to the audience in attendance.

Below are some photos taken during the charity fundraiser and fashion show:



The models showcasing their outfits from Will Tree, for the audiences to see and purchase on the night.



South Lakes Safari Zoo

On Sunday 8th October 2023, we took 48 people to the South Lakes Safari Zoo in Cumbria to learn about the different animals that we share the Earth with.

Our volunteers and members were able to see primates, big cats, aviaries, bush birds and animals from Africa, Australia and Madagascar. They all had a fantastic day out, which involved seeing animals up close and personal. The day involved seeing many amazing animals, watching them being fed, playing with each other and marking their territories too.

We saw colourful macaws, beautiful Canada lynx, baby baboons jumping around, huge kangaroos walking around, zebras playing in the mud and jaguars leaping up a pole to reach their food. Our group watched on in awe and enjoyed taking photos of all the fascinating animals. The trip was both social and educational which benefitted all the attendees.

We thank Boohoo for their continued support, which allows us to organise activities and outdoor trips such as this for adults with learning disabilities.



Group of 48 adults and children with learning disabilities, posing in front of the entrance at the South Lakes Safari Zoo.



Some of our volunteers and members having a photo with the giraffes in their enclosure.



Daniel, one of our members taking photos of the birds and feeling delighted with his capture.



Here our trip attendees visited the penguin enclosure and watched them being fed.



Halloween Party

We had a spectacular Halloween party with our fantastic volunteers and members with learning disabilities from Lancashire First CIO.

We carved pumpkins kindly donated by Tesco Burnley, played dress up as a mummy and decorated our very own wizarding wands.

Our attendees were also treated to a buffet lunch of sandwiches, drinks, crisps, cheese twists and sweets. It was great to see everyone come together and put on a great Halloween party.

The magnificent display pieces on the food table and around the room, were created by our talented volunteers and members at our Wednesday drop in sessions.

Everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed themselves. A big thank you to County Councillor Lian Pate for accommodating us at the Switch Centre building in Burnley.



Wand making and decorating, as part of our Halloween party games.



Some of our attendees showcase their fantastic pumpkin carving skills.



The group pair up here to mummify each other using bandages and paper.



This amazing display piece was created by Sam for the Halloween party.

No Food Wastage Pact

This year we made a pact to make use of the pumpkins we were kindly donated by Tesco Burnley. Our volunteers and members sent in photos of things they did or made with their pumpkins. It was great to see all the different ways in which the pumpkins were used.

The lovely Christine made pumpkin soup, which looked scrumptious.

We had another member cook the pumpkin seeds for snacking on, what a fantastic idea this was. There was also one volunteer whose mum helped her make pumpkin pudding and finally the remainder of the pumpkins were fed to the wildlife by Lancashire First CIO.

Below are some photos showing what happened to the donated pumpkins:



Pumpkin, onion, flour, swede, butter and seasoning all in a pan ready to make pumpkin soup.



The hearty soup made by one of our volunteers, ready to enjoy with a slice of bread.



Pumpkin seeds dried out and roasted to create a healthy snack.



Another one of the pumpkins all cleaned out, creating the perfect animal feed.



Butter, sugar, milk & pumpkin pieces all mixed together to create pumpkin pudding.



After several hours of cooking on the hob, a wintery pudding is ready to serve.



The insides of the pumpkin placed in one of the members gardens, for the wildlife to enjoy.



Squirrels come out to eat the food left out and they all thoroughly enjoy it.

Illuminations & Madame Tussauds

On Sunday 19th November 2023, we had the pleasure of taking 45 volunteers and members with learning disabilities to Blackpool for one of our outdoor trips.

Our group of 45, had lunch at The Sea Fish and Chips restaurant, followed by a visit to Madame Tussauds which they absolutely loved, played lots of games at the amusements and then went on to a scenic walk, to view the stunning Blackpool Illuminations.

A big thank you to Tesco Burnley for their financial support towards this trip, and our donors Boohoo for their continued support, which allows us to organise these outdoor trips.

Here are some photos from our fantastic day out:



Our group of adults with learning disabilities, waiting at the entrance of Madame Tussauds, ready to get exploring.



Photo with the Strictly Come Dancing star.



Some of the attendees dress up with props to have a photo.



The view of the Blackpool tower, marking the start of our walk.



The stunning illuminations, enjoyed by all of our volunteers and members.

Healthier & Happier Me Project

On Wednesday 15th November 2023, we began our Healthier & Happier Me project, starting with our Art Therapy sessions.

This project and these sessions were funded by the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (LSCICB) and administered by Burnley Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service (BPRCVS).

Our two and a half hour sessions gave our attendees the opportunity to be creative and improve their mental health through art. The aim of these sessions is to provide a safe and open space for our attendees to chat to one another as well as improve their confidence and social skills. During the sessions the attendees took part in many different activities, including painting, drawing, diamond art, model construction and sewing to name a few.

The Healthier & Happier Me project will run until the end of March 2024.



LH makes an attempt at her first diamond art piece.



Becki showing us the bracelet she made during the art therapy sessions.



Chris, works on the construction of his wooden boat.



Sam using gel pens to colour, creating a metallic look.



Sharon makes a start on a new foil art project.



Maxine uses tinsel wrapped bendy wire to create snowflakes so that she can decorate her art piece.

Dance Sessions

Week one of our fantastic dance classes, taught by the talented Dansworks Dance Academy of Performing Arts CIC instructor.

Our new dance classes allowed attendees to get fit and socialise in the late afternoon at the end of the working week. It also got them all together at one venue.

Running every Friday from 4.45pm till 5.45pm at the Vanguard Community Centre, these sessions were free and a part of our Healthier & Happier Me project, funded by the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (LSCICB) and administered by Burnley Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service (BPRCVS).

Our attendees loved to dance and found it to be the perfect activity to do in order to feel active, energised and fitter. The feedback received from participants was very positive.



Week one of our dance sessions with ten attendees.



The class getting into the dance routine.



The group concentrating on the instructions being given by their dance instructor.



A close up of the dance students at the back, whilst they do a cool down routine.

Happy Birthdays 2023

At Lancashire First CIO, we like to appreciate the time, passion and dedication of all the amazing volunteers we have supporting our charity and also volunteering to carry out various tasks in our Gladrags charity shop. This appreciation is shown by gifting the volunteers birthday cards and chocolates to celebrate their birthdays.

Below are some of the volunteers who were gifted birthday cards and chocolates:



Kimberley with her card and chocolates.



Amy with her card and chocolates.



Parveen with her card and chocolates.



April with her card and chocolates.



LH with her card and chocolates.



Scott with his card and chocolates.



Anisa with her card and chocolates.



Susan with her card and chocolates.

Christmas Party 2023

What a lovely night it was; full of joy, pride, Christmas cheer and 70 amazing guests.

Lancashire First CIO hosted their annual Christmas party on Sunday 10th December 2023 at the Landmark in Burnley for their hardworking volunteers and members with learning disabilities, inviting along their carers, supporters and donors of the charity too.

The night involved games, raffle prizes, speeches from some of our volunteers, food, desserts, karaoke and plenty of entertainment. It was great to end the year together, as one team.

We thank all our guests and all those who made the evening so special. Thank you to Nadeem from Asda Burnley, Mukhtar from Tesco Burnley, Boohoo, County Councillor Lian Pate and DJ Jordan from Harts Electrical Services Ltd for their continued support and attendance on the night. Thank you also to The Landmark for a stunning party set up for a third year running.

We would like to also appreciate all of the amazing organisations for their kind donations gifted for our raffle at the Christmas party. From the raffle, we were able to raise an outstanding £320, which will be used for future activities organised by Lancashire First CIO.

We thank Billie-Jean Horne & Mukhtar Mirza from Tesco Burnley, Depher CIC, Entertainer Toys, Morrison's Nelson, Asda Blackburn, The Works & JT Lloyds who helped us fill our raffle tables with great prizes that our volunteers and members were delighted to win!



Our raffle and dessert tables set up around the Christmas tree.



Raffle table full of amazing prizes and dessert table set up for the guests.



The guests having a dance whilst the DJ plays some Christmas music.



April and Maxine taking part in the karaoke.



Donna with her special mistletoe and tinsel hat.



The games begin for the night with pass the parcel.



Vivien with Buddy the Elf, presenting her with her prize for winning stand up bingo.



Volunteer Adam with his father, enjoying the night.



Here are some more great photos taken during the Christmas Party 2023:



In conclusion, Lancashire First CIO had a very successful year, accommodating and providing opportunities for double the amount of people we supported in the previous year. We managed and delivered two successful and prosperous projects around the themes of fitness, wellbeing, mental health, learning new skills and education.

Additionally, we hosted three events; including the King's Coronation, Halloween Party and the Annual Christmas Party, all of which provided a safe social space for our volunteers and members with learning disabilities along with our donors and supporters of the charity.

We organised four trips for up to 48 beneficiaries each time, these included travelling to Birmingham, Cumbria, Blackpool and Bradford. Our attendees were able to explore parts of the UK they have never seen before and they were able to learn and experience new things focusing on animals, health, culture, media, science, TV and entertainment.

Lancashire First CIO also managed the Gladrags charity shop with the support of our amazing volunteers, donors and customers. Year on year we are seeing an increase in the number of new customers visiting the Gladrags charity shop and a greater demand for the items available to buy. We would like to thank everyone for their ongoing support.

Testimonials

We surveyed our beneficiaries after they had taken part in certain activities, trips and projects organised by Lancashire First CIO. Below you will find some of their personal feedback and comments about their experiences and reasons for participating:

Activity: Trip to Cadburys World – Birmingham:

Name: Conner Martin

Feedback: "I enjoyed looking at all the different chocolate and learning new things. I benefitted from getting a bit of independence and getting out of the house. Trips like this are great as you learn so much and experience new things. It really was fantastic to be a part of."

Name: Susan Dawson

Feedback: "This activity was extremely good, there was a variety of shows for everyone to enjoy. Meeting new people, keeping busy and engaging with activities helps my mental health. I would like to take part in more trips and activities like this."

Name: Leoni Price

Feedback: "I really enjoyed it, the chocolate testing, 4D chocolate adventure, circus and so much more. I have been able to visit somewhere new and enjoy myself. I would like to appreciate Lancashire First CIO and all the staff for the invitation to take part."

Name: Yusuf Patel

Feedback: “It was a very interactive enjoyable day. I have learnt about the history of Cadbury’s and how it has evolved into a huge business.”

Activity: Trips, Stitch and Socialise – Sewing:

Name: Helen Andrews

Feedback: It’s interesting, good for occupational therapy, helps my mind and hands. I like the friendly atmosphere.”

Name: Chris Cragg

Feedback: “Good activity, helped me learn a new skill and kept me occupied. I met new people and it helped my social skills. Activities like these gets you out, helps with your mind and mental health. Sewing makes me feel calm; it’s a great form of therapy.”

Name: Samuel Ratcliffe

Feedback: “It’s good, I’ve loved it, found it relaxing and it’s allowed me to meet new people. I learnt new skills and revisited old skills, which has inspired me to do it more at home. Activities like this help me to improve my skills and it can help me in the future.”

Name: Maxine Kemp

Feedback: “I think it’s good, I get to be creative. I’ve made more friends and learnt how to sew and embroid. I like socialising and learning new skills.”

Activity: King’s Coronation Tea Party – Burnley:

Name: Anisa Aslam

Feedback: “Had an amazing time with my work team.”

Name: Christine Heywood

Feedback: “Had a jolly good time, thank you.”

Name: Sagheer Akhtar

Feedback: "Well done everyone, absolutely amazing."

Activity: Trip to the National Science and Media Museum – Bradford:

Name: Christine Heywood

Feedback: Really enjoyed it, never seen a cinema so big and not seen 3D video before. It was fun looking at technology over the years. Seeing how beautiful our planet is, learning the uses of space and getting out and about, took my mind off things."

Name: Yusuf Ali

Feedback: "I enjoyed this activity because we watched some films and went in the gaming lounge. I benefitted from this activity by learning that if the ice melts in Antarctica we will all be doomed."

Name: Kimberley Clark

Feedback: "It has been very good and interesting. I enjoyed playing games in the games room and watching the 3D cinema, making friends and learning about different sciences."

Name: Becky McKenzie

Feedback: "It was enjoyable, getting out and about and seeing new things. Activities like this gets me out the house and it helps my mental health."

Name: Dan Thorley

Feedback: "I really enjoyed the museum, met new people and loved the space film."

Activity: Trip to the South Lakes Safari Park – Cumbria:

Name: Kery Beetham

Feedback: "I enjoyed it a lot, it was interesting and enjoyed meeting different people. I felt inspired and uplifted by the trip. I enjoyed it and would not have seen animals and scenery otherwise."

Name: Katie Ainsworth

Feedback: "I enjoyed it. I got to go on a trip I normally would not be able to afford. I would like to do more activities like this as it gets me out and about."

Name: Emma Hartley

Feedback: "I always love coming on trips with the charity, especially zoo trips. I love seeing the big cats every time I come to a zoo. I've done plenty of walking and I have managed to see all my favourite animals, took loads of pictures and seen new animals."

Name: Julie Dawson

Feedback: "Very interesting, lots to see and really nice catching up with people and having a chat. Lovely to connect with nature. It's outside in the fresh air and with walking around the ground, it has been very good exercise."

Activity: Trip to Madame Tussauds and Blackpool Illuminations:

Name: Susan Dawson

Feedback: "What an amazing day."

Name: Darren Halstead

Feedback: "I love Blackpool."

Name: Christine Heywood

Feedback: "Brilliant!"