

ROOT AND BRANCH CHANGE

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Registration Number 1199565

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5 APRIL 2023



ROOT AND BRANCH CHANGE

TRUSTEES' REPORT and FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5 April 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 5 April 2023.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the guidelines of the Charity Commission for Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs) with an income of under £25,000.

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation are, for public benefit:

1. To prevent or relieve poverty in South Africa, in particular but not exclusively in the township of Munsieville and surrounding areas, by providing grants, items and services (including advocacy and education) to children and families in need and/or charities and other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty amongst children and families
2. To advance the Christian religion in accordance with the statement of faith in the United Kingdom and South Africa, in particular but not exclusively through educating the public about the Christian religion and arranging missionary and outreach work amongst communities in financial hardship.

There have been no changes in these objectives since the last annual report.

When planning the activities for the year, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and are satisfied that the Charity's activities met the principles laid out in that guidance. The Charity aims to benefit the public in the communities with which it works by raising funds and donations and undertaking activities for the prevention and relief of poverty and its impact on children and their families in Munsieville township, South Africa, and the development of long term strategies leading to improvements in the health, security and well-being of vulnerable children that can be sustained in the long term, with or without the direct involvement of the Charity. The Trustees have also worked to advance the knowledge and personal experience of individuals and churches regarding the central place within Christian discipleship of care and justice for poor, vulnerable and marginalised children in South Africa as well as in the United Kingdom.

In the period to 5 April 2023, the Trustees agreed that the Charity would devote its best efforts to the further development of its strategy to support the rescue, care and protection of children in or close to Munsieville township who have experienced sexual, physical or emotional abuse, neglect or abandonment, providing support either directly to those in need, or supporting carefully selected partners to act on its behalf.

The Trustees recognise that whilst abuse, neglect and abandonment of children is, to some extent, driven by poverty, it also perpetuates trans-generational poverty by limiting vital social development and access to education of children, restricting their opportunity to emerge into adulthood with the capacity to contribute positively to society and to their own future families. With this in mind, they are seeking to develop a core specialism in the prevention of family-based mistreatment of children, and in the challenge of transforming situations where abuse and neglect have occurred.

Grant making policy

Root and Branch Change voluntarily agrees to work with other organisations to deliver some activities on its behalf. It does not consider unsolicited funding requests from external organisations. Small grants are made to individuals with the care of vulnerable children in our primary area of operation, who may be passing through a time of crisis. Such grants will only be considered when application is made to the Trustees by partner organisations in good standing with the Charity.

The Charity may, from time to time, provide gift in kind donations to external charitable organisations to undertake certain humanitarian activities that were pre-determined by the Trustees, being consistent with the objects of the Charity, and are in line with the strategic objectives of Root and Branch Change.

Achievements and performance

In its first reporting period (9 months) Root and Branch Change made strenuous efforts to establish its UK team of Trustees, advisors and operational volunteers, at the same time as working with its partners and contacts in South Africa to assess how the new Charity can make the most impactful and sustainable contribution to overcoming the challenges faced by children and families in the township of Munsieville, Gauteng Province, South Africa - challenges that have resisted attempts to address them for over a century.

The township and its immediate catchment area has an estimated population of some 60,000 people including over 25,000 infants, children and young people, two thirds of whom being defined as vulnerable using criteria established by UNICEF. Although Root and Branch Change is a new organisation set up to address the specific needs of children who are likely to fall through the "net" of services delivered by state providers or other NGOs, its founders have over two decades of combined experience in this very township, having overseen significant improvements in the health and well-being of children as a result of systematic and committed targeting of resources on core contributors to trans-generational transmission of poverty and deprivation that has become the accepted norm in Munsieville. The Trustees have an unshakable belief that significant, lasting change can be experienced by the most vulnerable people in the community – babies and infants who have been, or are likely to be, victims of serious abuse, neglect and abandonment. Along with rescue, protection and nurturing children so affected, the Charity has undertaken extensive consultation with local partners in support of its strategic aim of preventing such traumatic adverse experiences by establishing in-depth support for young, inexperienced parents and high numbers of young school-age girls who become pregnant, often as a consequence of rape, incest or coercion.

Throughout this reporting period, we have made advances in four key areas, all linked to our long-term objectives, seeking to lay firm foundations for our agenda of change within Munsieville, South Africa, and with churches in the UK:

- 1) **Child rescue.** Our aim is to locate, train and equip those who can provide temporary refuge for babies and infants who have suffered serious abuse, neglect or abandonment, and for whom there are no other suitable places of safety. This will provide an opportunity for courts, social workers, police and other agencies to undertake their work in determining the best long-term care arrangements. Our preference is to recruit individuals and families within Munsieville who are members in good standing within local churches, so they have a structured support network to assist with their caring responsibilities. This is a long-term objective and in the months since the Charity was launched, we have identified a small number people who have been supported and funded to provide refuge for extremely vulnerable infants, including 17-month old triplet girls and two young male infants whom local social services were unable to house. This experience, and the ongoing dialogue with the various agencies involved, is proving most valuable to the Trustees as they seek to build strength and resilience into their future strategy. At the close of this reporting period, these five children remained in the care of our partners, grant funded by Root and Branch Change.
- 2) **Prevention of child abuse, neglect and abandonment.** Whilst the provision of emergency care is important to the Charity, our main long-term focus is on prevention of family-based abuse, neglect and abandonment. To this end, the Charity has engaged in consultation with its network of individuals and organisations involved in the support of families, children and young people, to gather the evidence that will inform the organisation in its efforts to establish the strongest possible service to support the many young girls who become pregnant, frequently having babies in secret, subject themselves to risky "back-street" abortions, or find it impossible to care for their newborn babies, leading to catastrophic abandonment or infanticide. With the information, experience and evidence from this ongoing consultation, the Trustees are set to visit the township in April 2023 (in the next reporting period) to hold further planning meetings with local practitioners and to undertake a two-

day round table conference with a view to initiating an effective local network to develop effective abuse prevention services.

- 3) **Empowering belief.** For many years, service providers and community activists within Munsieville have perceived a negative and disabling belief within the community at large, that positive change is an unachievable fantasy. This has hampered the best efforts of those who work for change in the community, crippling the will to participate in transformative initiatives. In an attempt to embed a more positive and empowering belief in the hearts and minds of families, Root and Branch Change worked throughout 2022 to bring churches, NGO's and community leaders together to undertake a day of celebration and joy for over 750 of the most vulnerable children in the township, together with 300 caregivers - the biggest Christmas event ever seen in Munsieville's 115 year history. The event, entitled "Transform Christmas" was held on Christmas Day 2022 at the TloTlo Children's Sports arena, which is owned and operated by The Thoughtful Path Charity, a key partner of Root and Branch Change. The event, which included a cooked Christmas meal for all, gifts for each child, take-home food parcels for all families represented, and a day of music, dancing and games, and the provision of information on vital local services. Alongside the declared aim of encouraging children and families to see that positive things can, with their participation, happen in their community, we also wanted to give visibility to those places and services that are available to help prevent as well as overcome crisis situations faced by children.
- 4) **Establishing a sustainable support structure in the UK.** Committed to developing a sustainable future for the new Charity, the Trustees have endeavoured to broaden its support base in the UK, and to establish an income generating project to raise renewable funding for ongoing operations in South Africa. Although the number of committed financial donors remains low, steps have been put in place to grow the capacity of the organisation to manage steady increases in both the quantity of donors over the coming five years as well as their loyalty through active participation in the work of the Charity. To this end, following discussions over several months, Root and Branch Change became an official Mission Partner of St Mary's Church, Chesham, part of the Church of England Diocese of Oxford. As an expression of this ongoing partnership, the Charity is set to host over twenty-five young people and leaders from the C of E Parish of Great Chesham on a mission visit to Munsieville in July 2024, group training for which has commenced and will continue throughout 2023/24. This is in line with the Charity's second objective above. The Charity also held a launch event, named "Light in the Darkness" at St Mary's Church, Chesham on 19 November 2022, to garner support and participation from friends and supporters in the Buckinghamshire area.

In February 2023, friends of the Charity were invited to relocate and expand a volunteer-run plant nursery that has been established exclusively to raise renewable funding for the charity. In March, those involved in this initiative started developing structures on a 3.5-acre meadow at Pressmore Farm, near Chesham, including a commercial polytunnel, external sales areas and a display garden with a view to commencing sales of plants to the public from the spring of 2024. This development has been funded by volunteers as a private project with the intention of gifting it to Root and Branch Change in the autumn of 2023, when it will come under the direct control of the Trustees. The aim of the nursery is that it will provide a modest regular income to the Charity as well as helping to publicise its humanitarian endeavours and promote opportunities for public engagement.

Safeguarding

The Trustees recognise that they bear a heavy responsibility for the safeguarding of the children, young people and families in South Africa for which the Charity exists, for its volunteers and stakeholders, any staff, paid or unpaid, whom it may employ, and for all participants in the work of the Charity. They are aware of the added complications imposed on the Charity by virtue of the extreme vulnerability of many of its beneficiaries and the difficulties of working under more than one regulatory jurisdiction. Prior to its registration by the Charity Commission in July 2022, the Trustee Board adopted robust policies and procedure covering the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, safer employment/engagement, and working/volunteering overseas, and other related topics. In a bid to remain at the cutting edge of "best practise" in safeguarding, the Trustees have

agreed to join non-profit safeguarding organisation, Thirtyone:eight, through which policies and training will be further developed and DBS checks managed.

Fundraising

In its first year of operation, Root and Branch Change has been sustained through the generous and committed support of a number of individuals. This has been augmented by the proceeds of fundraising sales of plants and gifts. The Charity aims to develop a sustainable income stream from garden plant growing activities operated by volunteers in Buckinghamshire, UK, and has embraced the opportunity to develop a plant nursery on land provided on a rent-free basis in the town of Chesham, with structures and equipment to be paid as a gift by the families of two of the Charity's founders, with no capital costs to the Charity. The construction of the nursery commenced in March 2023 and is expected to be fully operational early in 2024, with an income expected to be available to Root and Branch Change from the spring of 2024. This income will be used in support of core operational costs in Munsieville.

The Charity acknowledges the support of the Anglican Parish of Great Chesham (UK), and of St Mary's Church, Chesham in particular, which has adopted Root and Branch Change as an official Mission Partner. Although this arrangement does not include regular direct funding, members of the St Mary's congregation are currently a most significant source of income.

Voluntary help and donations in kind

All trustees gave their time freely and without charge. We acknowledge and greatly appreciate the provision of rent-free land and services (for the Charity's plant nursery) at Pressmore Farm, Ashley Green Road, Chesham. We are greatly indebted to a small band of faithful volunteers who have consistently gone above and beyond what could normally be expected, to facilitate activities in both Munsieville, and in Chesham, and are thankful and excited about our collaboration with The House of Tree, Chesham, which is supporting our work to develop our nursery and adjacent community garden as both an income stream for the benefit of children in Munsieville, but also as a base to engage more people in the UK in creating solutions for children in Munsieville whom they are unlikely to ever meet.

Reserves

Root and Branch Change uses its resources efficiently and effectively which is evidenced by:

- 1) Very low frictional costs. We currently pay no staff – all personnel are volunteers, pay only very limited out of pocket expenses, and use office space and other property on a rent-free basis.
- 2) Delivering what we promised. All commitments have been honoured and no commitments are made by the trustees without robust plans for how they will be paid for.
- 3) Putting money raised to work. Root and Branch Change puts cash to work and runs with low reserves. This has been made possible by our low overheads and a low fixed cost structure that allows us to deliver a low burden of costs, as above. A higher level of reserves can be carried at any time if required by donors.

The Trustees recognise that the income of the charity is subject to fluctuation and is committed to endeavouring to build reserves in coming years to be able to ensure services to beneficiaries are maintained.

Risk management

The Trustees operate a rolling risk assessment programme, with quarterly review, covering the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, including those relating to the operations, volunteers, beneficiaries of the charity, the finances of the charity and the low levels of free reserves it carries. They are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks in the UK and in its activity in South Africa.

Structure, governance, and management

Root and Branch Change is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and is governed by its Constitution. It is governed by a Board of Trustees who are all volunteers who give their time without remuneration. The Trustees who served during the year are as follows:

P H Brooks (Executive Chairman)
TB Grist
JS Spence

The election of members to the Board, in place of those retiring, takes place at the Annual General Meeting. The Trustees may appoint any member to the Board to fill a casual vacancy or as an additional Trustee. A Trustee so appointed shall hold office only until the next Annual General Meeting when he/she shall retire and be eligible for reappointment for a three-year term. When recruiting new Trustees, the Board makes enquiries with its advisors, and with relevant external bodies, in a bid to attract candidates with skills and experiences appropriate to the perceived needs of the charity at that time.

Training and mentoring are made available to Trustees as appropriate, to equip them to fulfil their duties in accordance with voluntary sector best practice and external requirements. The Executive Chairman and operational team of volunteers is charged with the responsibility to execute the day-to-day operations of the charity in accordance with the policies, procedures and budgets approved by the Board of Trustees. The Charity has no share capital or debentures.

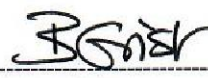
Strategic plans for the future:

The focus of the charity over the coming year will be to strengthen its capacity to deliver vital services to children and families in crisis in Munsieville township, in particular to:

- 1) Recruit, train and deploy a strong local leader in Munsieville to develop effective interventions to rescue children suffering serious abuse, neglect or abandonment, providing them with emergency care and a secure pathway to long-term care and nurture; to build and support a strong network of approved local stakeholders with appropriate skills, commitment and resources to support children through crisis and into their permanent home settings; and to work closely with the Trustees to create strong strategies and actions to prevent the abuse, neglect and abandonment of babies and infants, with particular focus on teenage parents and young girls who are pregnant.
- 2) Develop structures and curriculum contents, along with local implementing partners, for a permanent programme to support teenagers and young adults, especially those who are pregnant or already having parental responsibility for children, by giving them advanced parenting skills and access to a network of associated support services.
- 3) Recruiting and training young Christians in the UK to be deployed for a high-intensity mission in Munsieville in July 2024, working with indigenous young people to launch a new youth centre in the township, delivering a children's holiday club for over 500 children, and promoting safer homes for children through door-to-door visitation of homes most likely to pose the highest risks to the safety of young children.
- 4) Establishing a stable funding base for the Charity, with diverse income streams particularly from individuals and churches, augmented by income from the sales of African crafts and garden plants grown by volunteers in a new plant nursery in the Chiltern Hills, and dedicated to fundraising for front-line services in Munsieville, the building of which commenced in March 2023, by volunteers at no cost to the Charity.
- 5) Creating greater awareness of the Charity in the Chiltern Hills area of Buckinghamshire, especially amongst young people, including those with special educational needs, with a view to their active participation in support for the Charity's work with children in Munsieville.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Paul H Brooks
Chair of Trustee Board

Theresa B Grist
Trustee

11 January 2024

11 January 2024



John S Spence
Trustee

11 January 2024

ROOT AND BRANCH CHANGE
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1199565

Year ended 5 April 2023.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCOME		£
Donations		15852
Gift Aid Recovery		2837
Trading Profit		<u>148</u>
		18837
Less: Expenditure		
Childcare & Field Support	3624	
Christmas Mission	3076	
Marketing	1481	
Repairs & Renewals	80	
Vehicle Costs	756	
Travel & Accommodation	439	
Phone & IT	337	
Bank Charges	61	
Sundries	<u>7</u>	<u>9861</u>
NET INCOME		<u>£8976</u>

ROOT AND BRANCH CHANGE
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1199565

Year ended 5 April 2023

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

Gift Aid Recovery	733	
Bank	6264	
Cash	53	
Flights in Advance	<u>2215</u>	9265

Less: Liabilities

Expenses		289
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NET CURRENT ASSETS

£8976

RESERVES

£8976



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Root and Branch Change

1199565

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

06/07/2022

To

05/04/2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	15,852	-	-	15,852	-
Gift Aid Recovery	2,104	-	-	2,104	-
Trading Profit	148	-	-	148	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	18,104	-	-	18,104	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	18,104	-	-	18,104	-
A3 Payments					
Childcare & Christmas Mission	6,700	-	-	6,700	-
Marketing	1,481	-	-	1,481	-
Overheads	3,606	-	-	3,606	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	11,787	-	-	11,787	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	11,787	-	-	11,787	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	6,317	-	-	6,317	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	6,317	-	-	6,317	-

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash	53	-	-
	Bank	6,264	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	6,317	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	Gift Aid	733	-	-
	Debtors	2,215	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Expenses	289	-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Paul H Brooks (Chairman)	11/01/2024
	John S Spence (Trustee)	11/01/2024