

One Impossible Thing is a CIO and our objectives, as set out in our constitution, are:

the relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances, by the provision of:

- (a) free recycled sports shoes to enable them to participate in sports and activities
- (b) promoting the benefits of recycling and reuse of sports shoes
- (c) raising awareness of the beneficial effect that participation in sports and exercise has on both mental and physical health.

Summary of our main activities

We deliver these objectives in three key ways

- *Collecting preloved sports shoes*
We collect preloved sports shoes through our permanent recycling bins in sports venues in Dacorum, Luton, St. Albans and Harpenden. We also collect the shoes through one-off Shoe Drives held by schools, sports clubs and businesses. All of these collections promote the benefits of recycling sports shoes and look to change behaviour in the general public.
- *Distributing sports shoes*
We work with schools, sports clubs, refugee groups, homeless charities, charitable organisations and individuals, to distribute the preloved sports shoes to those who need a little extra help.
- *Organising sports challenges*
We promote the benefits of sport by organising a series of One Impossible Challenges that encourages the general public to get involved in physical challenges at their own level, whilst being supported by an online community.

Overview

By the end of the financial year we had distributed 5,612 pairs of preloved sports shoes since the charity started. This equates to a saving of 78.568 tonnes of CO2 emissions. At an average cost of a pair of preloved sports shoes of £25, this has collectively saved families and individuals £140,300.

Distributions

Schools

This financial year we worked with a number of schools to provide free preloved sports shoes for their students. This included ongoing support to Adeyfield Academy (Dacorum), Chiltern Way Academy (Wendover) Kings Langley School (Dacorum), The Hemel Hempstead School (Dacorum) and Dacorum Education Support Centre. New schools included St. Roses Primary and Nursery (Dacorum), Greenfield's Primary School (Watford) and The Reddings Primary School (Dacorum).

The majority of senior schools tend to be in need of football boots for students to take part in PE lessons on their 3G astro pitches. The majority of primary schools wanted trainers for PE lessons.

We gave out 322 pairs of preloved sports shoes to schools over the financial year.

Refugee groups

We worked on an ongoing basis with a number of the local branches of the Herts Welcomes Refugees (HWR) groups. We also worked with St. Albans Refugees, Care 4 Calais, the Refugee Council and the Stevenage Novotel refugee group. We gave out 390 pairs in total to these refugee groups.

Apex 360 ran ongoing football sessions for refugees in Redbourn, so we provided football boots for them. Over the year we provided 58 pairs of preloved boots to their participants.

Homeless Organisations

We continued our relationship with New Hope in Watford and DENS in Dacorum. New Hope held a Health Day at their homeless Drop In Centre in October. Their beneficiaries had access to services such as dental care, liver checks, haircuts and pedicures. We attended with a number of trainers to give to their beneficiaries. We gave out 37 pairs.

We also supported Hightown Housing Association, who ran a similar Homeless Health Day in St. Albans. We gave out 18 pairs of preloved trainers at this event.

Both of these Health Days proved very successful in helping the homeless access goods and service that they wouldn't normally have access to. We are booked in to attend more of these at both New Hope and with Hightown in the next financial year.

Community Foodbanks

We made a connection with the three community foodbanks in Dacorum. They were initially started by a group of three churches and linked this way, but each foodbank is run separately. We have visited the Apsley food bank more regularly. Their clients tend to be the homeless and the residents of the Druglink supported housing.

In total we gave out 177 pairs to the three foodbanks over the financial year.

Druglink

We connected with Druglink, who were looking at getting their clients in to regular exercise as part of their recovery journey. We provided preloved running shoes for some people who wanted to go to the gym and to some who wanted go running. Once these clients started their exercise they decided to enter a running race and this inspired more people to start running, so we provided more preloved running shoes.

Druglink ended up putting a team of clients, staff and supporters in to the Hyde Park 5km run and used this as a fundraiser for their charity.

St. Albans and Hertsmere Womens Refuge (SAHWR)

We provided some preloved trainers and football boots to a number of women and children that SAHWR support. SAHWR have been organising walking and exercise classes for the women so providing the trainers for them to wear was a great help to them.

Women and Girls Festival

Herts Sports Partnership organised a festival in June in Hemel. It offered a range of sports for women and children to try for free. They had a day of programs, with both indoor and outdoor activities. We gave out 27 pairs of preloved sports shoes to ensure those who attended had the right footwear.

Pop Up Stands

We ran more Pop Up Sessions at The Active Hub over the summer holidays and October half term. As we had found in the previous financial year, the summer sessions proved very successful in helping families access free preloved sports shoes for their children for the new school year. We gave out 294 pairs in total over these sessions.

Shoe Drives

We had a number of organisations hold Shoe Drives for us this financial year. Some clubs, such as the Chineham Park Running Club and Dunstable parkrun, were organisations that have held Shoe Drives in the past for us.

New ones included schools, running clubs and local businesses. They were: the Running High Club, a new running club in Apsley; Berkhamsted and Hemel Hockey Club; Luton Someries Rotary Club; Warriors Amateur Boxing Club; Greenway Primary and Nursery School and Computacentre, who are running a number of Shoe Drives over the year. We are also working with Rickmansworth School on an ongoing basis, as they are donating all the sports shoes in their lost property at the end of each term.

One Impossible Challenge

We launched a series of challenges to encourage people to be more active. They were open for anyone to join in. Participants chose their own targets, so whatever their level of fitness was, everyone could benefit. All participants were also offered a free pair of preloved sports shoes if they needed them to be able to take part.

We set up an online community through a private Facebook Group, for people to share their achievements and struggles as they went through their challenge. It was a way to motivate and encourage people on their journey. Local business Cardo sponsored the challenges, by providing a number of prizes to encourage participation.

Our three challenges all had a slightly different angle to the challenge, but they essentially involved participants choosing an activity, like running, swimming, walking, dancing etc. and then choosing the distance they thought they could cover during the challenge. This meant people of any level of fitness could take part as the goals were personalised to each individuals level.

We had 17 people actively taking part in each of our first two challenges, but this had dropped to 8 by the third challenge. Those who took really enjoyed it and found it motivated them. It even motivated one participant to sign up for next years London Marathon! We need to look at a way to promote this better so that we can increase the number of participants.

Storage

In this financial year we have been using two storage areas. Our main storage area has been at The Active Dacorum Hub, in a decommissioned toilet and shower block. This space is being used to store all our shoes once they have been cleaned. We also have a smaller storage area at a local Dacorum business, where we have been storing our shoes that need to be washed. Both of these storage spaces have been kindly offered to us on a no cost basis.

The Active Dacorum Hub is buying a large storage container, which we have the opportunity to rent half of. This will enable us to store all our shoes in one location and cut down on wasted time spent moving shoes backwards and forwards between locations. It would also enable us to have a permanent space that people can come to obtain sports shoes and would be a place that we can hold Pop Up Sessions during the school holidays.

This container would have a rental cost attached to it, so we currently have applied for a grant from HCF to cover the cost for one year.

Volunteers

We took on two new trustees in this financial year, as two trustees terms came to an end. Sam Ward and Lynsey Hanafan both retired and Lucia Jelley and Nichola Drew were welcomed on board. Both Lucia and Nichola have both been supporters of the charity since we started. Lucia was one of the first people to hear about us and donate her sports shoes to us. Nichola was one of our first beneficiaries as we helped her out with preloved football boots for her two sons.

We also depend on volunteers to clean shoes. We have been continuing to run our monthly shoe cleaning sessions and have a pool of volunteers that come to these sessions regularly. We have anything from two - seven volunteers turning up at any one session. We also continue to have a few Duke of Edinburgh students who clean shoes in their own home once a week over a period of three months.

Awards

We were delighted to be the recipient of a Sport for Good Award from the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire. We received this award at a ceremony held in March at the University of Hertfordshire. The award also included a monetary prize, which will be accounted for in the next financial years accounts.

Success stories

We helped a student at Adeyfield Academy by providing a pair of preloved athletic spikes. She who was a good runner, but lacked confidence. The spikes meant she could compete alongside others without the disadvantage of losing vital seconds. This gave her confidence and inspired her to join an athletics club.

Our work with the homeless has ensured they can carry on their daily routines. For example with the homeless we work with through New Hope, two of the problems they face are issues with mental health and the boredom each day brings. Walking is one way they address this. This means a lot of wear and tear on their shoes, so having a functional pair of trainers is essential.

Our preloved sports shoes have helped our refugee beneficiaries take part in sport, which helps with their mental and physical health. Many refugees only arrive with a pair of flip flops, but to take part in sport they must have a pair of suitable shoes. For example we provided preloved football boots to Apex 360 who were running football sessions for refugees and we provided preloved trainers to Herts Welcomes Refugees so their refugees could make use of the free gym facilities that they had been offered.

Our preloved sports shoes have also helped our beneficiaries gain the confidence they need in school. For example, for students at Chiltern Way Academy, which caters for students with SEMH needs, PE lessons help with their attention span, self esteem and their cognitive functions. Many of the students turn up to play football with only their school shoes. Functional sports shoes are therefore a priority for the students to enable them to fully take part and benefit from their PE lessons.

Financial details

Revenue

We had a number of supporter led events this financial year.

In the first few months of the financial year, the support from our monthly quiz came to an end as the quiz rotated to a new charity. We received a total of £474 from the quiz organisers in this financial year.

We again took part in the Hemel Hempstead Rotary Christmas Santa Sleigh and received £320, a share of the money raised.

An ex-trustee, Denise Burford, secured a place in the London Marathon through the ballot. She decided to raise money for us and another charity (Family Rights Group). As the marathon is in April, the funds she raised are spread over two financial years. In this financial year £637 had been banked in to our account.

We were the charity partner for the Boxmoor Virtual Marathon, an active challenge where all participants had to walk, run, dance, step or swim their way through the marathon distance of 26.2 miles over a 10 week period. As the charity partner, participants were encouraged to collect donations for One Impossible Thing. We received £1,028 in total.

One new fundraising method we tried this financial year was joining in to The Giving Lottery. This is a lottery which charities can sign up to and they receive a percentage of the number of tickets they sell. We thought this would be a good way for supporters to donate to us, as participants also have a chance to win £25,000 each week. This didn't prove to be as popular as we thought. We had a few people sign up and so we raised £28 in total. We have decided this is not something that we are going to carry on.

We were lucky to receive £1,000 through a prize draw from the Benefact Group. They run their prize draws every couple of months, for all nominated charities. For each person that nominates One Impossible Thing, we receive a ticket in to the draw. This is an ongoing draw that we encourage supporters to sign up to for free.

Our total funds raised for the financial year was £3,604. This compares to £19,038 last financial year. The bulk of our money last financial year was received through grants from The National Lottery and Hertfordshire Community Foundation. We have applied to these two grant bodies again, for £18,000 and £2,400 respectively. If successful, this money will not be received until next financial year (FY 25/26).

Expenditure

We spent a total of £18,800. This meant our expenditure was quite a bit more than our revenue. However this was not a cash flow issue as the majority of the expenditure was for the Charity Manager wage. Money which we had received in the previous financial year (FY 23/24).

Our largest expense was £16,937 for the Charity Manager (wages/tax/pension). Other larger costs included: IT expenses (website platform, domain, email addresses) - £510; branded recycling bins - £441; petrol reimbursement costs for volunteers - £410; and volunteer expenses (cake, tea, coffee, milk for shoe cleaners, Easter Eggs,

Christmas chocolates and cards) - £240. A complete breakdown of all costs can be seen in our budget breakdown.

Summary

Having the funds to employ a Charity Manager, has meant we have been able to reach out to more groups. This is because we know we will be able to support these groups in the long term, rather than relying on the goodwill of volunteers to ensure the viability of the charity. We are delighted with the connections we have made and the variety of groups we have been able to help.

Storage has been an ongoing factor again for this financial year, with shoes still split over two locations, meaning there was a lot of wasted time in the logistics of running the operation. Moving in to next financial year we are hopeful to have found an solution, if the funding comes together.

Our main focus moving in to FY25/26 is how to ensure the charity is sustainable from a funding point of view. We need to look at multiple funding streams - business sponsorship, merchandise, grants, fundraising events - to ensure we the charity is financially viable in to the future.

Report prepared by
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Charity Manager and Founder
One Impossible Thing
April 2025

Financial year from 1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025	
	Revenue
Our events	
The Giving Lottery	£28.00
Supporter led events	
The Patch Pub Quiz	£474.00
Rotary Santa Sleigh	£320.00
Boxmoor Virtual Marathon	£1,028.24
Denise's London Marathon	£637.29
General Donations	£116.50
Grants	
Benefact Group	£1,000.00
TOTAL REVENUE	£3,604.03
	Costs
Recycling baskets/bins	£441.57
Membership fees	£40.00
Marketing	£17.00
Cleaning and shoe repairs	£67.18
Storage equipment	£0.00
IT	£510.84
Stationery and postage	£27.75
Bank fees	£1.44
Insurance	£105.66
Salary - Charity Manager	£16,937.24
Rent and utilities	£0.00
Petrol reimbursements	£410.64
Volunteer expenses	£240.92
TOTAL COSTS	£18,800.24