

BETTER LEEDS COMMUNITIES

England & Wales · Charity number 514371

Details

Other names	BURLEY LODGE CENTRE
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	01754257
Registered	1983-10-19
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Burley Lodge Centre Community Centre 42-46 Burley Lodge Road Leeds LS6 1QF
Phone	01132754142
Email	info@betterleeds.org.uk
Website	www.betterleeds.org.uk

Activities

Objects: (A) TO PROMOTE THE BENEFIT OF THE INHABITANTS OF THAT PART OF THE CITY OF LEEDS KNOWN AS BURLEY, LEEDS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD (HEREINAFTER CALLED 'THE AREA OF BENEFIT') WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF RACE, SEX OR OF POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS OR OTHER OPINION;(B) TO ADVANCE EDUCATION AMONG THE INHABITANTS OF THE AREA OF BENEFIT;(C) TO PROVIDE FACILITIES IN THE INTERESTS OF SOCIAL WELFARE FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THE AREA OF BENEFIT;(D) TO PROVIDE FACILITIES FOR RECREATION AND LEISURE TIME OCCUPATION FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THE AREA OF BENEFIT;(E) TO ASSOCIATE LOCAL AUTHORITIES, VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND THE INHABITANTS IN COMMON EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS OF LIFE IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT AND TO FURTHER ANY OTHER CHARITABLE PURPOSE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SAID INHABITANTS;(F) TO ACQUIRE, ESTABLISH OR SECURE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTRE AND TO MAINTAIN AND MANAGE OR TO CO-OPERATE WITH ANY LOCAL STATUTORY AUTHORITY OR ANY VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION IN THE MAINT-REGISTRATION DATE ENANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF SUCH A CENTRE FOR ACTIVITIES PROMOTED BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE LATEST AMENDMENT COMPANY OR ITS MEMBERS.

Activities: Advice Service, Support and Engagement service, Families and Communities work including volunteer support and community leadership, and social prescribing

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** BURLEY LEEDS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD
- Leeds City

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£756,067	£789,928	£594,293	21
2024-03-31	£836,064	£813,368	£628,154	22
2023-03-31	£740,925	£750,007	£605,458	23
2022-03-31	£656,033	£599,760	£612,540	24
2021-03-31	£689,242	£649,012	£556,267	27

Trustees

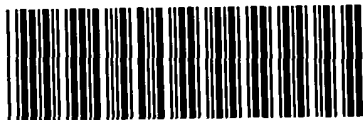
Name	Role	Appointed
Alexander James Edward Knight		2022-07-19
Kulvinder Richardson		2022-11-29
Neil David Canwell		2017-06-26
Richard Napier		2022-05-31
SARAH Walker		2014-11-25
WILLIAM RHYS HIRD		

Accounts

Company registered number 1754257
Registered charity number 514371

Better Leeds Communities
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st March 2025

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COMPANIES HOUSE

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

The Board presents its report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2025. Included within the trustees' report is the directors' report as required by company law.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity name	Better Leeds Communities
Charity Registration Number	514371
Company Registration Number	1754257
Registered Office Better Leeds Communities	42-46 Burley Lodge Road Leeds LS6 1QF
Trustee/Directors	Neil Canwell William Hird Sarah Walker Kulvinder Richardson Alexander Knight Richard Napier Terri McGregor (resigned 30 April 2024)
Senior Management Team	Rajo Saira (joined 1 July 2024) Taira Kayani (resigned 31 October 2024)
Auditors	Slade & Cooper Limited Chartered Certified Accountants & Registered Auditors Beehive Mill Jersey St Ancoats Manchester M4 6JG
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank plc Nine Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2HB Scottish Widows Bank plc 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ CCLA COIF Charities Deposit Fund 1 Angel Lane London EC4R 3AB

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Structure, Governance and Management

Company Status and Governing Document

Better Leeds Communities is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19 September 1983 and registered as a charity on 21 July 1983. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. There are currently 6 members.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

All the directors of the company are also trustees of the charity. The trustees who served during the year under review and to date are set out on page 1. In accordance with the Articles of Association, one-third of the directors or, if their number is not three or a multiple of three, the number nearest to one-third, must retire from office and being eligible, can offer themselves for re-election. The directors to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment. If any directors became or were appointed directors on the same day those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) be determined by lot.

Our strategy is to recruit individuals with skills we have identified as necessary and have lived experience of our service area to continue to ensure effective governance.

Anyone interested in joining the Board is first asked to submit a CV, which is scrutinised by the Chair. If appropriate, the prospective trustee is offered the opportunity to observe a Board meeting. By mutual agreement an interview is scheduled, a DBS check is carried out and references are taken up. A final recommendation is then made to the trustees. The final decision to appoint a new trustee is taken at a Board meeting.

Induction and Training of Trustees

All current trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity, and many will participate in staff training, meetings, and away days. Trustees are informed of the provision of activities and meet all senior staff members.

Additionally, all new trustees receive a prepared Trustee Induction Pack, which includes the following Better Leeds Communities information:

- Publicity leaflet
- Latest annual accounts
- Latest annual report
- All organisational policies
- Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Minutes of the latest Board meeting
- Contact details for the Board
- Relevant Charity Commission leaflets
- The NCVO – Good Trustee Guide

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Organisational Structure

Better Leeds Communities is organised, so the trustees meet regularly to manage its affairs and provide strategic direction. The organisations day-to-day management is undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer who is directly accountable to the Chair and collectively the wider Board of Trustees.

The CEO manages the Communities Manager, the First Contact Manager, the Debt Supervisor, Generalist, Housing and Support & Engagement staff; the Debt Team are managed by the Debt Supervisor; and the First Contact Team is managed by the First Contact Manager and the Communities Team is managed by the Communities Manager. The Income generation is the responsibility of the CEO. Remuneration for key personnel is reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis with reference to the NJC pay scales.

Risk Management

Consideration of risk is an ongoing aspect of all project planning, monitoring, and quality assurance. Many procedures such as authorisation, monitoring and reporting, staff vetting and appraisal, safety procedures for staff, property and clients, and adequate insurance cover are in place; and security equipment has been installed to safeguard against theft from the building. We continue to invest in training, resources, and development of new policies on all aspects of safety in the workplace. The principal financial risk to the charity is the loss of income through major contracts coming to an end and the risk of being unable to secure continuation funding. The trustees review this risk on a regular basis and keep a risk register. The Board holds strategy meetings to plan for the future and ensure that the charity remains responsive to new opportunities. Decisions taken at these meetings inform the future direction of the charity.

Our Aims and Objectives

The main object of the charity is the promotion of any charitable purpose for the benefit of the inhabitants of, principally but not exclusively, the local government area of Leeds and its environs, and more particularly the promotion of learning and social inclusion amongst the inhabitants of the area and the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare, recreation, and leisure time occupation.

The organisation provides a range of services and activities in pursuance of these objectives including legal advice in welfare benefits, debt, and housing. We deliver social prescribing services across Leeds in partnership with service leads, and deliver intensive, holistic support packages to individuals in financial crisis. Additionally, we also work alongside local residents to develop participatory activities that they have pride in and ownership of, including coordinating and delivering community activities and fun days; and run a personalised community leadership programme developing skills, confidence, and civic participation. In addition, within our building we house specialist facilities (including training and interview rooms, an activity studio, and a kitchen) to run our own activities to cater for the needs of community groups, public and private sector organisations.

Having such excellent community-based facilities means that we can readily host a range of activities, public events and meetings for the benefit of the local community and beyond.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Better Leeds Communities' staff and volunteers are guided by the following set of values that positively influence the culture of the organisation: Our values are:

Excellence - We are ambitious for Leeds, we are committed to delivering high quality, continuous improvement and value for money.

Collaboration - Partnership is at the centre of all we do, we work positively with others to achieve more for the people who use our services.

Inclusion - We value diversity, we promote equality. Our services are open, accessible and our opportunities are available to all. We are always welcoming, encouraging, and respectful.

Sustainability - We are innovative, forward looking, and creative. We are enterprising, relevant, and progressive in pursuit of our vision.

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims of the organisation and its future activities.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Chair's Report

We are pleased to introduce Better Leeds Communities Annual Report 2024-2025 which sets out for our clients, supporters, staff, funders and the public our work and achievements during the year and our future plans. I would like to thank the Directors/ Trustees, the Senior Management team and all of our staff for their hard work during the year.

Better Leeds Communities (BLC) is a long established charity that has delivered vitally important services in Leeds for many years. In the previous year (2023/24) BLC achieved a surplus of £23k which was added to our reserves. However in 2024/25, like many other charities we were under significant cost pressures. These led to a financial deficit of £34k. The principle reasons for this deficit were:

- Continued revenue spending on upgrading Burley Lodge Centre
- Reduced income from bank interest due to a general decline in interest rates
- Recruitment costs
- Transitional costs as we changed Chief Executives

The Managers and Trustees aim to balance income and expenditure year to year, thus maintaining the stability of the charity. Given the surplus in 2023/24 and the deficit in 2024/25 we are content that the charity remains in a stable financial position. In particular we have maintained healthy cash balances over the 2024/25 year.

We are anticipating a further deficit in 2025/26, particularly caused by increases to employer National Insurance payments and increases in general inflation. Our funders have continued to be extremely supportive, however many have not been able to increase their funding to match inflationary pressures. The Board and our senior managers continue to seek further funding to ensure the continuity of our much needed services.

We are confident that our reserves are sufficient for us to manage short term deficits and we have plans in place to return to a balanced income and expenditure position in future years.

During 2024/25 we continued to make a significant contribution to alleviating the cost of living crisis by distributing vouchers and other resources funded by the Household Support Fund.

Our advice services continued to deal with a significant caseload, often involving complex issues faced by our clients.

Our community development programme has offered a wide range of activities to the residents of Burley and surrounding areas.

We have continued to invest in upgrades to our facilities, including enhanced IT and catering equipment. Burley Lodge Centre is now equipped to a high professional standard and is used by a wide range of partners for training sessions and meetings.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

After 22 years of successful service to BLC our highly respected Chief Executive Taira Kayani left to further develop her career. We held a thank you celebration for Taira, which was very well attended by staff, funders, partners, other stakeholders and trustees. We would like to formally record our thanks to Taira and wish her well in her future endeavours.

After a competitive recruitment process Rajo Saira was appointed as our new Chief Executive, with a brief to further develop BLC's services in the Leeds community.

During the course of 2024-25 there were no changes to our Board of Trustees. We are very grateful to our fellow Trustees for continuing their involvement as volunteers, and for their enthusiastic hard work

We would like to reiterate our thanks to all our staff, funders and partners for their support.

Neil Canwell Chair of Trustees-April to December 2024

Kully Richardson Chair of Trustees January to March 2025

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Chief Executive's Report

Better Leeds Communities was established over 40 years ago, and since that time it has grown and evolved to reflect the changing needs of its diverse communities. I am delighted to be sharing our Annual Report with you, looking over the previous year's challenges and key achievements.

I was thrilled to join Better Leeds Communities in July 2024, having worked in the third sector for over thirty years, I remain deeply passionate about championing the vital and often under recognised role that voluntary and community organisations play in society.

Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working across a diverse range of communities and diverse range of services—including within community mental health, young people's services, women's rape, sexual violence/domestic violence services, BAME- and LGBTQ+ specific services, Voluntary Action Centres and more recently at Age UK dedicated to services supporting older people, within their homes, in hospital and within the community. I am thrilled to be able to share my passion, commitment and experience at Better Leeds Communities and to be able to contribute to an organisation that is rooted in strengthening and supporting communities.

Over the past year, Better Leeds Communities has continued to adapt to the evolving challenges of a rapidly changing social and economic landscape. We have navigated the pressures of diminishing funding—both locally and nationally—while responding to a significant and growing demand for our services across Leeds. During 2024–25, we reviewed our strategic plan in response to the increasing economic and social deprivation. The rising cost of living has placed immense pressure on disadvantaged communities, affecting access to daily essentials such as food, housing, energy, and transport. Many families are struggling to make ends meet. These challenges have deepened existing inequalities within our society.

During the last year, we have witnessed an unprecedented rise in housing needs, with families and individuals facing increasing difficulties in securing stable accommodation. Alongside this, we have witnessed a marked increase in the number of people experiencing economic deprivation, financial hardship, increased mental health difficulties and increased isolation and economic deprivation. Impacting the most vulnerable people in our society today. However, despite these challenges, we are proud to say, we have continued to support the diverse communities of Leeds. We remain passionate and committed to delivering inclusive, responsive, and high-quality services to meet the changing needs of our communities in Leeds.

Our Strategic Priorities 2025-2028

During 2024–25, we reviewed our strategic priorities in response to the changing needs of communities living in Leeds. We have set out clear strategic priorities for the next three years; our strategic priorities will focus on the following key areas of work:

Building Stronger Communities

We will proactively continue to consult and engage with communities in Leeds to understand their challenges and changing needs. We will enable and empower communities to strengthen their voice and take positive action to enable lasting change.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Strengthening Families

We will continue to consult and engage with families living in Leeds to identify and understand their needs and challenges. We will gather intelligence and develop innovative support services and work in collaboration with partners to strengthen and support to families.

Increasing Young People's Voices

We will consult and engage with young people through a range of innovative ways to better understand their needs, aspirations and challenges. We will promote young people's wellbeing, develop their confidence, and focus on their active participation in community and increase their sense of belonging.

Strengthening Partnerships

We will proactively continue to identify opportunities for collaboration, strengthen our networks, share intelligence with partners and stakeholders across Leeds; to further expand our reach and support to communities, families and young people across Leeds.

Protecting Equitable and Inclusive Services

We will continue to adapt our support and services to the diverse needs of our communities in Leeds. We will ensure that all our services treat every person as an individual, with respect and that all our services are inclusive and welcoming to all communities. We remain committed to deepening our engagement with communities, young people, and families across Leeds. By listening actively and working collaboratively, we aim to empower individuals and groups to shape the services and support they need. Our focus is on fostering trust, amplifying voices, and creating spaces where people feel heard, valued, and able to contribute to lasting change. In response to the evolving needs of Leeds' most vulnerable residents, we are enhancing the range and flexibility of our services. This includes adapting our advice, outreach, and wellbeing support to reflect the realities of economic hardship, social isolation, and health inequalities. We are committed to delivering services that are culturally sensitive, trauma-informed, and accessible to all, ensuring no one is excluded.

We recognise the importance of extending our support through building new relationships and strengthening existing ones, we aim to reach more communities across Leeds—especially those facing systemic disadvantage. This includes working with grassroots communities, community organisations, local health and social partners to ensure our services are visible, inclusive, and responsive to local needs.

Looking ahead, we are actively exploring new opportunities to expand our services, partnerships, and resources. This includes securing sustainable funding, investing in staff and volunteer development, and embracing innovation in service delivery. Our goal is to build on our legacy and create long-term, meaningful change that improves lives and strengthens communities across Leeds.

Together, with our staff team, volunteers, partners, and Board of Directors, we have a strong foundation for the future—I am confident that Together we will continue to build on our legacy and continues to make a meaningful difference to the lives of the people in Leeds. Without the dedication of our Board Directors, the staff team and volunteers, none of this would be possible. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your hard work, dedication and compassion.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Furthermore, I would like to take this opportunity to express our most sincere thanks and appreciation to all our funders – without your financial support we could not continue to do this vital work.

I look forward to the year ahead with hope and optimism. While I am acutely aware of the challenging times we face, I am equally aware of the resilience, creativity, and dedication of our staff team, volunteers, Board directors, and partners.

I look forward to us all continuing to work together over the coming year and continuing to make a real difference to the lives of the local people of Leeds.

Rajo Saira
(Chief Executive Officer)

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Our Advice Services

Debt Advice Service - The Debt Advice Service delivers debt advice sessions to Leeds residents. The service is funded by the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) through Citizen Advice. This service continues to provide detailed Debt Casework including negotiations with creditors, agreement to debt write offs, assistance with court proceedings, discussions with enforcement agents, and advice on the full range of statutory debt solutions and help with income maximisation and financial capability. The referrals for this service come from a wide range of organisations such as, Yorkshire Liaison and Diversion Service, Leeds Credit Union, Education, Health, Housing, Leeds Voluntary organisations and through self-referral.

The Debt Advice team deliver advice on a range of debt issues including credit cards, loans, rent, utilities, and council tax arrears; and all are qualified to act as approved intermediaries for Debt Relief Orders when appropriate to client situations. This year has continued to witness clients struggling with their debts primarily due to the cost-of-living crisis that has affected personal finances. The case work and support to clients have become increasingly complex and requiring significantly more time dedicated to every client being supported.

Throughout the year, we have supported over 500 new cases, with two thirds of those requiring continued support into the following year due to the complexity of the cases.

Debt balance advised on during the year was £28,118,497. Debt written off during this period was £65,609.19. Average number of debts per client was 4. The new cases highlight the continued pressure on household families, during the year we supported families with 313 dependents.

We are fortunate that the funding for this work has continued. I am pleased to share that we have retained our 2 FTE Debt Advisors.

Generalist Welfare Rights Advice

This year we have continued to deliver our Generalist Welfare Right Advice service (GWR), we are grateful to the Leeds City Council for their financial support in enabling us to deliver this service to the residents of Leeds. We have one Advisor delivering this service.

Our Generalist Advisor complements the specialist housing and debt advice teams by providing frontline, independent, and impartial guidance on welfare benefits, debt, housing, and employment issues. Clients are supported to claim the benefits they are entitled to, helping to ease financial pressure and reduce the risk of hardship or returning to debt. The demand for this service continues to increase.

A typical appointment might include completing a Personal Independence Payment application, assisting with mandatory reconsiderations, or providing practical support for clients transitioning from legacy benefits to Universal Credit, providing benefit advice on child benefit, council tax, disability benefits etc. The Advisor has also provided financial assistance through the Household Support Fund for those facing financial hardship.

We have been able to offer appointments at outreach venues to increase accessibility, including in Bramley, Kirkstall and within the Armley ward. We have provided outreach sessions at five community venues, including an inner-city high school, making advice accessible to people where they live, work, and study.

We have provided over **450 one-to-one appointments** to residents living within these areas.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Housing Advice Service

Our other Advice service is the housing which delivers housing advice to residents across Leeds. The demand and need for housing advice has increased significantly due to the local housing crisis in Leeds, as has the complexity of the cases coming through to us. Unfortunately, with one full time House Advisor for Leeds, we are continuing to struggle to meet the growing demand placed on our Housing Advice service and staff.

The Housing Advice Service provides detailed housing advice and housing casework on behalf of clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and are in an urgent need. This includes, supporting referrals for a homelessness assessment/housing needs assessment, referral to temporary accommodation schemes as well as advice on housing options. The service also provides advice on tenants' rights and obligations, harassment, repairs and legal procedures. Clients continued to present with complex housing needs, and we have witnessed an increase in the number of clients approaching us with multiple disabilities and mental health issues. This has resulted in staff having to dedicate significantly more time to every client and their case.

We have received double the number of enquires during the year and the situation is exacerbated by limited onward referral pathway to solicitors who are able to take on legal aid work. We see yet again increasing numbers of clients being threatened with evictions as they struggled to meet their housing costs on top of increased fuel and food prices. The eviction notices have also continued to increase by landlords as a means of making improvements to their properties and then increasing the rent, often leading to clients unable to meet their new rental increases.

We are pleased that we are able to continue to receive funding for the single Housing Advisor we have for Leeds, through the funds received from Citizen Advice Leeds. This allows us to continue to provide such a critical service to the residents of Leeds.

Throughout the year, we have **supported over 250** new cases, half of which required continued support into the following year due to the complexity of the cases. In addition to the new cases we have taken on we have also continued to provide advice and assistance to a third of the previous year's clients.

During the year, of the total numbers of clients we supported, 87% of those had complex and multiple disabilities and mental health needs. Of the total numbers of clients, we supported 65% were from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic communities whose first language was not English.

We have continued to meet client needs by delivering appointments flexibly to ensure accessibility, this has included face to face appointments at our community centre, telephone appointments and advice and assistance through emails.

Henry Smith – complex Debt Advice Service

The Henry Smith Project offers holistic Debt Advice and support to clients referred by the citywide Linking Leeds Project. This project allows the organisation the ability to offer a more holistic service to clients in financial hardship which compliments our MaPS Debt Advice Service. Often the clients referred into this project have additional complexities such as mental health needs, isolation, physical disabilities and other barriers in their daily lives.

During the year we have **supported 112 clients with complex needs**. The debt balance advised on was £666,069, the debt written off was £29,046, and the average deficit budget was £111. 93 of the total number of clients and the total number of children in client households advised were 81.

Better Leeds Communities

Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Clients are assessed at the beginning of their debt advice journey with our Debt Advisor using our customised wellbeing wheel to establish their wellbeing across a range of indicators. A co-produced action plan is developed to create agreed achievable targets to deal with the identified issues. Our Debt Advisors work with the client and various partners by signposting or referring the client to external agencies for additional support and to access specialist services. A further assessment is carried out at the end of the client journey, which enables us to measure outcomes pre and post engagement with the project. The client evaluation provides us with valuable feedback and during the last year clients have reported the following outcomes:

80% experience increased financial stability.

Over **75%** of clients felt more optimistic.

Over **75%** report an improvement in how they are dealing with problems.

Over **75%** reported feeling more relaxed.

Over **75%** reported thinking more clearly.

75% Avoided homelessness.

Over **30%** more aware of where to go for information and support.

Household Support Fund

We were fortunate to receive £100,000 from Leeds City Council during the year which provided us with the opportunity to provide direct financial support to clients in financial hardship caused by the national cost of living crisis. The clients we supported were accessing our advice services and were struggling to meet their basic daily needs such as their energy and food costs. We used this funding to provide financial support through vouchers and direct payments for actual costs to households that were in genuine desperate need of help and support.

During the year we supported clients through a number of ways including food, fuel, daily essentials and white goods. Food was the greatest area of need and spend, followed by energy, then wider essential and white goods. We could clearly see that basic essentials such as food had become the greatest area of need, so many of our client's struggled day to day to manage due to the cost-of-living crisis.

Through this fund we **issued a total of 1,034 vouchers**, including **739 food** vouchers, **216 Energy** vouchers, **37 wider essential** vouchers and **42 white goods** vouchers across Leeds. When we analyse this further, we can see that this includes 318 vouchers to Households with children, 229 vouchers to single adults and 43 vouchers to Households with pensioners.

Community Development Service: The 1 Burley project – 170 Voices

The Community Development team have continued to increase community participation and engagement, developing new and innovative ways to bring communities together, empower community to voice their needs, develop their confidence, skills and increase community action.

The numbers of individuals and communities we have engaged with over the last year demonstrates the level of need and our ability to continue to adapt to the changing needs of communities and its residents.

The project is committed to valuing, supporting and developing volunteers. Our ambition is to continue to recruit and train community volunteers who are then equipped with the necessary skills, experience and confidence to jointly lead community groups, events and activities. We have an active team of 8 volunteers who currently support the delivery of our community activities and events.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

During this year we have **engaged with over 1,691 individuals** from communities across Leeds. Through various different activities including on a one-to-one basis, through support groups, community events, celebration events, trips, days out, workshops and courses. Below are a summary and flavour of the range of diverse activities, events and courses we have delivered to the residents of Leeds including:

15 Taster Activities

During the year we have provided 15 taster activities, including outreach at local PAYF café doing board games, Lunch and Learns, Listening Groups, Little Story Makers, Mindful Arts, Walking Groups and Salsa classes.

6 Courses/Workshops

During the year we have provided 6 workshops/courses, including Arabic Conversation, keep active sessions, digital learning, ESOL, First Aid Training and Migrant Session for youths.

7 Seasonal Events

During the year we have provided 7 seasonal events, including Eid Bazaar, Chaand Raat, Chinese New Year Celebration, Winter Wreath Making session, Family Walks and a Xmas Party.

5 School Holidays – Half Term

During the year we have provided 5 school holiday activities, including facilitator led days out to the museums/galleries, farm visits, arts and crafts sessions and outreach teams coming to the centre to offer specific activities for the children.

12 Summer School Holidays

During the year we have provided 12 school holiday activities, including facilitated Arts and Crafts activities, organised local visits out, picnics in the park for families. The project and service continues to go from strength to strength. As we approach our final year of the funding from the Big Lottery, we are actively seeking alternative funding to continue this crucial work with the local residents and communities of Leeds.

We are very grateful to our funders the Big Lottery Fund for their financial support to enable us to undertake this work.

The Linking Leeds – Social Prescribing Service

The Linking Leeds is the integrated city-wide Social Prescribing service for people in Leeds. This service commenced delivery on the 1st of September 2019. Linking Leeds provides Social Prescribing for all Leeds residents aged 16 years and above and provides practical and emotional support.

The Social Prescribing service helps people to address concerns in their life that are having a negative effect on their physical and mental wellbeing. It could include isolation, loneliness, debt problems, housing issues, or anything else. It's tailored to the individual and connects them to local services, support and help that is needed.

We have four Wellbeing Coordinators based around the city at community locations and GP surgeries. Our Wellbeing Coordinators are a team of caring, warm and person-centred skilled staff, who offer a listening ear, guide and support individuals to explore their needs, interest, passions and assist them to seek the help and support they need.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

The BLC Community Centre and The First Contact Service

The First Contact Team is the public face of the organisation, who welcome the public to the centre, answer all incoming calls and deal with all incoming enquiries. The First Contact Team triage and direct enquiries to the relevant services across BLC and signpost to external providers/agencies where appropriate.

The team also deal with all room bookings and facilities accessed by local communities' groups and partners.

The First Contact Team includes our casual staff who work weekdays, evenings and weekends.

Financial review

During the year 2024-25 we continue to operate as a community centre and hub, including making available our rooms and community spaces. During the financial year, we have invested in modernising our community hub and room hire facilities through the installation of large tv's and updating our kitchen. This year, we generated £49,962 through hiring rooms out to communities and organisations.

Income in the year decreased from £836,064 to £756,067. Expenditure also decreased in the year from £813,368 to £789,928. This left an overall net movement in funds in the year of (33,861) made up of £332 in restricted funds and (34,193) unrestricted funds. Funding came from a variety of statutory and non-statutory bodies. Better Leeds Communities is grateful to all our funders, especially in such difficult times for our participants and clients, for helping the organisation to work towards its mission of creating opportunities that enable Leeds residents to achieve their potential by raising aspirations, removing barriers, and developing abilities that lead to a better life.

Reserves policy

The trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets (the free reserves) held by the charity should be adequate to ensure that current levels of activity could continue for at least six months during a period of unforeseen difficulty.

On 31st March 2025, the total reserves were £594,293. Of this, £332 are restricted and not available for general use and £114,589 are held as functional fixed assets. The trustees are mindful of their responsibilities for the maintenance and repair of the Burley Lodge Centre building. Significant investment has been made to improve and maintain the building to date, however, there are ongoing issues with the building infrastructure and design. Trustees agreed to allocate a designated reserve of £150,000 to ensure the high standard of maintenance and repair are preserved and any necessary upgrades can be undertaken. This leaves the level of free reserves amounting to £329,372. This reserve level, together with ongoing sources of income, give the trustees the confidence to consider that this reserve is sufficient to meet the above objective.

The free reserves are required to:

1. Finance new and existing projects until such time as funds are received from the relevant grant making body, where appropriate.
2. Finance an orderly close-down of BLC should the need arise.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Funders of Better Leeds Communities

We would like to express our most sincere thanks to all our funders during 2024-2025 for their generous support. It is only through their financial support being made available that we have been able to continue to deliver our much-needed services and support to the residents of Leeds.

Our plans for Future

During the forthcoming financial year, we will continue to work to sustain existing funding, services and support, as well as to identify and secure new funding opportunities.

We will continue with a focus on the development of community assets, further strengthen local partnerships, expand our reach and impact for the benefit of all residents of Leeds. We will maintain our commitment to empower all our clients to make informed choices about their lives through the provision of quality and equitable services.

We will launch our new revised Strategic Plan and Marketing Strategy for 2025-2028 underpinned by our strategic priorities action plan.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2025

Statement of the Board of Directors' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Better Leeds Communities for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Board of Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation. The Board of Directors is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In so far as the Board of Directors is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware
- The Board of Directors has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information

The Board of Directors is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Auditors

Slade & Cooper Ltd were re-appointed as the charitable company's auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Board of Directors and signed on its behalf by



Mr Neil Canwell (Trustee)

Date: 2nd December 2025

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Better Leeds Communities

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Better Leeds Communities (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (including the income and expenditure account), the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102. The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 13, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view,

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims.
- enquiry of the charity's staff, management and those charged with governance to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Independent Auditor's Report
(continued)**

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Christy Yun Hing Lau FCCA DChA CTA

Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of

Slade & Cooper Limited
Statutory Auditors
Beehive Mill
Jersey Street
Manchester
M4 6JG

Date: 23/12/2025

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	287	-	287	245
Charitable activities:	4				
Advice Service		12,000	532,159	544,159	569,528
Communities and Families		-	141,248	141,248	195,798
Services and Room Hire		49,962	-	49,962	51,152
Investments	5	20,411	-	20,411	19,341
Total income		82,660	673,407	756,067	836,064
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	6				
Advice Service		12,000	531,827	543,827	585,899
Communities and Families		-	141,248	141,248	195,798
Services and Room Hire		104,853	-	104,853	31,671
Total expenditure		116,853	673,075	789,928	813,368
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		(34,193)	332	(33,861)	22,696
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	8	(34,193)	332	(33,861)	22,696
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		(34,193)	332	(33,861)	22,696
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		628,154	-	628,154	605,458
Total funds carried forward		593,961	332	594,293	628,154

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

A full comparative SOFA is available on the last page of the financial statements.

Better Leeds Communities
Company number 01754257
Balance sheet as at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025	2024
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	114,589	132,753
Total fixed assets		114,589	132,753
Current assets			
Debtors	14	70,128	24,003
Cash at bank and in hand		542,641	552,715
Total current assets		612,769	576,718
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	15	(133,065)	(81,317)
Net current assets		479,704	495,401
Total assets less current liabilities		594,293	628,154
Net assets		594,293	628,154
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	17	332	-
Unrestricted income funds	18	593,961	628,154
Total charity funds		594,293	628,154

These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006 and are for circulation to members of the company.

The notes on pages 21 to 40 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 02/12/2025 and signed on their behalf by:

N. P. Canwell

Neil Canwell (Trustee)

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ending 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	21	(30,485)	71,227
<i>Cash flows from investing activities:</i>			
Dividends, interest, and rents from investments		20,411	19,341
Cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		20,411	13,618
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(10,074)	84,845
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		552,715	467,870
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		542,641	552,715

Better Leeds Communities
Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgments and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Better Leeds Communities meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees have made no key judgments which have a significant effect on the accounts.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

c Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of a provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

d Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised; refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

f Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities includes delivery costs undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charity's programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 7.

i Operating leases

Operating leases are leases in which the title to the assets, and the risks and rewards of ownership, remain with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

j Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

Leasehold improvements	Over the period of the lease
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	25% reducing balance
Computer equipment	33.3% straight line

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

k Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

m Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

n Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

o Pensions

Employees of the charity are entitled to join a defined contribution 'money purchase' scheme. The charity's contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 9. There were no outstanding contributions at the year end (2024: £nil). The costs of the defined contribution scheme are included within support and governance costs and allocated to the funds of the charity using the methodology set out in note 7.

2 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales and has no share capital. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The registered office address is disclosed on page 1.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Donations	287	-	287	245
Total	287	-	287	245
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2024</i>	<i>245</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>245</i>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Advice Service				
Advice UK	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
BARCA	-	2,300	2,300	-
Basis Yorkshire	6,000	-	6,000	4,500
Big Lottery Fund	-	100,675	100,675	92,432
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	111,720	111,720	111,720
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	47,588	47,588	97,352
Co-op Acedemy	6,000	-	6,000	-
Henry Smith Charity	-	59,390	59,390	28,900
Leeds City Council				
Household Support Fund	-	100,000	100,000	100,000
Inner North West	-	16,460	16,460	-
Multiply	-	9,000	9,000	60,000
UKSPF/Digital Inclusion	-	19,940	19,940	30,060
Live Well Leeds	-	-	-	991
Love Leeds Parks	-	375	375	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	3,740	3,740	20,701
MAPs Debt Modernisation Fund	-	24,971	24,971	4,372
Mental Health First Aid	-	-	-	5,500
Power to Change	-	-	-	8,000
Tesco Stronger Starts	-	1,000	1,000	1,500
The Sir George Martin Trust	-	-	-	2,500
WYCA				
Digital Project	-	10,000	10,000	-
Housing Advice	-	24,000	24,000	-
Advice Service	12,000	532,159	544,159	569,528
Communities and Families				
Linking Leeds	-	141,248	141,248	195,798
Communities and Families	-	141,248	141,248	195,798
Services and Room Hire				
Other income - room hire	48,582	-	48,582	51,152
Other income	1,380	-	1,380	-
Services and Room Hire	49,962	-	49,962	51,152
Total	61,962	673,407	735,369	816,478
Total by fund 31 March 2024	55,652	760,826	816,478	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

4 Income from charitable activities (cont.)

Previous reporting period	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2024 £
Advice Service			
Advice UK	-	1,000	1,000
Basis Yorkshire	4,500	-	4,500
Big Lottery Fund	-	92,432	92,432
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	111,720	111,720
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	97,352	97,352
Henry Smith Charity	-	28,900	28,900
Leeds City Council			
Household Support Fund	-	100,000	100,000
Multiply	-	60,000	60,000
UKSPF/Digital Inclusion	-	30,060	30,060
Live Well Leeds	-	991	991
Lloyds bank Foundation	-	20,701	20,701
MAPs Debt Modernisation Fund	-	4,372	4,372
Mental Health First Aid	-	5,500	5,500
Power to Change	-	8,000	8,000
Tesco Stronger Starts	-	1,500	1,500
The Sir George Martin Trust	-	2,500	2,500
Advice Service	4,500	565,028	569,528
Communities and Families			
Linking Leeds	-	195,798	195,798
Communities and Families	-	195,798	195,798
Services and Room Hire			
Other income - room hire	51,152	-	51,152
Services and room hire	51,152	-	51,152
Total	55,652	760,826	816,478

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 £	2024 £
Income from bank deposits	20,411	-	20,411	19,341
	20,411	-	20,411	19,341

All investment income in the previous year was unrestricted

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

6 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Staff costs	319,268	105,879	-	425,147	456,054
Administration	1,183	-	-	1,183	894
Depreciation	-	-	18,164	18,164	19,010
Project costs	131,330	711	-	132,041	148,004
Governance costs (see note 7)	-	-	19,761	19,761	10,709
Support costs (see note 7)	92,046	34,658	66,928	193,632	178,695
	<u>543,827</u>	<u>141,248</u>	<u>104,853</u>	<u>789,928</u>	<u>813,366</u>
Previous reporting period					
	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2024 £	
Staff costs	303,478	152,576	-	456,054	
Administration	280	616	-	896	
Depreciation	-	-	19,010	19,010	
Project costs	147,822	182	-	148,004	
Governance costs (see note 7)	-	-	10,709	10,709	
Support costs (see note 7)	134,319	42,424	1,952	178,695	
	<u>585,899</u>	<u>195,798</u>	<u>31,671</u>	<u>813,368</u>	
				2025 £	2024 £
Restricted expenditure				673,075	781,480
Unrestricted expenditure				116,853	31,888
				<u>789,928</u>	<u>813,368</u>

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

7 Analysis of governance and support costs

	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2025 £
Staff costs	Time spent	108,767	-	108,767
Office costs	Floor area	84,865	-	84,865
Audit fees	Governance	-	3,960	3,960
Legal and professional	Governance	-	12,281	12,281
Subscriptions & Membership	Governance	-	3,520	3,520
		193,632	19,761	209,873
Previous reporting period	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2024 £
Staff costs	Time spent	88,367	-	88,367
Office costs	Floor area	90,328	-	90,328
Audit fees	Governance	-	3,960	3,960
Legal and professional	Governance	-	3,148	3,148
Subscriptions & Membership	Governance	-	3,588	3,588
Other	Governance	-	13	13
		178,695	10,709	189,404

8 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation	18,164	19,010
Auditor's remuneration - audit fees	3,300	3,300

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

9 Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	464,914	484,547
Social security costs	42,426	31,442
Pension costs	22,479	22,065
Recruitment, training and travel	4,095	6,367
	<u>533,914</u>	<u>544,421</u>
Allocated as follows:		
Charitable activities	425,147	456,054
Support costs	108,767	88,367
	<u>533,914</u>	<u>544,421</u>

No employee has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2024: one). In 2024, the ex-CEO had unused holiday entitlement, which the board of trustees approved to be paid instead of carried forward.

The average number of staff employed during the period was 20.75 (2024: 22.25).

The average full time equivalent number of staff employed during the period was 16.5 (2024: 16.7).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were 97,240 (2024: £66,343). This is due to having two CEOs during a few months of the year.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

10 Trustee remuneration and expenses, and related party transactions

Neither the trustees nor any persons connected with them received any remuneration or reimbursed expenses during the year (2024: Nil).

No trustees received travel and subsistence expenses during the year (2024: £nil). During the year, trustees were reimbursed £60 for subscription expenses.

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity, including guarantees, during the year (2024: nil).

11 Government grants

The government grants recognised in the accounts were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Leeds City Council	45,400	90,060
CCG - Linking Leeds	141,248	195,798
Leeds City Council - Household Support Fund	100,000	100,000
	286,648	385,858

There were no unfulfilled conditions and contingencies attaching to the grants.

12 Corporation tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

13 Fixed assets: tangible assets

	Leasehold improvements £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	398,137	16,099	414,236
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2025	398,137	16,099	414,236
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	269,200	12,283	281,483
Charge for the year	16,256	1,908	18,164
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2025	285,456	14,191	299,647
Net book value			
At 31 March 2025	112,681	1,908	114,589
At 31 March 2024	128,937	3,816	132,753

14 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Other debtors	38,058	1,839
Prepayments and accrued income	32,070	22,164
	70,128	24,003

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Short term compensated absences (holiday pay)	-	6,502
Other creditors and accruals	41,570	22,991
Taxation and social security costs	7,960	9,410
Deferred income	83,535	42,414
	133,065	81,317

16 Deferred income

	2025 £	2024 £
Deferred grant brought forward	42,414	9,726
Grant received		
Big Lottery Fund	* 4,768	5,765
Henry Smith 2024-27	* 35,160	-
Leeds City Council - UKSPF/Digital Inclusion	* -	9,940
Linking Leeds	* 37,653	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	* -	3,740
Love Leeds Park	-	375
WYCA	-	22,000
Other income - room hire	5,954	594
Released to income from charitable activities	(42,414)	(9,726)
Deferred grant carried forward	83,535	42,414

* After assessing the grants not completed by the year end and reviewing the agreements, the board concluded that unspent income should be deferred, as the ongoing grant work is tied to performance related conditions spanning the year end.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

17 Analysis of movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
Advice Service					
1 Burley: 170					
Voices	-	100,675	(100,675)	-	-
Advice UK	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
BARCA	-	2,300	(2,300)	-	-
Children's Centre					
Advice Service	-	13,588	(13,588)	-	-
Digital Inclusion	-	19,940	(19,940)	-	-
Henry Smith					
2024-2027	-	59,390	(59,390)	-	-
Household					
Support fund	-	100,000	(100,000)	-	-
Housing Advice	-	34,000	(34,000)	-	-
Inner North West	-	16,460	(16,460)	-	-
Love Leeds Parks	-	375	(375)	-	-
MAPs Debt					
Modernisation					
Fund	-	24,971	(24,971)	-	-
Money Advice					
Service	-	111,720	(111,720)	-	-
Multiply	-	9,000	(9,000)	-	-
My Place (Leeds)	-	3,740	(3,740)	-	-
Teatime Club	-	1,000	(668)	-	332
WYCA Digital					
Project	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
WYCA Housing					
Advice	-	24,000	(24,000)	-	-
	-	532,159	(531,827)	-	332
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	141,248	(141,248)	-	-
	-	141,248	(141,248)	-	-
Total	-	673,407	(673,075)	-	332

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

17 Analysis of movements in restricted funds (cont.)

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Advice Service					
1 Burley: 170					
Voices	8,404	92,432	(100,836)	-	-
Advice UK	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Aviva RDO	3,963	-	(3,963)	-	-
Children's Centre					
Advice Service	-	57,659	(57,659)	-	-
Digital Inclusion	-	30,060	(30,060)	-	-
Henry Smith					
2020/2023	4,816	28,900	(33,716)	-	-
Household					
Support fund	-	100,000	(100,000)	-	-
Housing Advice	-	39,693	(39,693)	-	-
Live Well Leeds	-	991	(991)	-	-
MAPs Debt					
Modernisation	-	4,372	(4,372)	-	-
Mental Health					
First Aid	-	5,500	(5,500)	-	-
Money Advice					
Service	-	111,720	(111,720)	-	-
Multiply	-	60,000	(60,000)	-	-
My Place (Leeds)	826	20,701	(21,527)	-	-
Power to Change	-	8,000	(8,000)	-	-
Teatime Club	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
The Sir George					
Martin Trust	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
Warm Hub	2,645	-	(2,645)	-	-
	20,654	565,028	(585,682)	-	-
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	195,798	(195,798)	-	-
	-	195,798	(195,798)	-	-
Total					
	20,654	760,826	(781,480)	-	-

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

17 Analysis of movements in restricted funds (cont.)

Name of restricted fund	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
1 Burley: 170 Voices	This project supports people living in Burley to build a sustainable movement by them taking a lead in developing and delivering community activities bringing people together.
Advice UK	As members of Advice UK and recipients of funding for the MaPS debt Advice Project we were eligible to make an application for funding to support with the administration of Debt Relief Orders.
BARCA	Package of Debt Advice and Support for participants on Pathways to Progress from Better Leeds Communities
Children's Centre Advice Service	This is a scheme providing an outreach advice service at centres across Leeds.
Digital Inclusion	This project is targeted at providing digitally inclusive training and support to local communities in Leeds
Henry Smith	This project provides holistic debt advice and support to clients referred by the Linking Leeds Project.
Household Support Fund	This project is aimed at providing targeted support and help to families facing hardship due to cost of Living crisis, it provides financial support to families and communities in need.
Housing Advice	This service delivers housing advice to Leeds residents
Inner North West	The Youth Service (Inner North West, Leeds City Council)
Linking leeds	The linking Leeds service is a social prescribing service city wide targeted at providing 121 social, mental and emotional support to improve the mental well being of local resident.
MAPs debt modernisation fund	This fund was provided to update the digital infrastructure of BLC to enable us to become more efficient in the provision of the service.
Citizens Advice - Money & Pensions Debt Advice Project	This forms part of a national initiative to provide debt advice.
Multiply	This fund is provided to enable BLC to deliver 121 training, mentoring and support to local residents to develop their digital skills and confidence.
My Place Lloyds	Providing housing support to vulnerable people.
Teatime Club	Bringing together local communities and providing hot meals to local vulnerable families and connecting local people.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

17 Analysis of movements in restricted funds (cont.)

Aviva Community Fund	The Aviva Community Fund helps local causes build stronger communities across the UK.
Live Well Leeds	Promoting positive mental health and well being through art and local connections.
Mental Health First Aid	Promoting positive mental health and well being through art and local connections.
Power To Change	Development of leadership and deepen the positive impact our organisation has in our community.
The Sir George Martin Trust	To deliver support and activities to benefit the well-being of disadvantaged and vulnerable people in West Yorkshire.
Warm Hub	Bringing together local communities and providing hot meals to local vulnerable families and connecting local people.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

18 Analysis of movement in unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2025 £
General fund	349,217	82,660	(100,597)	-	331,280
Building fund	128,937	-	(16,256)	-	112,681
Maintenance and repair fund	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
	<u>628,154</u>	<u>82,660</u>	<u>(116,853)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>593,961</u>

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2024 £
General fund	289,611	75,238	(15,632)	-	349,217
Building fund	145,193	-	(16,256)	-	128,937
Maintenance and repair fund	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
	<u>584,804</u>	<u>75,238</u>	<u>(31,888)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>628,154</u>

Name of unrestricted fund	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
General fund	The free reserves after allowing for all designated funds
Building fund	The fixed assets are essential for the future operation of the charity and so are excluded from free reserves.
Maintenance and repair fund	Trustees agreed to allocate a designated reserve of £150,000 to ensure the high standard of maintenance and repair are preserved and any necessary upgrades can be undertaken.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	1,908	112,681	-	114,589
Net current assets/(liabilities)	329,372	150,000	332	479,704
Total	331,280	262,681	332	594,293
Previous reporting period				
	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	3,816	128,937	-	132,753
Net current assets/(liabilities)	345,401	150,000	-	495,401
Total	349,217	278,937	-	628,154

20 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods:

	Property		Equipment	
	2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
Less than one year	1	1	-	-
One to five years	4	4	-	-
Over five years	1	2	-	-
	6	7	-	-

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

21 Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	(33,861)	22,696
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	18,164	19,010
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(20,411)	(19,341)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(46,125)	8,285
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	51,748	40,577
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating	(30,485)	71,227

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

22 Prior year Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure account)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	245	-	245	5
Charitable activities:	4				
Advice Service		4,500	565,028	569,528	500,240
Communities and Families		-	195,798	195,798	194,987
Services and Room Hire		51,152	-	51,152	45,228
Investments	5	19,341	-	19,341	2,465
Total income		75,238	760,826	836,064	742,925
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	6				
Advice Service		217	585,682	585,899	502,903
Communities and Families		-	195,798	195,798	194,987
Services and Room Hire		31,671	-	31,671	52,117
Total expenditure		31,888	781,480	813,368	750,007
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		43,350	(20,654)	22,696	(7,082)
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	8	43,350	(20,654)	22,696	(7,082)
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		43,350	(20,654)	22,696	(7,082)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		584,804	20,654	605,458	612,540
Total funds carried forward		628,154	-	628,154	605,458

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Accounts

Company registered number 1754257
Registered charity number 514371

Better Leeds Communities
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st March 2024

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

The Board presents its report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2024. Included within the trustees' report is the directors' report as required by company law.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

1. Reference and Administrative Information

Charity name	Better Leeds Communities Limited
Charity Registration Number	514371
Company Registration Number	1754257
Registered Office Better Leeds Communities	42-46 Burley Lodge Road Leeds LS6 1QF
Trustee/Directors	Neil Canwell (Chair) William Hird Sarah Walker Terri McGregor (resigned 30 April 2024) Kulvinder Richardson Alexander Knight Richard Napier
Senior Management Team	Taira Kayani (resigned 31 October 2024) Rajo Saira (joined 1 July 2024)
Auditors	Slade & Cooper Limited Chartered Certified Accountants & Registered Auditors Beehive Mill Jersey St Ancoats Manchester M4 6JG
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank plc Nine Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2HB Scottish Widows Bank plc 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ CCLA COIF Charities Deposit Fund 1 Angel Lane London EC4R 3AB

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Company Status and Governing Document

Better Leeds Communities is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19 September 1983 and registered as a charity on 21 July 1983. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. There are currently 7 members.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

All the directors of the company are also trustees of the charity. The trustees who served during the year under review and to date are set out on page 1. In accordance with the Articles of Association, one-third of the directors or, if their number is not three or a multiple of three, the number nearest to one-third, must retire from office and being eligible, can offer themselves for re-election. The directors to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment. If any directors became or were appointed directors on the same day those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) be determined by lot.

Our strategy is to recruit individuals with skills we have identified as necessary and have lived experience of our service area to continue to ensure effective governance.

Anyone interested in joining the Board is first asked to submit a CV, which is scrutinised by the Chair. If appropriate, the prospective trustee is offered the opportunity to observe a Board meeting. By mutual agreement an interview is scheduled, a DBS check is carried out and references are taken up. A final recommendation is then made to the trustees. The final decision to appoint a new trustee is taken at a Board meeting.

Induction and Training of Trustees

All current trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity, and many will participate in staff training, meetings, and away days. Trustees are informed of the provision of activities and meet all senior staff members.

Additionally, all new trustees receive a prepared Trustee Induction Pack, which includes the following Better Leeds Communities information:

- Publicity leaflet
- Latest annual accounts
- Latest annual report
- All organisational policies
- Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Minutes of the latest Board meeting
- Contact details for the Board
- Relevant Charity Commission leaflets
- The NCVO – Good Trustee Guide

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

Organisational Structure

Better Leeds Communities is organised, so the trustees meet regularly to manage its affairs and provide strategic direction. The organisations day-to-day management is undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer who is directly accountable to the Chair and collectively the wider Board of Trustees.

The CEO manages the Communities Manager, the First Contact Manager, the Debt Supervisor, Generalist, Housing and Support & Engagement staff; the Debt Team are managed by the Debt Supervisor; and the First Contact Team is managed by the First Contact Manager and the Communities Team is managed by the Communities Manager. The Income generation is the responsibility of the CEO. Remuneration for key personnel is reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis with reference to the NJC pay scales.

Risk Management

Consideration of risk is an ongoing aspect of all project planning, monitoring, and quality assurance. Many procedures such as authorisation, monitoring and reporting, staff vetting and appraisal, safety procedures for staff, property and clients, and adequate insurance cover are in place; and security equipment has been installed to safeguard against theft from the building. We continue to invest in training, resources, and development of new policies on all aspects of safety in the workplace. The principal financial risk to the charity is the loss of income through major contracts coming to an end and the risk of being unable to secure continuation funding. The trustees review this risk on a regular basis and keep a risk register. The Board holds strategy meetings to plan for the future and ensure that the charity remains responsive to new opportunities. Decisions taken at these meetings inform the future direction of the charity.

3. Our Aims and Objectives

The main object of the charity is the promotion of any charitable purpose for the benefit of the inhabitants of, principally but not exclusively, the local government area of Leeds and its environs, and more particularly the promotion of learning and social inclusion amongst the inhabitants of the area and the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare, recreation, and leisure time occupation.

The organisation provides a range of services and activities in pursuance of these objectives including legal advice in welfare benefits, debt, and housing. We deliver social prescribing services across Leeds in partnership with service leads, and deliver intensive, holistic support packages to individuals in financial crisis. Additionally, we also work alongside local residents to develop participatory activities that they have pride in and ownership of, including coordinating and delivering community activities and fun days; and run a personalised community leadership programme developing skills, confidence, and civic participation. In addition, within our building we house specialist facilities (including training and interview rooms, an activity studio, and a kitchen) to run our own activities to cater for the needs of community groups, public and private sector organisations.

Having such excellent community-based facilities means that we can readily host a range of activities, public events and meetings for the benefit of the local community and beyond.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

Better Leeds Communities' staff and volunteers are guided by the following set of values that positively influence the culture of the organisation: Our values are:

Excellence - We are ambitious for Leeds, we are committed to delivering high quality, continuous improvement and value for money.

Collaboration - Partnership is at the centre of all we do, we work positively with others to achieve more for the people who use our services.

Inclusion - We value diversity, we promote equality. Our services are open, accessible and our opportunities are available to all. We are always welcoming, encouraging, and respectful.

Sustainability - We are innovative, forward looking, and creative. We are enterprising, relevant, and progressive in pursuit of our vision.

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims of the organisation and its future activities.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

4. Our Achievements and Performance

Chair's Report

I am pleased to introduce Better Leeds Communities Annual Report 2023-2024 which sets out for our clients, supporters, staff, funders and the public our work and achievements during the year and our future plans. I would like to thank the Directors/Trustees, the Senior Management team and all of our staff for their hard work during the year.

Better Leeds Communities (BLC) is a long-established charity that has delivered vitally important services in Leeds for many years. In 2023/24 BLC exceeded its income budget due to a variety of reasons some of which will not repeat in future years. The principal reasons are:

- The return of income from room rental to levels similar to that experienced prior to Covid
- Changes to banking arrangements to take advantage of increased interest rates
- The acquisition of new contracts for a wider range of services
- The continuation of the Household Support Fund administered by Leeds City Council

Much of the extra income was paid directly to 3rd parties in support of the charity's objectives. In addition part of the extra income was allocated to an essential upgrade to our building as set out below. The Directors/Trustees and Senior Management Team continue to adopt a cautious approach to long term financial stability and were also able to add the final unrestricted surplus of £43k to our reserves.

Our net assets at the end of the year were £628,154, of which £552,715 was held in cash. This sound financial base means that we can be a reliable partner to our funders and clients for the foreseeable future in these uncertain times.

During 2023/24 we continued to make a significant contribution to alleviating the cost-of-living crisis by distributing vouchers and other resources funded by the Household Support Fund. A very efficient system for the distribution of these resources was introduced by our Management Team.

Our funders continued to be extremely supportive during this period, and our service volumes have returned to pre Covid levels. Some clients still exhibit a reluctance to attend advice sessions in person at Burley Lodge Centre and we have adapted our service delivery model to include options for consultations by phone and in 3rd party premises.

We continued to invest in upgrades to our building particularly in projects to reduce energy consumption. We also implemented essential maintenance to the building, including to our bathrooms, kitchen, flooring and roof. The Burley Lodge Centre is a significant asset but requires careful management and appropriate ongoing funding to ensure that the facility reflects modern standards and is welcoming to our staff and clients.

Delays in staff recruitment reduced during 2023-24. However, this continued to place additional demands on the existing team, and we are extremely grateful for their hard work in providing cover.

During the course of 2023-24 there were no changes to our Board of Trustees. I am very grateful to my fellow Trustees for continuing their involvement as volunteer Trustees, and for their enthusiastic hard work I would like to record my thanks to all our staff, funders and partners for their support.

Neil Canwell
Chair of Trustees

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

Chief Executive's Report

I am pleased to present the annual report for Better Leeds Communities (BLC) for the year ending 31 March 2024. This has been a year of both challenges and remarkable progress as we continue our commitment to empowering individuals, strengthening families, and fostering sustainable communities across Leeds.

Despite the continued economic and social challenges of recent times, BLC's dedicated team and our partners have ensured that vulnerable members of our community receive the support they need.

The impact of the cost-of-living increases on personal finances have meant we have seen more clients with deficit budgets. Our debt MaPS funded projects managed close to £5 million of debt. The complexity of debt cases has continued to increase resulting in the average case remaining open 75 days. Increasing numbers of clients have asked us for support around ensuring they're in receipt of their full benefit entitlement through benefit checks. We have again been fortunate this year to be able to offer clients financial support by issuing food and fuel vouchers and have supported some clients with wider essentials such as cookers and carpets through the Household Support Fund (HSF). Clients continued to present with complex housing needs that increases the time and intervention required; and we are also seeing clients that have multiple complexities in their lives including debt and poor physical and mental wellbeing.

While our community continues to face challenges, including the rising cost of living and an increasing demand for services, we have adapted by listening to our communities, pursuing new funding sources, and developing innovative service models. I am proud of our community's team's resilience and our ability to pivot in response to changing community needs.

As Better Leeds Communities closes the year, we reaffirm our commitment to empowering people, working co-operatively with partners, and coproducing our services and activities. We remain committed to ensuring that we continue to work holistically with individuals and families in order to achieve demonstrable long-lasting change in their lives.

This will be my final full year as CEO of Better Leeds Communities, I am immensely proud of the position and reputation of the organisation. I leave the organisation in a strong position both financially and strategically and am confident that this legacy will be protected and developed further in the future.

I am very grateful to the staff team for their commitment and hard work under such immensely challenging circumstances. Their compassion and kindness are a source of immense pride for me as are their achievements and creativity given the challenges they face on a daily basis.

We thank all of our stakeholders, particularly our funders who have been understanding and supportive of our challenges. We look forward to working with all our supporters in the coming year.

I am also extremely grateful to the Directors/Trustees for their continued energy and commitment to our mission.

Taira Kayani
Chief Executive Officer

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

5. Our Services

Advice Services

Debt Advice Service

The MaPS Debt Advice Services delivers advice sessions to Leeds residents. The service is funded by the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) through Citizen's Advice.

The Debt Service provides detailed Debt Casework including negotiations with creditors, agreement to debt write offs, assistance with court proceedings, discussions with enforcement agents, and advice on the full range of statutory and non-statutory debt solutions, plus help with income maximisation and financial capability.

Referrals come from a wide variety of agencies and organisations including education settings, Leeds voluntary sector organisations, housing support workers, health professionals, self-referral and internally from Better Leeds Communities' other services.

The services Specialist Debt Advisors deliver advice on a range of debt issues including credit cards, loans, rent, utilities, and council tax arrears; and are all qualified to act as approved intermediaries for Debt Relief Orders when appropriate to client situations.

The year has once again presented challenges around cost-of-living and the impact that has on personal finances. The constant cost-of-living increases have brought about more deficit budgets, with clients on average spending £121 per month more than they have coming in.

Throughout the year, a total of 511 new cases were opened, with 63 of them continuing to receive support into the following year. Whilst a reduction in comparison to last year, this reflects a reduction in target from the funder. The continued pressure on family finances is evident with almost 50% of cases having at least one dependent child.

Despite the reduction in new cases in comparison to last year, the project has managed £4,705,834.48 of debt. This figure is almost identical to last year when we opened 830 new cases, highlighting a higher level of individual debt.

The complexity of cases has continued its upward trend, with cases being open for an average of 75 days.

MaPS announced a recommissioning process is going to take place in 2024-25. Currently, there is no indication as to whether there will be an impact on the organisation, though the recommissioning process is likely to result in a temporary extension of the current agreement.

MaPS Debt Modernisation Fund

During the year we had the opportunity to improve adviser productivity and wellbeing by making an application to this fund. We were able to upgrade the IT hardware available to our 2 FTE Advisers. We replaced aging laptops providing advisers with 2 monitors each to increase productivity, wellbeing and DSE compliance. We also upgraded to wireless keyboards and mice and Bluetooth wireless headphones with noise cancelling facilities.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

Children's Centres

The Children's Centre service is funded by Citizen Advice Leeds, through funding received from Leeds City Council and is aimed at those responsible for (or expecting) a child under 16 years of age in Leeds and focusing on those expecting a baby or that have children under the age of 5.

Referrals are received from numerous sources, including Citizen's Advice Leeds, family support workers, education settings and through self-referrals.

Our Generalist Advice Workers deliver advice on welfare benefits, housing, debt, employment and immigration; assists clients with form filling, benefit appeals and mandatory reconsiderations. They also signpost to other services provided by Better Leeds Communities and those of appropriate external organisations depending on client needs.

The year has once again been dominated by the increasing cost of living pressures that have led to high numbers of clients contacting us for support, especially around ensuring they're in receipt of their full benefit entitlement through benefit checks. Additionally, we have been fortunate to be able to provide financial assistance through the Household Support Fund (HSF).

In-year, we offered appointments at outreach locations throughout the city and at the Burley Lodge Centre. Appointments were also offered over the telephone and via email as client need dictated.

The project saw an increase in demand during the 2023-24 financial year, resulting in 551 unique clients supported.

The funding for this project is due to come to an end in quarter one of the 2024-25 financial year.

Housing Advice Service

Our Housing Service delivers housing advice to Leeds residents and is funded by Citizen's Advice Leeds through funding received from Leeds City Council.

The service provides detailed advice to 'Casework' level; supports those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or in need of help with an urgent housing issue – including advice on a wide range of issues including renting, housing options after relationship breakdowns, tenants' rights and obligations, harassment, repairs and legal procedures.

Clients continued to present with complex housing needs that increases the time and intervention required; and we are also seeing clients that have multiple complexities in their lives including debt and poor wellbeing.

We have continued to meet client need by delivering appointments flexibly to ensure accessibility, this has included face to face appointments at the Burley Lodge Centre, telephone appointments and advice via email. Overall, clients have been reluctant to meet with an advisor in person and the majority of appointments have been delivered by telephone with follow up work via letter and email. Despite this reluctance, the project has a high client engagement rate.

As rents continued to sharply rise, we were contacted by increasing numbers of clients being threatened with eviction as they struggle to meet their housing costs on top of the increased cost of living.

Non-fault evictions were a prominent topic throughout the year and were used by some landlords to remove their tenant and increasing their rents for a new tenant.

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Extremely long waiting lists for Social Housing are intensifying pressures on clients as their need for affordable rents becomes more of a priority.

Our housing casework service supported 167 unique clients, with 83% of those clients providing support for a dependent child.

Henry Smith 2020-2023

The Henry Smith Project offers holistic debt advice and support to clients referred by the citywide Social Prescribing Project, Linking Leeds. This project means the organisation offers a more holistic service to clients in financial hardship than our MaPS Debt Advice Project. Previously, clients referred into this project have additional social needs and complexities in their lives such as poor mental health, however this is now mirrored across both debt advice projects.

Clients are assessed at the beginning of their debt advice journey with our Debt Advisor using our customised wellbeing wheel to establish their wellbeing across a range of indicators. A co-produced action plan is developed to create agreed achievable targets to deal with the identified issues. Our Debt Advisor works with the client and various partners by signposting or referring the client to external agencies for additional support and to access specialist services. A further assessment at the end of the client journey enables a measurement of outcomes pre and post engagement with the project.

In the year, clients are:

More optimistic – 75%.

Report an improvement in how they are dealing with problems – 90%.

Feeling more relaxed – 75%.

Thinking more clearly – 78%.

Will experience increased financial stability – 90%.

Avoid homelessness – 50%.

More aware of where to go for information and support – 100%.

During the operational period of the financial year, the service has supported 224 new clients.

The project's funding came to an end at the midpoint of the 2023-24 financial year. We submitted a further bid to Henry Smith Charitable Trust in-year, this bid was successful, and we will recommence the project in April 2024.

Leeds City Council – Household Support Fund 4

In July 2023 we received £100,000 funding from Leeds City Council to allow us to provide direct financial support to clients accessing our advice services. The fund specifically supported clients in financial hardship caused by the national cost of living crisis resulting in increasing energy and food costs. We used this funding to provide financial support through vouchers to households genuinely in need of support. Wherever possible, we linked the support to existing advice services.

The funding allocated was also used to provide additional advice service, which was utilised to provide additional housing advice appointment throughout the funding period.

The Household Support Fund allowed us to support 616 households, of which 423 had a dependent child.

During the year, we distributed 857 food vouchers, 146 energy vouchers, 57 clothing vouchers and 17 vouchers for wider essentials including carpets and white goods.

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Basis Yorkshire

During the 2023-24 financial year, we received funding from Basis Yorkshire, a charity that is working to end stigma, create safety and promote empowerment for sex workers and people who have experienced sexual abuse and exploitation.

The service users of Basis Yorkshire often struggle with engaging with services like debt, housing and benefits advice. With that in mind, funding was received for an advisor to attend their weekly drop-in service in an attempt to break down barriers and increase their engagement with services.

We have received extremely positive feedback, both from Basis Yorkshire and the clients who have gone on to receive advice and support from ourselves.

Aviva Community Fund

The Aviva Debt Relief Order (DRO) fund was established through crowdfunding to provide assistance to clients in covering their £90 DRO fees, ultimately enabling them to eliminate their debt.

To date, the fund has successfully covered the expenses for 29 DROs and has managed to alleviate a total debt amount of £321,664.39.

Advice UK

As members of Advice UK and recipients of funding for the MaPS debt Advice Project we were eligible to make an application for funding to support with the administration of Debt Relief Orders. Our application was successful as we met the organisational criteria which was;

1. Is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority to provide debt advice
2. Does not generate any revenue in the process of administering DRO applications and does not charge any fees to clients beyond the £90 DRO application fee
3. Holds a MaPS accredited Quality Standard and will provide details of this upon request

The funding we received supported the administration of Debt Relief orders for our debt advice clients accessing the MaPS Debt Advice Project.

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Communities and Families

1 Burley: 170 Voices

As the project entered its third year of delivery, we can see our ongoing efforts to ensure our offer continues to support the development of the community via empowerment. The project progressed well despite the day-to-day pressures many in our community are facing.

One of the things we are very proud of is how strong social connections are being created at our events and activities as people continue to thrive and survive despite these challenges. There is a strong sense of mutual assistance as we saw and heard stories demonstrating this throughout the year.

There are always discussions on how taking proactive measures to reduce vulnerability is a form of empowerment for our participants. We have learnt throughout the year that these conversations take place as a secondary 'activity' at all our events but act as a primary motivator in supporting our participants.

Our commitment to continuous reflection is also helping to ensure we are thinking about the little things that make a big difference. We aim to be present in each initiative so that we can capture both the group thinking and the individual thoughts as well as identify advice and support needed and to guide this where vocalised.

During the year, we recognised the importance and overwhelming demand for family activity over and above any other type of activity and continue to weigh our efforts here. The challenge for us in this is capturing families with children past the primary school children. We hear the parents/carers of this age group asking for us to help them with engaging children in the area, but despite our best efforts, this is a tricky group to identify activities for, and we continue to 'test' different methods of engagement. We are currently looking at working with a volunteer who is a qualified parkour instructor to offer parkour in the warmer months in a new local greenspace that has been re-developed and is within a few minutes' walk of our base at the Burley Lodge Centre.

With regards to our Education and Awareness development sessions, we know these are popular when delivered in a less formal setting as has been identified earlier in the project.

We look forward to heading into the final two years of the project with great momentum now behind us.

Staff Team

Abeer joined our staff team in November and is now established within the team. Having a new team member has helped us look at our ways of working again through a fresh set of eyes and Abeer has strengthened and added to what we've been able to offer to our community. We are excited about the capacity, capability, and potential we now have as a staff team to ensure the momentum built so far further increases the impact of our work with the community.

Our Volunteers

Over the last 6 months we have attracted 6 new volunteers to the project who have spent time completing their induction training, inputting into planning and coaching sessions and supporting us with the delivery of activities. Within this cohort we have two student placements who are focussing on our digital sessions. Our next opportunity is diversifying this fantastic team of volunteers further and to focus on the inter-generational opportunities that we feel exist within our community.

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Volunteer Impact

Some of our Volunteers have been with us from the beginning of the project and get involved in as much as possible, others have more ad-hoc involvement and have specific activities that they want to spend their time supporting. We feel that the approach we now have suits both the volunteers we are attracting and the project demands. We continue to support our volunteers to achieve their goals identified through their application process and ongoing development goals.

Our Participants

To date, the core group of participants we worked with were overwhelmingly Female, South Asian and in the 25 – 45 age brackets with primary school aged children.

It is encouraging to see that our approach in the last 12 months has seen an increase in the diversity of people we are reaching and bringing together. Our ethnicity data shows us that there is no single self-identified ethnicity group of people attending our activities with a percentage higher than 25.

Examples of Our Activities

Our Community Activism sessions are being scoped and defined as part of our Craftivism Sessions

Leeds Craftivists have teamed up with our project to bring together a group of people who want to work on a piece of art that represents the concerns in Burley. The purpose of our craftivism sessions is to support a community process of action, expression, and negotiation. Community members work collaboratively on a piece of craft that expresses their concerns artistically. As with all of our activities, we hope this will help promote collective empowerment for those involved. We look forward to sharing the progress of this exciting group in our next report.

Our ideas around 'how to set up a community group' is central to our Burley Planning Group

This group of local people has already begun with the planning of our Iftar and Eid Party which aims to expand participation to include the whole community especially those currently under-represented in the project. This group is a fantastic example of participants coming together to co-produce future activities. Plans for a summer event in the local park are already being excitedly discussed.

Digital

As an organisation, we have become a 'Digital Health Hub'. Our Digital Inclusion Officer has worked with the project to explore how we can support the community in digital inclusion. We ran some digital drop-in sessions to test out the appetite and needs of the local community. We learnt that our offer needs to be individualised as those attending had a wide variety of needs, many of which we had not anticipated in our original drop-in offer.

Our previous involvement with a local university's research project 'Exploring Digital Poverty: A Study Of Socio-Digital Exclusion And Digital Inclusion Practices In Leeds' also gave us greater insight into how our support could be most impactful. The recommendations are enabling us to deliver a more bespoke digital offer in the next year which will see 3 volunteers working with a targeted group of local participants to offer a learning pathway created by self-identified digital goals. We look forward to developing and delivering this work and evaluating the impact of the approach identified.

Parents Space

We developed a taster course in collaboration with the Lifelong Learning Centre (LLLC) at Leeds University. The LLLC provided several facilitators who specialised in learning, awareness and understanding of parenting issues. Engagement with this project which demonstrated to participants that they are able to access routes into higher education through the LLLC. We are delighted that one of our participants will be exploring this option in the near future.

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Festive Fayre

We delivered this well received event on a Saturday afternoon in December. Additionally, during the festive period we ran a very popular wreath making workshop. This was particularly popular, with participants telling us how happy they were to be able to 'make and take' such a beautiful but simple object away with them. The success of this years' festive activities has increased our confidence in the request to go even bigger next year as we know the call for such activities is beneficial to existing participants as well as affording us the opportunity to introduce the project to a wider audience.

Burley History Sessions

We are reaching a new 'generation' of participants through this project; it has appealed to a completely 'new-to-us' demographic and is becoming increasingly popular with each session held. The participants come together for social interaction and to share stories and experiences of their lives in Burley. Sue, who has an interest in genealogy, has helped another member of the group with his research and they have been in touch in between sessions. Participants said 'it's a nice space to meet new friends' and they are very grateful we are providing the opportunity for them to meet and interact with other people in their community with similar interests. We are helping the group shape what they want to get out of their time with the project. They have developed the idea of a book/audio stories and memory walks and possibly an exhibition in the future.

Spring Family Event

Our ever-popular half-term event was facilitated by the community artist, Alice, who has become a vital asset for us when we need specialist support to deliver arts-based activities. Alice has been adopted by participants as our 'Resident Artist'. Her knowledge of and affinity to the local community makes her a fantastic professional to partner with.

Community Iftar and Eid Events

Planned by our community members and volunteers this year, we have held our first Community Iftar as a project – something we've been wanting to get in the calendar for the last few years but, due to limitations on volunteer availability previously, have been unable to. With recitation from local children, prayer (led by one of our community members), delicious food and a concerted effort to engage the whole community and to use the occasion to widen understanding about Ramadan and Eid. We were pleased to see people of all faiths and backgrounds join the event to learn and experience this activity.

Teatime Club

This project started through support received from the Tesco Stronger Starts funding we received this year. The additional funding meant that we were able to support local families struggling financially because of the cost-of-living crisis. We delivered the project through the winter months, offering both a warm inviting place to be and a hot meal after school hours.

Through our strong links with local schools, an invite to access our weekly club that provided a meal for the family was sent to families in need. Participants were able to access our Teatime Club for a few hours in a warm space with a meal included. The service also made it easier for referrals to be made into our organisation's wider services, as well as signposting participants into other services across the city able to provide support where this was needed.

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The most impactful element of our Teatime club was the meal that we provided and the food parcels that we gave to families in attendance. We often heard the adults talk about how much it helped them not having to go home and 'feed the kids'.

We felt it was important for us to make sure we were targeting families in the local area. We therefore made the decision to restrict the invite to those that had children at one of our 3 local primary schools which are all within 0.5 miles of our centre. We hosted the project in our Community Room which is a large enough space to have been able to seat 36 people across two large communal tables. One table reserved for craft activities and the other for board games after the meal. This still left us with room to take advantage of our large table tennis table which proved a popular activity at the club.

Each week we designed a fun educational element into what we were doing – via trivia quizzes, crosswords, and games that we played.

Meals were prepared based on those that booked onto the sessions. Across the 12 sessions this totalled 224 meals prepared, on average 18 per week. Any food left over was packaged up and given to the families to take away to eat later.

We supported;
28 Families
58 Individuals directly
75 individuals in total including indirectly.

Live Well Leeds

The art collective, funded by Live Well Leeds were made up of a core group of 8 women aged 30 – 60. The group came together to share art/craft skills whilst carving out space for their mental health and to increase their community participation. The group was peer-led with the support of volunteers, and it was observed by themselves that sessions had different dynamics with some being more mindful, in a quieter atmosphere, and some being more conversation led. There was lots of encouragement that the group gave to each other in the crafts they were learning and on the topics that they discussed that were wide and varied.

Feedback included:

'The group was supportive and spread positivity/skills'.
'I can come and talk openly and sound things out in a safe environment'
'I don't feel judged'.

Several of this group will rejoin us for the planned craftivism sessions next year as volunteers.

The Sir George Martin Trust

Funding from the Sr George Martin Trust received in the year enabled us to improve the facilities available in our commercial kitchen.

This in turn supported the delivery of a number of projects and activities including our Teatime Club.

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Digital inclusion

We secured a grant through 100% Leeds to deliver the Woodsley and Holt Park LCP (WHP LCP) Digital Inclusion Project. The aim of the project was to establish a digital presence in the WHP LCP area. This would be demonstrated by embedding digital inclusion in existing service provision, establishing digital health hubs, recruiting, training, retaining volunteers, improving health outcomes, enabling connectivity, upskilling, and building digital confidence in participants and professionals.

We employed a Digital Inclusion Officer who has worked to bring 15 organisations and community hubs together in the Woodsley and Holt Park (WHP) area.

The digital inclusion officer delivered over 30 in person digital sessions and interacted with over 97 learners supporting them on their digital journey.

While working alongside different organisations, it was identified organisations struggled with staff capacity including volunteer recruitment and retention. With the Digital Inclusion Officers' support, 9 volunteers were recruited through various careers and volunteer channels, this allowed organisations to meet the demands of their client groups. Another opportunity was advanced when working with the University of Leeds Social work department to host 2 students to work across organisations in WHP LCP area to reduce the demand on staff to deliver digital support.

Multiply

The Multiply Project is a digital inclusion project aimed at increasing people's ability to use maths in their daily life. We supported 100 people in-year through digital skills training as well as gifting a digital device and data for 24 months to each participant.

Social Prescribing

Linking Leeds

Linking Leeds is the integrated city-wide Social Prescribing service for people in Leeds that links individuals attending GP practices or living in the community with a range of local community services to improve social, emotional, and mental wellbeing. It is commissioned by West Yorkshire Integrated Commissioning Board.

The service is a consortium of seven local partners, including Better Leeds Communities, who have over a decade of collective experience delivering Social Prescribing to the people of Leeds. The Linking Leeds service commenced delivery on the 1st September 2019. Linking Leeds provides Social Prescribing for all Leeds residents aged 16 years and above and responds to the specific health profiles of communities.

Linking Leeds is directed to anyone who may benefit from better links with their local community, including those who wants to improve their general health and wellbeing. It can connect people with a range of services in their area, including mental health support, fitness classes, volunteering or employment opportunities, faith groups, money or housing services and hobby groups.

Our Wellbeing Coordinators are now fully located in community locations and GP surgeries. Referral numbers have continued to grow. Throughout the year, numbers of referrals continued to grow as more

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people were affected financially by the cost-of-living crisis, with a negative effect on mental and emotional health.

The service is now preparing for a further round of commissioning as the current contract is due to end on 31 August 2024. This has created some uncertainty for staff working on the project.

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Services and Room Hire

First Contact Service

The First Contact Team, which includes our Casual First Contact Team who work evenings and weekends, are the welcoming face of the organisation. They are the first point of contact for all clients, customers, contractors, and funders coming into Better Leeds Communities services and facility.

We have continued to welcome back our regular room bookers and seen a surge in demand for rooms to deliver training and 1:1 support. Call numbers into the organisation have increased significantly over the year, the advice service has seen demand increase by 100% over several months of the year. Alongside call volumes, we have seen an increase in the length of calls into the organisation. Clients have presented with more complex personal needs and more complex circumstances requiring more than one service and/or needing to be signposted or referred to other services in the city. We have increased our staff presence over the year to ensure sufficient capacity to take calls and welcome in clients and customers accessing training and activities at the Centre.

Room Hire

In year, room booking really started to pick up. We saw an increase in room rental income equating to 19.32% higher than the previous financial year and returning to 100% of pre pandemic levels. The budget for the year was set at £40,000 assuming some drop off in income, but we achieved £51,152 in the financial year.

We have made some major improvements to the building including replacement of a flat roof at the back of the building and significant repairs to other areas of the roof. We replaced the staff kitchen and the flooring on the top floor of our building. Several items of furniture have been purchased to improve the look and feel of the building and large smart TV's have been installed in three of our larger training/activity rooms. We have also significantly improved the facilities in our commercial kitchen adding a new commercial Fridge, Freezer and Dishwasher.

6. Financial review

2023-24 continued to be a particularly challenging year in terms of new or renewed funding being available. Some of our funding was under threat of withdrawal post the current financial year, creating a degree of uncertainty for both the organisation and the individuals working for us. This came at a time when demand for services was surging. Thankfully, we were able to secure additional funding for both debt and housing advice in-year and the impending cuts to funding did not in fact materialise and we were able to meet all our funding outputs and outcomes. As we go into the next financial year, we have the majority of our current funding requirements met and are hopeful that shortfalls in the budget will be met. The funding landscape has begun to open up following the Covid 19 pandemic and we are seeing some longer-term opportunities emerging.

Income in the year increased from £742,925 to £836,064. Expenditure also increased in the year from £750,007 to £813,368. This left an overall net movement in funds in the year of £22,696 made up of (£20,654) in restricted funds and £43,350 unrestricted funds.

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Funding came from a variety of statutory and non-statutory bodies. Better Leeds Communities is grateful to all our funders, especially in such difficult times for our participants and clients, for helping the organisation to work towards its mission of creating opportunities that enable Leeds residents to achieve their potential by raising aspirations, removing barriers, and developing abilities that lead to a better life.

Reserves policy

The trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets (the free reserves) held by the charity should be adequate to ensure that current levels of activity could continue for at least six months during a period of unforeseen difficulty.

At 31 March 2024 the total reserves were £628,154. Of this £0 are restricted and not available for general use and £132,753 are held as functional fixed assets. Trustees have allocated a designated reserve of £150,000 to ensure the high standard of maintenance and repair are preserved and any necessary upgrades to the building can be undertaken. This leaves the level of free reserves amounting to £345,401. This reserve level, together with ongoing sources of income, give the trustees the confidence to consider that this reserve is sufficient to meet the above objective.

The free reserves are required to:-

1. Finance new and existing projects until such time as funds are received from the relevant grant making body, where appropriate.
2. Finance an orderly close-down of BLC should the need arise.

7. Funders

Better Leeds Communities would like to thank its funders during the 2023-2024 financial year. It is only with the continuation of funding being available that we have been able to continue to deliver the much-needed services for Leeds residents.

Advice UK
Aviva Community Fund
Basis Yorkshire
Big Lottery Community Fund
Citizens Advice
Citizens Advice Leeds
Community Links
Leeds City Council (100% Digital)
Leeds City Council (Household Support Fund)
Live Well Leeds
The Henry Smith Charity
The Sir George Martin Trust
Groundwork UK (Tesco Stronger Starts)

8. Plans for future periods

During the forthcoming financial year, we will continue our commitment to our long-term plans to ensuring the sustainability and expansion of services to Leeds residents. We will continue to focus on building and sustaining strong local partnerships, working in collaboration across the city and empowering our clients to make informed choices about their lives. We remain committed to delivering flexible, responsive and innovative high-quality services in Leeds. We have plans to develop and

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

implement a new Better Leeds Communities Strategy and implementation plan for 2025-2027.

During 2024 - 2025 we will continue to apply for funding and will promote our Room Hire Business. We have several funding bids in the pipeline or expected to emerge during the later part of the year financial year in 2024 these include funding to support our clients with digital exclusion and to support our staff with training and development opportunities aimed at improving their skills and resilience. We also expect to receive further funding from Leeds City Council aimed at increasing advice provision to specific areas across Leeds where we have communities with high deprivation needs. In addition, we are hoping that a further round of Household Support Fund (Round 6) is made available through the City Council. This allows the organisation to provide direct financial support to clients accessing our advice services. The fund specifically supports clients in financial hardship caused by the national cost of living crisis resulting in increasing energy and food costs.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2024

10. Statement of the Board of Directors' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Better Leeds Communities for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Board of Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation The Board of Directors is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In so far as the Board of Directors is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware
- The Board of Directors has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information

The Board of Directors is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

11. Auditors

Slade & Cooper Ltd were re-appointed as the charitable company's auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Board of Directors and signed on its behalf by

Neil Canwell (Chair)

Date: 26th November 2024

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Better Leeds Communities

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Better Leeds Communities (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (including the income and expenditure account), the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 20, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view,

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims.
- enquiry of the charity's staff, management and those charged with governance to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Christy Yun Hing Lau FCCA DChA CTA

Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of

Slade & Cooper Limited
Statutory Auditors
Beehive Mill
Jersey Street
Manchester
M4 6JG

17th December 2024

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	245	-	245	5
Charitable activities:	4				
Advice Service		4,500	565,028	569,528	500,240
Communities and Families		-	195,798	195,798	194,987
Services and Room Hire		51,152	-	51,152	45,228
Investments	5	19,341	-	19,341	2,465
Total income		75,238	760,826	836,064	742,925
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	6				
Advice Service		217	585,682	585,899	502,903
Communities and Families		-	195,798	195,798	194,987
Services and Room Hire		31,671	-	31,671	52,117
Total expenditure		31,888	781,480	813,368	750,007
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		43,350	(20,654)	22,696	(7,082)
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	8	43,350	(20,654)	22,696	(7,082)
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		43,350	(20,654)	22,696	(7,082)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		584,804	20,654	605,458	612,540
Total funds carried forward		628,154	-	628,154	605,458

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

A full comparative SOFA is available on the last page of the financial statements.

Better Leeds Communities
Company number 01754257
Balance sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	132,753	146,040
Total fixed assets		132,753	146,040
Current assets			
Debtors	14	24,003	32,288
Cash at bank and in hand		552,715	467,870
Total current assets		576,718	500,158
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	15	(81,317)	(40,740)
Net current assets		495,401	459,418
Total assets less current liabilities		628,154	605,458
Net assets		628,154	605,458
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	17	-	20,654
Unrestricted income funds	18	628,154	584,804
Total charity funds		628,154	605,458

These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006 and are for circulation to members of the company.

The notes on pages 28 to 46 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 26/11/2024 and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Neil Canwell (Chair)

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ending 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	21	71,227	21,270
<i>Cash flows from investing activities:</i>			
Dividends, interest, and rents from investments		19,341	2,465
Cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		13,618	2,465
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		84,845	23,735
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		467,870	444,135
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		552,715	467,870

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgments and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Better Leeds Communities meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees have made no key judgments which have a significant effect on the accounts.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

c Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of a provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

d Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised; refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

f Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities includes delivery costs undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charity's programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 7.

i Operating leases

Operating leases are leases in which the title to the assets, and the risks and rewards of ownership, remain with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

j Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

Leasehold improvements	Over the period of the lease
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	25% reducing balance
Computer equipment	33.3% straight line

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

k Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

m Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

n Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

o Pensions

Employees of the charity are entitled to join a defined contribution 'money purchase' scheme. The charity's contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 9. There were no outstanding contributions at the year end (2023: £2,861). The costs of the defined contribution scheme are included within support and governance costs and allocated to the funds of the charity using the methodology set out in note 7.

2 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales and has no share capital. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The registered office address is disclosed on page 1.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations	245	-	245	5
Total	245	-	245	5
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2023</i>	5	-	5	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Advice UK	-	1,000	1,000	2,000
Aviva RDO	-	-	-	4,773
Basis Yorkshire	4,500	-	4,500	-
Big Lottery Fund	-	92,432	92,432	96,035
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	111,720	111,720	133,291
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	97,352	97,352	92,852
Henry Smith Charity	-	28,900	28,900	57,300
Law Society	-	-	-	4,927
Leeds City Council				
Household Support Fund	-	100,000	100,000	70,000
Multiply	-	60,000	60,000	-
UKSPF/Digital Inclusion	-	30,060	30,060	-
Live Well Leeds	-	991	991	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	20,701	20,701	-
MAPs Debt Modernisation Fund	-	4,372	4,372	-
Mental Health First Aid	-	5,500	5,500	-
Power to Change	-	8,000	8,000	-
Stronger Families	-	-	-	35,937
Tesco Stronger Starts	-	1,500	1,500	-
The Sir George Martin Trust	-	2,500	2,500	-
Warm Hub	-	-	-	3,125
Advice Service	4,500	565,028	569,528	500,240
Linking Leeds	-	195,798	195,798	194,987
Communities and Families	-	195,798	195,798	194,987
Other income - room hire	51,152	-	51,152	42,867
Other income	-	-	-	2,361
Services and Room Hire	51,152	-	51,152	45,228
Total	55,652	760,826	816,478	740,455
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2023</i>	<i>47,228</i>	<i>693,227</i>	<i>740,455</i>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

4 Income from charitable activities (cont.)

Previous reporting period	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2023 £
Advice Service			
Advice UK	2,000	-	2,000
Aviva RDO	-	4,773	4,773
Big Lottery Fund	-	96,035	96,035
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	133,291	133,291
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	92,852	92,852
Henry Smith Charity	-	57,300	57,300
Law Society	-	4,927	4,927
Leeds City Council			
Household Support Fund	-	30,000	30,000
Household Support Fund 3	-	40,000	40,000
Stronger Families	-	35,937	35,937
Warm Hub	-	3,125	3,125
Advice Service	2,000	498,240	500,240
Communities and Families			
Linking Leeds	-	194,987	194,987
Communities and Families	-	194,987	194,987
Services and Room Hire			
Other income - room hire	42,867	-	42,867
Other income	2,361	-	2,361
Services and room hire	45,228	-	45,228
Total	47,228	693,227	740,455

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 £	2023 £
Income from bank deposits	19,341	-	19,341	2,465
	19,341	-	19,341	2,465

All investment income in the previous year was unrestricted

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

6 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Staff costs	303,478	152,576	-	456,054	474,257
Administration	280	616	-	896	1,652
Depreciation	-	-	19,010	19,010	19,630
Project costs	147,822	182	-	148,004	78,338
Governance costs (see note 7)	-	-	10,709	10,709	11,138
Support costs (see note 7)	134,319	42,424	1,952	178,695	164,992
	<u>585,899</u>	<u>195,798</u>	<u>31,671</u>	<u>813,368</u>	<u>750,007</u>
	<u><u>585,899</u></u>	<u><u>195,798</u></u>	<u><u>31,671</u></u>	<u><u>813,368</u></u>	<u><u>750,007</u></u>
Previous reporting period	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2023 £	
Staff costs	314,319	159,938	-	474,257	
Administration	938	714	-	1,652	
Depreciation	-	-	19,630	19,630	
Project costs	78,318	20	-	78,338	
Governance costs (see note 7)	-	-	11,138	11,138	
Support costs (see note 7)	109,328	34,315	21,349	164,992	
	<u>502,903</u>	<u>194,987</u>	<u>52,117</u>	<u>750,007</u>	
	<u><u>502,903</u></u>	<u><u>194,987</u></u>	<u><u>52,117</u></u>	<u><u>750,007</u></u>	
			2024 £	2023 £	
Restricted expenditure			781,480	697,890	
Unrestricted expenditure			31,888	52,117	
			<u>813,368</u>	<u>750,007</u>	
			<u><u>813,368</u></u>	<u><u>750,007</u></u>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

7 Analysis of governance and support costs

	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2024 £
Staff costs	Time spent	88,367	-	88,367
Office costs	Floor area	90,328	-	90,328
Audit fees	Governance	-	3,960	3,960
Legal and professional	Governance	-	3,148	3,148
Subscriptions & Membership	Governance	-	3,588	3,588
Other	Governance	-	13	13
		178,695	10,709	185,803

Previous reporting period	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2023 £
Staff costs	Time spent	109,095	-	109,095
Office costs	Floor area	55,897	-	55,897
Audit fees	Governance	-	4,898	4,898
Legal and professional	Governance	-	3,400	3,400
Subscriptions & Membership	Governance	-	2,664	2,664
Other	Governance	-	176	176
		164,992	11,138	176,130

8 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation	19,010	19,630
Auditor's remuneration - audit fees	3,300	4,082

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

9 Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	484,547	509,211
Social security costs	31,442	41,811
Pension costs	22,065	23,533
Recruitment, training and travel	6,367	8,797
	544,421	583,352
Allocated as follows:		
Charitable activities	456,054	474,257
Support costs	88,367	109,095
	544,421	583,352

One employee has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2023: Nil). The CEO had unused holiday entitlement, which the board of trustees approved to be paid instead of carried forward.

The average number of staff employed during the period was 22.25 (2023: 23).

The average full time equivalent number of staff employed during the period was 16.7 (2023: 16.7).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £66,343 (2023: £65,211).

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

10 Trustee remuneration and expenses, and related party transactions

Neither the trustees nor any persons connected with them received any remuneration or reimbursed expenses during the year (2023: Nil).

No trustees received travel and subsistence expenses during the year. (2023:£nil).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity, including guarantees, during the year (2023: nil).

11 Government grants

The government grants recognised in the accounts were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Leeds City Council	90,060	35,937
CCG - Linking Leeds	195,798	194,987
Leeds City Council - Household Support Fund	100,000	70,000
	385,858	300,924

There were no unfulfilled conditions and contingencies attaching to the grants.

12 Corporation tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

13 Fixed assets: tangible assets

Cost	Leasehold improvements £	Computer equipment £	Total £
At 1 April 2023	398,137	13,956	412,093
Additions	-	5,723	5,723
Disposals	-	(3,580)	(3,580)
At 31 March 2024	398,137	16,099	414,236
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	252,944	13,109	266,053
Charge for the year	16,256	2,754	19,010
Disposals	-	(3,580)	(3,580)
At 31 March 2024	269,200	12,283	281,483
Net book value			
At 31 March 2024	128,937	3,816	132,753
At 31 March 2023	145,193	847	146,040

14 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Other debtors	1,839	3,439
Prepayments and accrued income	22,164	28,849
	24,003	32,288

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Short term compensated absences (holiday pay)	6,502	-
Other creditors and accruals	22,991	22,705
Taxation and social security costs	9,410	8,309
Deferred income	42,414	9,726
	81,317	40,740

16 Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred grant brought forward	9,726	-
Grant received		
Big Lottery Fund	* 5,765	-
Leeds City Council - UKSPF/Digital Inclusion	* 9,940	-
Live Well Leeds	-	991
Lloyds Bank Foundation	* 3,740	-
Love Leeds Park	375	-
Mental Health First Aid	-	5,500
The Sir George Martin Trust	-	2,500
WYCA Digital project	22,000	-
Other income - room hire	594	735
Released to income from charitable activities	(9,726)	-
Deferred grant carried forward	42,414	9,726

* After assessing the grants not completed by the year end and reviewing the agreements, the board concluded that unspent income should be deferred, as the ongoing grant work is tied to performance related conditions spanning the year end.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

17 Analysis of movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Advice Service					
1 Burley: 170					
Voices	8,404	92,432	(100,836)	-	-
Advice UK	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Aviva RDO	3,963	-	(3,963)	-	-
Children's Centre					
Advice Service	-	57,659	(57,659)	-	-
Digital Inclusion	-	30,060	(30,060)	-	-
Henry Smith					
2020/2023	4,816	28,900	(33,716)	-	-
Household					
Support fund	-	100,000	(100,000)	-	-
Housing Advice	-	39,693	(39,693)	-	-
Live Well Leeds	-	991	(991)	-	-
MAPs Debt					
Modernisation	-	4,372	(4,372)	-	-
Mental Health					
First Aid	-	5,500	(5,500)	-	-
Money Advice					
Service	-	111,720	(111,720)	-	-
Multiply	-	60,000	(60,000)	-	-
My Place (Leeds)	826	20,701	(21,527)	-	-
Power to Change	-	8,000	(8,000)	-	-
Teatime Club	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
The Sir George					
Martin Trust	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
Warm Hub	2,645	-	(2,645)	-	-
	20,654	565,028	(585,682)	-	-
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	195,798	(195,798)	-	-
	-	195,798	(195,798)	-	-
Total					
	20,654	760,826	(781,480)	-	-

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

17 Analysis of movements in restricted funds (cont.)

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Advice Service					
1 Burley: 170					
Voices	12,314	96,035	(99,945)	-	8,404
Aviva RDO	-	4,773	(810)	-	3,963
Children's Centre					
Advice Service	-	55,049	(55,049)	-	-
Henry Smith					
2020/2023	12,177	57,300	(64,661)	-	4,816
Household					
Support fund	-	70,000	(70,000)	-	-
Housing Advice	-	37,803	(37,803)	-	-
Law Society	-	4,927	(4,927)	-	-
My Place (Leeds)	826	-	-	-	826
Money Advice					
Service	-	133,291	(133,291)	-	-
Stronger Families	-	35,937	(35,937)	-	-
Warm Hub		3,125	(480)	-	2,645
	13,003	402,205	(402,958)	-	12,250
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	194,987	(194,987)	-	-
	-	194,987	(194,987)	-	-
Total					
	13,003	597,192	(597,945)	-	12,250

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

17 Analysis of movements in restricted funds (cont.)

Name of restricted fund	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
1 Burley: 170 Voices	This project supports people living in Burley to build a sustainable movement by them taking a lead in developing and delivering community activities bringing people together.
Advice UK	As members of Advice UK and recipients of funding for the MaPS debt Advice Project we were eligible to make an application for funding to support with the administration of Debt Relief Orders.
Aviva Community Fund	The Aviva Community Fund helps local causes build stronger communities across the UK.
Children's Centre Advice Service	This is a scheme providing an outreach advice service at centres across Leeds.
Digital Inclusion	This project is targeted at providing digitally inclusive training and support to local communities in Leeds
Henry Smith	This project provides holistic debt advice and support to clients referred by the Linking Leeds Project.
Household Support Fund	This project is aimed at providing targeted support and help to families facing hardship due to cost of Living crisis, it provides financial support to families and communities in need.
Housing Advice	This service delivers housing advice to Leeds residents
Linking leeds	The linking Leeds service is a social prescribing service city wide targetted at providing 121 social,mental and emotional support to improve the mental well being of local resident.
Live Well Leeds	Promoting positive mental health and well being through art and local connections.
MAPs debt modernisation fund	This fund was provided to update the digital infrastructure of BLC to enable us to become more efficient in the provision of the service.
Mental Health First Aid	Promoting positive mental health and well being through art and local connections.
Citizens Advice - Money & Pensions Debt Advice Project	This forms part of a national initiative to provide debt advice.
Multiply	This fund is provided to enable BLC to deliver 121 training, mentoring and support to local residents to develop their digital skills and confidence.
My Place Lloyds	Providing housing support to vulnerable people.
Power To Change	Development of leadership and deepen the positive impact our organisation has in our community.
Teatime Club	Bringing together local communities and providing hot meals to local vulnerable families and connecting local people.
The Sir George Martin Trust	To deliver support and activities to benefit the well-being of disadvantaged and vulnerable people in West Yorkshire.
Warm Hub	Bringing together local communities and providing hot meals to local vulnerable families and connecting local people.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

18 Analysis of movement in unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2024 £
General fund	289,611	75,238	(15,632)	-	349,217
Building fund	145,193	-	(16,256)	-	128,937
Maintenance and repair fund	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
	<u>584,804</u>	<u>75,238</u>	<u>(31,888)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>628,154</u>
Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2023 £
General fund	425,774	49,698	(35,861)	(150,000)	289,611
Building fund	161,449	-	(16,256)	-	145,193
Maintenance and repair fund	-	-	-	150,000	150,000
	<u>587,223</u>	<u>49,698</u>	<u>(52,117)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>584,804</u>

Name of unrestricted fund	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
General fund	The free reserves after allowing for all designated funds
Building fund	The fixed assets are essential for the future operation of the charity and so are excluded from free reserves.
Maintenance and repair fund	Trustees agreed to allocate a designated reserve of £150,000 to ensure the high standard of maintenance and repair are preserved and any necessary upgrades can be undertaken.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	3,816	128,937	-	132,753
Net current assets/(liabilities)	345,401	150,000	-	495,401
Total	349,217	278,937	-	628,154
Previous reporting period				
	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	847	145,193	-	146,040
Net current assets/(liabilities)	288,764	150,000	20,654	459,418
Total	289,611	295,193	20,654	605,458

20 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods:

	Property		Equipment	
	2024 £	2023 £	2024 £	2023 £
Less than one year	1	1	-	489
One to five years	4	4	-	-
Over five years	2	3	-	-
	7	8	-	489

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

21 Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	22,696	(7,082)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	19,010	19,630
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(19,341)	(2,465)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	8,285	(11,654)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	40,577	22,841
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating	71,227	21,270

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

22 Prior year Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure account)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	5	-	5	8,078
Charitable activities:	4				
Advice Service		2,000	498,240	500,240	444,016
Communities and Families		-	194,987	194,987	175,966
Services and Room Hire		45,228	-	45,228	27,862
Investments	5	2,465	-	2,465	111
Total income		49,698	693,227	742,925	656,033
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	6				
Advice Service		-	502,903	502,903	401,734
Communities and Families		-	194,987	194,987	175,966
Services and Room Hire		52,117	-	52,117	22,060
Total expenditure		52,117	697,890	750,007	599,760
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		(2,419)	(4,663)	(7,082)	56,273
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	8	(2,419)	(4,663)	(7,082)	56,273
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		(2,419)	(4,663)	(7,082)	56,273
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		587,223	25,317	612,540	556,267
Total funds carried forward		584,804	20,654	605,458	612,540

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Accounts

Company registered number 01754257
Registered charity number 514371

Better Leeds Communities
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st March 2023

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

The Board presents its report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2023. Included within the trustees' report is the directors' report as required by company law.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

1. Reference and Administrative Information

Charity name	Better Leeds Communities Limited
Charity Registration Number	514371
Company Registration Number	01754257
Registered Office Better Leeds Communities	42-46 Burley Lodge Road Leeds LS6 1QP
Trustee/Directors	Neil Canwell (Chair) William Hird Sarah Walker Terri McGregor John O'Dwyer - resigned 19/07/2022 Christopher Eatwell – resigned 29/11/2022 Matt Farrar – resigned 22/07/2022 Richard Napier – joined 31/05/2022 Alexander Knight – joined 19/07/2022 Kulvinder Richardson – joined 29/11/2022
Senior Management Team	Taira Kayani Rebecca Nicholson – joined 18/07/2022 Rebecca Nicholson – resigned 26/02/2023
Auditors	Slade & Cooper Limited Chartered Certified Accountants and Registered Auditors Beehive Mill Jersey St Ancoats Manchester M4 6JG
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank plc Nine Brindley Place 80 Cheapside Birmingham London B1 2HB 1.EC2V 6DZ Scottish Widows Bank plc 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh, EH3 8YJ CCLA COIF Charities Deposit Fund Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4ET

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Company Status and Governing Document

Better Leeds Communities is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19 September 1983 and registered as a charity on 21 July 1983. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. There are currently 10 members.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

All the directors of the company are also trustees of the charity. The trustees who served during the year under review and to date are set out on page 1. In accordance with the Articles of Association, one-third of the directors or, if their number is not three or a multiple of three, the number nearest to one-third, must retire from office and being eligible, can offer themselves for re-election. The directors to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment. If any directors became or were appointed directors on the same day those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) be determined by lot.

Our strategy is to recruit individuals with skills we have identified as necessary and have lived experience of our service area to continue to ensure effective governance.

Anyone interested in joining the Board is first asked to submit a CV, which is scrutinised by the Chair. If appropriate, the prospective trustee is offered the opportunity to observe a Board meeting. By mutual agreement an interview is scheduled, a DBS check is carried out and references are taken up. A final recommendation is then made to the trustees. The final decision to appoint a new trustee is taken at a Board meeting.

Induction and Training of Trustees

All current trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity, and many will participate in staff training, meetings, and away days. Trustees are informed of the provision of activities and meet all senior staff members.

Additionally, all new trustees receive a prepared Trustee Induction Pack, which includes the following Better Leeds Communities information:

- Publicity leaflet
- Latest annual accounts
- Latest annual report
- All organisational policies
- Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Minutes of the latest Board meeting
- Contact details for the Board
- Relevant Charity Commission leaflets
- The NCVO – Good Trustee Guide

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Organisational Structure

Better Leeds Communities is organised, so the trustees meet regularly to manage its affairs and provide strategic direction. The organisations day-to-day management is undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer who is directly accountable to the Chair and collectively the wider Board of Trustees.

The CEO manages the Deputy CEO, the Communities Manager, the First Contact Manager, the Debt Supervisor, Generalist, Housing and Support & Engagement staff; the Debt Team are managed by the Debt Supervisor; and the First Contact Team is managed by the First Contact Manager and the Communities Team is managed by the Communities Manager. The Income generation is the responsibility of the Deputy CEO. Remuneration for key personnel is reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis with reference to the NJC pay scales.

Risk Management

Consideration of risk is an ongoing aspect of all project planning, monitoring, and quality assurance. Many procedures such as authorisation, monitoring and reporting, staff vetting and appraisal, safety procedures for staff, property and clients, and adequate insurance cover are in place; and security equipment has been installed to safeguard against theft from the building. We continue to invest in training, resources, and development of new policies on all aspects of safety in the workplace. The principal financial risk to the charity is the loss of income through major contracts coming to an end and the risk of being unable to secure continuation funding. The trustees review this risk on a regular basis and keep a risk register. The Board holds strategy meetings to plan for the future and ensure that the charity remains responsive to new opportunities. Decisions taken at these meetings inform the future direction of the charity.

3. Our Aims and Objectives

The main object of the charity is the promotion of any charitable purpose for the benefit of the inhabitants of, principally but not exclusively, the local government area of Leeds and its environs, and more particularly the promotion of learning and social inclusion amongst the inhabitants of the area and the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare, recreation, and leisure time occupation.

The organisation provides a range of services and activities in pursuance of these objectives including legal advice in welfare benefits, debt, and housing. We deliver social prescribing services across Leeds in partnership with service leads, and deliver intensive, holistic support packages to individuals in financial crisis. Additionally, we also work alongside local residents to develop participatory activities that they have pride in and ownership of, including coordinating and delivering community activities and fun days; and run a personalised community leadership programme developing skills, confidence, and civic participation. In addition, within our building we house specialist facilities (including training and interview rooms, an activity studio, and a kitchen) to run our own activities to cater for the needs of community groups, public and private sector organisations.

Having such excellent community-based facilities means that we can readily host a range of activities, public events and meetings for the benefit of the local community and beyond.

Better Leeds Communities' staff and volunteers are guided by the following set of values that positively influence the culture of the organisation: Our values are:

Excellence - We are ambitious for Leeds, we are committed to delivering high quality, continuous improvement and value for money.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Collaboration - Partnership is at the centre of all we do, we work positively with others to achieve more for the people who use our services.

Inclusion - We value diversity, we promote equality. Our services are open, accessible and our opportunities are available to all. We are always welcoming, encouraging, and respectful.

Sustainability - We are innovative, forward looking, and creative. We are enterprising, relevant, and progressive in pursuit of our vision.

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims of the organisation and its future activities.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

4. Our Achievements and Performance

Chair's Report

I am pleased to introduce Better Leeds Communities Annual Report 2022-2023 which sets out for our clients, supporters, staff, funders and the public our work and achievements during the year and our future plans. I would like to thank the Directors/ Trustees, the Senior Management team and all of our staff for their hard work during the year.

Better Leeds Communities is a long-established charity that has delivered vitally important services in Leeds for many years. The Directors/Trustees and the Senior Management team are very conscious of the need to ensure that it continues to operate for many years into the future and to do that financial stability is crucial. Like the rest of the country, we experienced significant cost of living pressures during the year in both staff related and non-staff costs. However, we were able to offset the majority of these increases by careful cost management. This resulted in a small deficit of £7k for the year which, given the circumstances was a creditable outcome. Our net assets at the end of the year were £605.4k, of which £467.9k was held in cash.

In addition to our previously planned activities, we were able to make a significant contribution to alleviating the cost-of-living crisis by distributing vouchers and other resources funded by Leeds City Councils' Household Support Fund. The administration of this urgent project placed significant strain on our Management Team and staff, but we were able to successfully deliver these resources which were very much needed by our clients.

Our funders continued to be extremely supportive during this period, and our service volumes have returned to pre Covid levels.

We continued to invest in upgrades to our building particularly in projects to reduce energy consumption.

Staff recruitment continued to prove challenging during 2022/23 and posts remained unfilled for longer than we would have liked, reflecting the tightening in the jobs market post Covid. This placed extra demands on existing staff members, and we are extremely grateful for their hard work in providing cover.

During the course of 2022-2023 Chris Eatwell, John O'Dwyer and Matt Farrar retired from our Trustee Board, and we are very grateful for the time and experience that they contributed. We were pleased to welcome Richard Napier, Alex Knight and Kully Richardson to the Board. I am very grateful to my fellow Trustees for continuing their involvement as volunteer Trustees.

I would like to record my thanks to all our staff, funders and partners for their support.

Neil Canwell
Chair of Trustees

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Chief Executive's Report

Coming out of the national Covid 19 pandemic, the current financial year began with a concerted effort to resume delivery of our services and activities in-person. The resumption of a 'new normal' included staff returning to work from our Burley Lodge Centre and at outreach locations a minimum of 60% of their working week. We welcomed staff back to start to engage in their client work in the supportive environment of the workplace, amongst colleagues and managers.

As we recovered and restarted our services, activities and room bookings, welcoming participants and clients back into face-to-face delivery, we began to see the demand for services increasing rapidly. The year was dominated by the cost-of-living crisis, energy and food prices increased beyond the reach of the people we aim to serve. This created a further period of unique disturbance to our operational delivery as many of our service users were disproportionately affected by the consequences of the crisis. Often the impact was felt most acutely by the same groups of people that had been impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic, exacerbating the challenges and further depleting the resilience of those in poverty, insecure employment. Housing, health and race inequalities combined to put many of our clients at significant and enduring disadvantage stretching people to crisis point both financially and emotionally. Food and Fuel Poverty meant increasing numbers approached us in crisis for financial support.

As the year progressed and we headed towards winter, our advice service (in particular) was inundated with requests for support and advice. Waiting lists increased and staff adapted services to offer support more flexibly to try to meet demand. We do not see this situation improving over the coming year and are concerned about further increases in demand coupled with potential funding cuts. In-year, we have been able to offer clients financial support by issuing food and fuel vouchers and have supported some clients with wider essentials such as cookers and carpets. We hope further support of this nature will be forthcoming in the coming year to support those in desperate financial situations. I am incredibly grateful to the staff team for their dedication and hard work under such immensely challenging circumstances. Their compassion and kindness is a source of immense pride for me as are their achievements and creativity given the challenges they face on a daily basis.

Better Leeds Communities closes the year in a strong position both financially and strategically. We reaffirm our commitment to empowering people, working co-operatively with partners, and co-producing our services and activities. We remain committed to ensuring that we continue to work holistically with individuals and families in order to achieve demonstrable long-lasting change in their lives.

We thank all of our stakeholders, particularly our funders who have been understanding and supportive of our challenges. We look forward to working with all our supporters in the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our team of staff and volunteers for all their commitment and dedication, without their enthusiasm for the work and commitment to our service users we would be unable to achieve such excellent outcomes.

I am also extremely grateful to the Directors/Trustees for their continued energy and commitment to our mission.

Taira Kayani
Chief Executive Officer

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

5. Our Services

Advice Services

MaPS Debt Advice Service

The MaPS Debt Advice Service delivers debt advice sessions to Leeds residents. The service is funded by the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) through Citizen Advice.

The Debt Service provides detailed Debt Casework including negotiations with creditors, agreement to debt write offs, assistance with court proceedings, discussions with enforcement agents, and advice on the full range of statutory debt solutions, plus help with income maximisation and financial capability.

Referrals come from a wide variety of agencies and organisations including education settings, Leeds Voluntary Sector organisations, Housing Support Workers, Health professionals, through self-referral and from Better Leeds Communities other services.

The services Specialist Debt Advisors deliver advice on a range of debt issues including credit cards, loans, rent, utilities, and council tax arrears; and all are qualified to act as approved intermediaries for Debt Relief Orders when appropriate to client situations.

The year has presented numerous challenges, primarily due to the cost-of-living crisis that has affected personal finances. This crisis resulted in a substantial increase in the number of new cases opened by the project.

Throughout the year, a total of 830 new cases were opened, with 155 of them continuing to receive support into the following year. Additionally, 73 cases from the previous year required ongoing assistance. The new cases highlighted a significant burden on households, as they encompassed 824 dependent children, emphasising the pressures faced by families.

Heightened demand led to the project managing a greater amount of debt over the year, totalling £4,766,317.59.

While the complexity of cases has increased in the post-pandemic period, the number of creditors clients are dealing with has remained consistent year on year. However, it should be noted that 73 clients had to navigate interactions with ten or more creditors, further complicating their situations.

To address the increase in demand, the project was granted an additional full-time equivalent (FTE) staff member in October 2022 for a period of six months. However, we have also had a great deal of uncertainty about the continuation of funding for this project which heightened uncertainty for staff. Funding was secured in the end and luckily, we have managed to retain our 2 FTE Debt Advisors.

Children's Centres

The Children's Centre service is funded by Citizen Advice Leeds, through funding received from Leeds City Council and is aimed at those responsible for (or expecting) a child under 16 years of age in Leeds and focusing on those expecting a baby or that have children under the age of 5.

Referrals are received from numerous sources, including Citizen Advice Leeds, Family Support Workers, and self-referrals.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Our Generalist Advice Workers deliver advice on Welfare Benefits, housing, debt, employment and immigration; assist clients with form filling, benefit appeals and mandatory reconsideration. They also signpost to other services provided by Better Leeds Communities and those of appropriate external organisations depending on client needs.

The year has been dominated by the increasing cost of living pressures that have led to high numbers of clients contacting us for support with their money worries. We have been able to provide information advice and support with benefits checks, ensuring clients are in receipt of all the benefits they are entitled to. Additionally, we have been fortunate to be able to provide financial assistance through the Household Support Fund and to make applications to Trusts through supporting clients to make grant applications. In-year we offered appointments at outreach locations and at the Burley Lodge Centre. Appointments were also offered over the telephone and via email as client need dictated.

The promotion of the service with Family Outreach teams and Childrens Centre staff continued throughout the year to ensure that those in contact with other services were directed appropriately to advice to support their circumstances. Additionally the service was promoted through social media as well as through our networks and partnerships. We also continued to work with schools to promote the service to parents and carers.

The project supported 428 unique clients in the 2022-23 financial year.

Housing Advice Service

Our Housing Service delivers housing advice to Leeds residents and is funded by Citizen Advice Leeds

The service provides detailed advice to 'Casework' level; supports those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or in need of help with an urgent housing issue - including referral to some temporary accommodation schemes; and advises on a wide range of other issues including renting, housing options after relationship breakdowns, tenants' rights and obligations, harassment, repairs and legal procedures.

Clients continued to present with complex housing needs that increases the time and intervention required; and we are also seeing clients that have multiple complexities in their lives including debt and poor wellbeing.

We have continued to meet client need by delivering appointments flexibly to ensure accessibility, this has included face to face appointments at the Burley Lodge Centre, telephone appointments and advice via email. Overall, clients have been reluctant to meet with an advisor in person and the majority of appointments have been delivered by telephone with follow up work via letter and email.

We have struggled with limited resources to meet the demand for advice. We have received double the number of enquires to those that we are able to offer appointments to and the situation is exacerbated by limited onward referral pathway to solicitors able to take on legal aid work. The situation has been frustrating for clients and staff alike. We have explored options such as pro bono support without success.

As rents increased throughout the year, we were contacted by increasing numbers of clients being threatened with eviction as they struggled to meet their housing costs on top of increased fuel and food prices. Evictions were also being initiated by some landlords issuing eviction notices as a means of making improvements to their properties and then increasing the rent.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Affordability in the private rented sector is becoming an increasing problem for clients and longer waiting lists for Local Authority housing are intensifying pressures on clients.

During the year, our Housing casework service supported 203 unique clients.

Henry Smith 2020-2023

The Henry Smith Project offers holistic Debt Advice and support to clients referred by the citywide Linking Leeds Project. This project means the organisation the ability to offer a more holistic service to clients in financial hardship than our MaPS Debt Advice Project. Often the clients referred into this project have additional social needs and additional complexities in their lives such as physical health problems and poor mental health.

Clients are assessed at the beginning of their debt advice journey with our Debt Advisor using our customised wellbeing wheel to establish their wellbeing across a range of indicators. A co-produced action plan is developed to create agreed achievable targets to deal with the identified issues. Our Debt Advisor works with the client and various partners by signposting or referring the client to external agencies for additional support and to accesses specialist services. A further assessment is at the end of the client journey enables a measurement of outcomes pre and post engagement with the project.

Clients are;

More optimistic - 75%

Report an improvement in how they are dealing with problems - 75%

Feeling more relaxed – 75%

Thinking more clearly – 80%

Will experience increased financial stability - 75%

Avoid homelessness – 32%

More aware of where to go for information and support – 100%

During the operational period of the financial year the service has supported 169 new clients which has begun to increase as the Linking Leeds project has been able to reestablish itself post Covid-19. Demand for the service has begun to escalate as the year has progressed and the effects of the cost-of-living crisis have started to have greater impact on those most financially insecure.

Stronger Families

The Stronger Families project is a collaboration of third sector organisations across Leeds and Bradford. It is funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the National Lottery and managed by the DWP – local management is provided by Leeds City Council.

Stronger Families supports parents to access training, start job searching and find employment - Better Leeds Communities supports parents to do this by providing Specialist Debt and Housing Advice for families struggling with unemployment, low school attendance, physical health, social emotional and mental health issues, and financial exclusion.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

To be eligible for support people must:

- have a dependent child
- have the right to work in the UK
- not be in paid work

Clients of the service are allocated a Key Worker to support them to access specialists who can help with their health and wellbeing, debt issues, housing advice, budgeting, and benefits advice and preparation for work.

Whilst the plan was to return to face to face delivery of services with the lifting of Covid 19 restrictions, in March 2022, in reality the resumption of in-person services were hampered by continued concerns expressed by clients to meet with their Key Workers and our debt and housing advisors

During the year client referral flow resumed and increased as the cost of living and housing challenges began to have a negative impact on the Stronger Families clients. Our Specialist Debt & Housing Advisors continued to report that those accessing support continue to present with complex issues and require longer periods of support.

The service closed to participants at the mid-point of the financial year, allowing client cases to be completed and closed by the end of the calendar year. Significant efforts were made to find on-going funding for the project; however, these were not successful. Delivery numbers had been twice the target numbers for the project in the period of operation with 55 Debt clients supported and 42 Housing clients supported in the financial year.

Leeds City Council - Household Support Fund & Household Support Fund 3

In June 2022 we received £30,000 (Household Support Fund) and in December 2022 (Household Support Fund 3) we received an additional £40,000. This funding was received to allow us to provide direct financial support to clients accessing our advice services in financial hardship caused by the national cost of living crisis caused by increasing energy and food costs. We used this funding to provide financial support through vouchers and direct payments for actual costs to households genuinely in need of support. Wherever possible, we linked the support to existing services.

The majority of funding went to clients accessing our advice services, however we also provided support to families identified as being in financial crisis by staff in schools.

The Household Support Fund allowed us to support 263 households including 199 households with children, 54 adult only households and 10 households with pensioners. We supplied 27 vouchers for energy and water costs, 255 vouchers for food and 94 vouchers for wider essentials including white goods.

The Household Support Fund 3 allowed us to support 196 households including 113 households with children, 82 adult only households and 1 household with pensioners. We supplied 52 vouchers for energy and water costs, 132 vouchers for food and 12 vouchers for wider essentials including white goods.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Aviva Community Fund

The Aviva Community Fund helps local causes build stronger communities across the UK. We successfully raised £4,773 through their crowd funding platform aimed at helping people take control of their wellbeing by giving them the tools to be more financially independent and ready for anything. The funding will support clients accessing our debt advice projects where their debt solutions include the application for a Debt Relief Order (DRO) and they do not have the financial means of meeting the £90 DRO application fee.

The funding we have secured will allow us to pay the DRO fee for 53 clients.

Advice UK

As members of Advice UK and recipients of funding for the MaPS debt Advice Project we were eligible to make an application for funding to support with the administration of Debt Relief Orders. Our application was successful as we met the criteria which was;

1. Is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority to provide debt advice
2. Does not generate any revenue in the process of administering DRO applications and does not charge any fees to clients beyond the £90 DRO application fee
3. Holds a MaPS accredited Quality Standard and will provide details of this upon request

The funding we received supported the administration of Debt Relief orders for our debt advice clients accessing the MaPS Debt Advice Project.

The Law Society Charity Fund

Our successful funding application to this funding body allowed us to increase the provision of housing advice (casework) to residents of Leeds following a surge in enquiries from people struggling with homelessness or at risk of homelessness, or in need of help with an urgent housing issue - including referral to some temporary accommodation schemes; and advises on a wide range of other issues including renting, housing options after relationship breakdowns, tenants' rights and obligations, harassment, repairs and legal procedures.

The funding allowed us to increase service delivery over a 3-month period (January – March 2023). 25 clients (with 19 children) were supported in this period.

The Cardigan Centre

We received funding originating from the Local Care Partnership (LCP) for the Woodsley and Holt Park area to deliver a 'Warm Hub' Project in the LCP area. The project was delivered in partnership with the Cardigan Centre to support local families with the cost-of-living crisis through the worst of the winter months.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Communities and Families

1 Burley: 170 Voices

The project had grown and developed as the Covid 19 restrictions came to an end at the beginning of the second year of this 5-year Lottery funded project. Engagement and participation picked up in pace throughout the year as did the diversity of delivery.

Participants have grown in their engagement and continue to develop confidence in themselves and each other. We observed them facing into their fears of the impending 'Cost of Living Crisis' and continue to be aware of the changing needs and general mood of the community. The numbers we have engaged with this year has been encouraging and demonstrates greater confidence in our abilities to identify and meet the needs of the local community. We adjusted and responded to demand and the wellbeing needs of the community effected by almost 3 years of crisis (pandemic and now cost of living). The impetus to 'develop' oneself that we know existed before the pandemic has dissipated and has been replaced with a desire to 'belong' and increase social interaction. This shift in the personal priorities of our participants has meant that several of our groups have run over an extended period. We have continued to work with our participants to encourage some personal development by trying new experiences and gaining new skills.

The challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteers continues. As part of the Leeds Volunteers Managers Network, we have recognised that this issue is widespread and caused by things such as a shift in people who want to volunteer, volunteers are looking for more flexibility, students can be good but end up leaving and the general reduction post covid 19. There is also pressure on more people to find more paid hours if on Universal Credit so less time to volunteer.

This is reflected in our own experiences of having lost volunteers over the last year and then struggled to recruit more. The project is committed to valuing and welcoming, supporting and developing volunteers and we have taken on our first student volunteer 'placement' this year.

Our ambition to support volunteers to gain a recognised qualification in community development. We see this as a way of achieving personal, organisational and community goals, for the individual, the project and BLC and the wider community. We will explore the possibility of reviving and updating a previously organisationally held Community Leadership Course to deliver it as an NOCN Endorsed Programme meaning we could advertise and recruit with a nationally recognised certification (Level 1).

Our Networks and partnerships continue to strengthen and grow. Our ability to meet partners face to face and invite them to work in partnership with us using our Burley Lodge Centre as a base has meant that we have been able to diversify our delivery and increase participation.

We have made increasing numbers of referrals to financial and money advice over the last year as the cost-of-living crisis has affected most if not all the families we work with.

Many of our groups have asked that a WhatsApp group is created to stay in contact / share ideas and update each other. We have also increased our presence on all social media platforms and continue to grow our audience this way. One of the more successful routes has been via the app 'NextDoor' which is a hyperlocal social networking service for neighbourhoods.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Amongst activities delivered was:

Stay and Play

From the first session this group has been extremely popular. Feedback from parents and carers suggest that the children are becoming more confident and look forward to coming each week. It has allowed children whose English isn't their first language to develop their English skills and for some parents/carers it's encouraged them to get out of the house and meet other parents and carers in their area. The parent attendees have built excellent rapport with each other and are keen to get involved with other courses and contribute to the design of other sessions.

Women's Walking Group

This initially started as a low impact fitness session but did not attract the engagement that we had initially hoped. On reflection, we reverted to a walking group that the participants saw as gentle introduction to 'getting active' with the intention of building the numbers. The group have self-identified aims to improve both their physical and mental health and get out into new areas across Leeds and potentially further afield.

As Ramadan started, a drop off in numbers was expected and the time was used to advertise the group to the wider community. We now have an exciting possibility of working alongside another organisation who would be able to provide the project with a qualified instructor. Numbers have improved and this affords the possibility of exploring new and potentially more challenging activities.

Art Collective

The Art Collective is a group formed from last year. These participants were very keen to swap skills and learn from and with a wider group from the area. Funding was secured from Live Well Leeds to trial the idea and support their ambitions to become 'makers'. The focus of this group was to create a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for people of all abilities to learn, practice and share skills.

Pop up Craft Café

Project staff began visiting Rainbow Junction (a local pay as you feel café project) regularly. This has helped build strong and positive relationships with the café participants. The café visitors are always pleased to see us, and many have tried a craft activity with us at least once. This has proven to be a great opportunity to tell people about our project and other services that are open to access in the area.

The Pop-Up Craft Café model has proved to work in engaging the wider community and we aim to take it to other local venues such as Left Bank and Residential Homes in the local area.

Women Supporting Women

This group ran in partnership with Touchstone who share our aims and objectives around developing self-esteem, building resilience, and creating connections.

The group was made up of new participants to the project as well as some that had joined from other existing groups. For many it was a step up in their community engagement and for some was the first semi-formal group that they had attended. For some this was a struggle, and we did have dropouts after the first few sessions. For those that lasted the course length, the feedback suggested they felt more empowered, confident, and resilient.

Better Leeds Communities

Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Community Share

Aligning with the wider organisational value of sustainability, we trialled a new monthly Community Share to bring people together on the first Saturday morning of each month for Information Sharing, crafting and a clothes swap. to promote green living and sustainability. We plan to invite other makers / and do-ers into the space to build on what we've started with the aim of also including a 'conversation café' with themes for each month.

Burley Brunch

The Burley Brunch was set-up as a warm space over the winter months to coincide with our debt drop-in session. As we saw the numbers increasing there was a perfect opportunity to offer those waiting for an appointment with one of our specialist advisors, the chance to learn more about the project, talk to us about what they'd like to see happening and simply to lend an ear to many.

Tea-time Club

We attracted some additional funding through the Local Care Partnership that was aimed at creating 'Warm Hubs' to support local families with the cost-of-living crisis. We worked in partnership with the Cardigan Community Centre after identifying both organisations were hearing that there was a need for a space for families to use after school for a warm light meal and some activities. 1 Burley contributed our ideas and resources to the provision one evening through the worst of the winter months.

Having spoken to families that had engaged with us in other activities, we established that there was a certain amount of embarrassment and stigma attached to the concept. This led to us changing our approach and advertising. We removed the wording 'Warm Hub' and instead called it a Tea-time Club.

Women's Group

We found that towards the back end of 2022 the women's group has fluctuated a lot in engagement – on listening to what was happening we found out there were a large number that were becoming more interested in finding paid work due to changes in their circumstances and the Cost-of-Living Crisis. We partnered with Groundwork. They provided work experience opportunities and training in the Energy Efficiency sector. Most participants were looking for local jobs in schools. 8 women developed individual actions plans through the partnership work. To date 3 Women from the Group have found a route into employment. We have encouraged the remaining women to support us as volunteers.

Half Term Events

Clay Workshop - The Clay workshops really captured the imagination of both children and adults and was a mindful and creative session that everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

Easter Fun - Over the half term break in April, these split age group sessions worked really well as we were able to provide fun and activities that were age appropriate and kept the children entertained and allowed them to share ideas and conversations with the adults that were more appropriate to them.

Lineham Farm Visit - Our good friends at Lineham farm invited us to take a group of children to them for the day to explore the grounds, try some new activities and broaden their experiences. We tried den building, fire starting, animal feeding and archery. The children left feeling proud of their achievements.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Social Prescribing

Linking Leeds

Linking Leeds is the integrated city-wide Social Prescribing service for people in Leeds that links individuals attending GP practices or living in the community with a range of local community services to improve social, emotional, and mental wellbeing. It is commissioned by NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group.

The service is a consortium of seven local partners, including Better Leeds Communities, who have over a decade of collective experience delivering Social Prescribing to the people of Leeds. The Linking Leeds service commenced delivery on the 1st September 2019. Linking Leeds provides Social Prescribing for all Leeds residents aged 16 years and above and responds to the specific health profiles of communities.

Linking Leeds is aimed at anyone who may benefit from better links with their local community, including those who want to improve their general health and wellbeing. It can connect people with a range of services in their area, including mental health support, fitness classes, volunteering or employment opportunities, faith groups, money or housing services and hobby groups.

Our Wellbeing Coordinators started to re-establish their presence in community locations and GP surgeries this year. Referral numbers picked up throughout the year as GP's began to see more patients face to face and other referral agencies saw an increase in their caseloads exacerbated by the lack of being able to see people through the periods of restriction enforced by the Covid 19 pandemic. Throughout the year, numbers of referrals continued to grow as more people were affected financially by the cost-of-living crisis, with a negative effect on mental and emotional health.

Services and Room Hire

First Contact Service

The First Contact Team, which includes our Casual First Contact Team who work evenings and weekends, are the welcoming face of the organisation. They are the first point of contact for all clients, customers, contractors, and funders coming into Better Leeds Communities services and facility.

As Covid 19 restrictions were lifted at the beginning of the financial year, we welcomed back some of our regular room bookers and staff returned to working from the Burley Lodge Centre, taking calls and welcoming in clients and customers accessing training and activities at the Centre. Sadly, the enforced restricted working did lead to us losing a couple of our regular staff members who left due to certainty about available work.

The First Contact team also deliver element that support our service delivery and as services began to return to more face the face delivery the team engaged more in the work, they had previously undertaken. The team also resumed taking calls and ensuring they were answered in a timely manner and that emails were replied to within 3 days.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

Room Hire

In year, room booking began to return being closer to previous levels. We saw an increase in room rental income equating to 55% higher than the previous financial year and returning to 89% of pre pandemic levels. The budget for the year has set at an optimistic £40,000 but we achieved £42,867 in the financial year.

We have continued to make improvements to the building including the purchase the replacement of 2 of the Centre's 3 boilers with support from the Energy Emergency Fund.

6. Financial review

2022-23 continued to be a particularly challenging year in terms of new or renewed funding being available. Some of our funding was under threat of withdrawal post the current financial year, creating a degree of uncertainty for both the organisation and the individuals working for us. This came at a time when demand for services was surging. Thankfully, we were able to secure additional funding for both debt and housing advice in-year and the impending cuts to funding did not in fact materialise and we were able to meet all our funding outputs and outcomes. As we go into the next financial year, we have the majority of our current funding requirements met and are hopeful that shortfalls in budget will be met. The funding landscape has begun to open up following the Covid 19 pandemic and we are seeing some longer-term opportunities emerging.

Income in the year increased from £656,033 to £742,935. Expenditure also increased in the year from £599,760 to £750,007. This left an overall net movement in funds in the year of (£7,082) made up of (£4,663) in restricted funds and (£2,419) unrestricted funds.

Funding came from a variety of statutory and non-statutory bodies. Better Leeds Communities is grateful to all our funders, especially in such difficult times for our participants and clients, for helping the organisation to work towards its mission of creating opportunities that enable Leeds residents to achieve their potential by raising aspirations, removing barriers, and developing abilities that lead to a better life.

Reserves policy

The trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets (the free reserves) held by the charity should be adequate to ensure that current levels of activity could continue for at least six months during a period of unforeseen difficulty.

At 31 March 2023 the total reserves were £605,458. Of this £20,654 are restricted and not available for general use and £146,040 are held as functional fixed assets. The trustees are mindful of their responsibilities for the maintenance and repair of the Burley Lodge Centre building. Significant investment has been made to improve and maintain the building to date, however, there are ongoing issues with the building infrastructure and design. Trustees agreed to allocate a designated reserve of £150,000 to ensure the high standard of maintenance and repair are preserved and any necessary upgrades can be undertaken. This leaves the level of free reserves amounting to £288,764. This reserve level, together with ongoing sources of income, give the trustees the confidence to consider that this reserve is sufficient to meet the above objective.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

The free reserves are required to:-

1. Finance new and existing projects until such time as funds are received from the relevant grant making body, where appropriate.
2. Finance an orderly close-down of BLC should the need arise.

7. Funders

Better Leeds Communities would like to thank its funders during the 2022-2023 financial year. It is only with the continuation of funding being available that we have been able to continue to deliver the much-needed services for Leeds residents.

Big Lottery Community Fund
Citizens Advice
Citizens Advice Leeds
The Henry Smith Charity
European Structural and Investment Funds/Leeds City Council
Leeds City Council
Community Links
Aviva Community Fund
Advice UK
The Law Society Charity
The Cardigan Centre

8. Plans for future periods

During the forthcoming financial year, we will revert to our long-term plan to continue to explore how we can ensure the sustainability and expansion of services to Leeds residents. We will continue with a focus on the development of community assets and strong local partnerships; and continue to empower our clients to make informed choices about their lives via the provision of quality services. We will create a new strategy for the 2023-25 period and develop our Marketing Strategy,

In the financial year 2022-2023 the organisation reviewed services and income streams with an aim to expand services going forward. In the current year, we retained income from Citizens Advice and increased the income to cover a 6-month period from October 2022 to March 2023. In addition, we secured additional funds from several sources, including The Law Society Charity and Leeds City Council. In addition, we improved our internal resources with the appointment of a full time Deputy CEO (18/07/2022 – 26/02/2023) with specific responsibilities around fundraising and marketing activity.

During 2023-2024 we will continue to apply for funding and market our Room Hire Business. We have several funding bids in the pipeline or expected to emerge in the 2023-24 financial year, these include funding to support our clients with digital exclusion and to support our staff with training and development opportunities aimed at improving their skills and resilience. We also expect to receive further funding from Leeds City Council aimed at increasing advice provision and provide direct financial support to clients accessing our advice service.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2023

10. Statement of the Board of Directors' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Better Leeds Communities for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Board of Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Board of Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation The Board of Directors is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In so far as the Board of Directors is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware
- The Board of Directors has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information The Board of Directors is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

11. Auditors

Slade & Cooper Ltd were re-appointed as the charitable company's auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity. The Principal Auditor for the 2022-23 year has changed from Katie Hall to Christy Lau.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Board of Directors and signed on its behalf by

Neil Canwell (Chair)

Date: 27.11.2023

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Better Leeds Communities

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Better Leeds Communities (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (including the income and expenditure account), the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 19, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view,

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims.
- enquiry of the charity's staff, management and those charged with governance to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Audit/Audit-and-assurance/Standards-and-guidance/Standards-and-guidance-for-auditors/Auditors-responsibilities-for-audit/Description-of-auditors-responsibilities-for-audit.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Christy Yun Hing Lau FCCA DChA CTA

Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of

Slade & Cooper Limited
Statutory Auditors
Beehive Mill
Jersey Street
Manchester
M4 6JG

Date: 27th November 2023

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	5	-	5	8,078
Charitable activities:	4				
Advice Service		2,000	498,240	500,240	444,016
Communities and Families		-	194,987	194,987	175,966
Services and Room Hire		45,228	-	45,228	27,862
Investments	5	2,465	-	2,465	111
Total income		49,698	693,227	742,925	656,033
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	6				
Advice Service		-	502,903	502,903	401,734
Communities and Families		-	194,987	194,987	175,966
Services and Room Hire		52,117	-	52,117	22,060
Total expenditure		52,117	697,890	750,007	599,760
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		(2,419)	(4,663)	(7,082)	56,273
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	8	(2,419)	(4,663)	(7,082)	56,273
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		(2,419)	(4,663)	(7,082)	56,273
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		587,223	25,317	612,540	556,267
Total funds carried forward		584,804	20,654	605,458	612,540

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

A full comparative SOFA is available on the last page of the financial statements.

Better Leeds Communities
Company number 01754257
Balance sheet as at 31 March 2023

	Note	2023	2022
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	146,040	165,670
Total fixed assets		146,040	165,670
Current assets			
Debtors	14	32,288	20,634
Cash at bank and in hand		467,870	444,135
Total current assets		500,158	464,769
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	15	(40,740)	(17,899)
Net current assets		459,418	446,870
Total assets less current liabilities		605,458	612,540
Net assets		605,458	612,540
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	16	20,654	25,317
Unrestricted income funds	17	584,804	587,223
Total charity funds		605,458	612,540

These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006 and are for circulation to members of the company.

The notes on pages 27 to 45 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 22.11.2023 and signed on their behalf by:

Neil Canwell (Chair)

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ending 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	20	21,270	73,666
<i>Cash flows from investing activities:</i>			
Dividends, interest, and rents from investments		2,465	111
Cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		2,465	111
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		23,735	73,777
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		444,135	370,358
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		467,870	444,135

Better Leeds Communities
Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgments and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Better Leeds Communities meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees have made no key judgments which have a significant effect on the accounts.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

c Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of a provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

d Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised; refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

f Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities includes delivery costs undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charity's programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 7.

i Operating leases

Operating leases are leases in which the title to the assets, and the risks and rewards of ownership, remain with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

j Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

Leasehold improvements	Over the period of the lease
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	25% reducing balance
Computer equipment	33.3% straight line

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

k Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

m Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

n Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

o Pensions

Employees of the charity are entitled to join a defined contribution 'money purchase' scheme. The charity's contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 9. Outstanding contributions at the year end amounted to £2,861 (2022: £2,713). The costs of the defined contribution scheme are included within support and governance costs and allocated to the funds of the charity using the methodology set out in note 7.

2 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales and has no share capital. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The registered office address is disclosed on page 1.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
CJRS grants			-	5,078
Donations	5	-	5	3,000
Total	5	-	5	8,078
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2022</i>	<i>8,079</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>8,079</i>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Advice UK	2,000	-	2,000	1,000
Aviva RDO	-	4,773	4,773	-
Big Lottery Fund	-	96,035	96,035	106,653
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	133,291	133,291	125,421
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	92,852	92,852	88,352
Henry Smith Charity	-	57,300	57,300	56,750
Hyde Park Source	-	-	-	6,250
Law Society	-	4,927	4,927	-
Leeds City Council	-	-	-	10,667
Household Support Fund	-	30,000	30,000	-
Household Support Fund 3	-	40,000	40,000	-
Stronger Families	-	35,937	35,937	48,923
Warm Hub	-	3,125	3,125	-
Advice Service	2,000	498,240	500,240	444,016
Linking Leeds	-	194,987	194,987	175,966
Communities and Families	-	194,987	194,987	175,966
Other income - room hire	42,867	-	42,867	27,634
Other income	2,361	-	2,361	228
Services and Room Hire	45,228	-	45,228	27,862
Total	47,228	693,227	740,455	647,844
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2022</i>	<i>39,529</i>	<i>608,315</i>	<i>647,844</i>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

4 Income from charitable activities (cont.)

Previous reporting period	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2022 £
Advice Service			
Advice UK	1,000	-	1,000
Big Lottery Fund	-	106,653	106,653
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	125,421	125,421
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	88,352	88,352
Henry Smith Charity	-	56,750	56,750
Hyde Park Source	-	6,250	6,250
Leeds City Council	10,667	-	10,667
Stronger Families	-	48,923	48,923
Advice Service	11,667	432,349	444,016
Communities and Families			
Linking Leeds	-	175,966	175,966
Communities and Families	-	175,966	175,966
Services and Room Hire			
Other income - room hire	27,634	-	27,634
Other income	228	-	228
Services and room hire	27,862	-	27,862
Total	39,529	608,315	647,844

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 £	2022 £
Income from bank deposits	2,465		2,465	111
	2,465	-	2,465	111

All investment income in the previous year was unrestricted

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

6 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Staff costs	314,319	159,938	-	474,257	429,758
Administration	938	714	-	1,652	12,446
Depreciation	-	-	19,630	19,630	19,715
Project costs	78,318	20	-	78,338	17,544
Governance costs (see note 7)	-	-	11,138	11,138	3,172
Support costs (see note 7)	109,328	34,315	21,349	164,992	117,125
	<u>502,903</u>	<u>194,987</u>	<u>52,117</u>	<u>750,007</u>	<u>599,760</u>

Previous reporting period	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2022 £
Staff costs	281,581	148,177	-	429,758
Administration	11,033	1,413	-	12,446
Depreciation	-	-	19,715	19,715
Project costs	17,544	-	-	17,544
Governance costs (see note 7)	-	-	3,172	3,172
Support costs (see note 7)	91,576	26,376	(827)	117,125
	<u>401,734</u>	<u>175,966</u>	<u>22,060</u>	<u>599,760</u>

	2023 £	2022 £
Restricted expenditure	697,890	577,700
Unrestricted expenditure	52,117	22,060
	<u>750,007</u>	<u>599,760</u>

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

7 Analysis of governance and support costs

	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2023 £
Staff costs	Time spent	109,095	-	109,095
Office costs	Floor area	55,897	-	55,897
Audit fees	Governance	-	4,898	4,898
Legal and professional	Governance	-	3,400	3,400
Subscriptions & Membership	Governance	-	2,664	2,664
Other	Governance	-	176	176
		164,992	11,138	173,290
Previous reporting period	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2022 £
Staff costs	Time spent	72,167	-	72,167
Office costs	Floor area	44,958	-	44,958
Audit fees	Governance	-	3,120	3,120
Legal and professional	Governance	-	52	52
		117,125	3,172	120,297

8 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):	2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation	19,630	19,715
Auditor's remuneration - audit fees	4,082	3,120

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

9 Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	509,211	441,117
Social security costs	41,811	35,967
Pension costs	23,533	20,698
Recruitment, training and travel	8,797	4,143
	583,352	501,925
Allocated as follows:		
Charitable activities	474,257	429,758
Support costs	109,095	72,167
	583,352	501,925

No employees has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2022: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the period was 23 (2022: 24).

The average full time equivalent number of staff employed during the period was 16.7 (2022: 16).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £65,211 (2022: £55,405).

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

10 Trustee remuneration and expenses, and related party transactions

Neither the trustees nor any persons connected with them received any remuneration or reimbursed expenses during the year (2022: Nil).

No trustees received travel and subsistence expenses during the year. (2022:£nil).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity, including guarantees, during the year (2022: nil).

11 Government grants

The government grants recognised in the accounts were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Leeds City Council	35,937	59,590
CCG - Linking Leeds	194,987	175,966
Leeds City Council - Household Support Fund	70,000	-
HMRC job retention scheme	-	5,078
	300,924	240,634

There were no unfulfilled conditions and contingencies attaching to the grants.

12 Corporation tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

13 Fixed assets: tangible assets

Cost	Leasehold improvements £	Computer equipment £	Total £
At 1 April 2022	398,137	13,956	412,093
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	398,137	13,956	412,093
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	236,688	9,735	246,423
Charge for the year	16,256	3,374	19,630
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	252,944	13,109	266,053
Net book value			
At 31 March 2023	145,193	847	146,040
At 31 March 2022	161,449	4,221	165,670

14 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Other debtors	3,439	1,796
Prepayments and accrued income	28,849	18,838
	32,288	20,634

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Other creditors and accruals	22,705	8,865
Taxation and social security costs	8,309	8,492
Deferred income	9,726	542
	40,740	17,899

No accrual for holiday pay was required at the end of March 2023 (March 2022: £0), but a pay accrual was entered this year due to the sessional staff being paid in arrears.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

16 Analysis of movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Advice Service					
Aviva RDO	-	4,773	(810)	-	3,963
Burley Voices	12,314	96,035	(99,945)	-	8,404
Children's Centre Advice Service	-	55,049	(55,049)	-	-
Henry Smith 2020/2023	12,177	57,300	(64,661)	-	4,816
Housing Advice	-	37,803	(37,803)	-	-
Household Support fund	-	70,000	(70,000)	-	-
Law Society	-	4,927	(4,927)	-	-
My Place (Leeds) Money Advice	826				826
Service	-	133,291	(133,291)	-	-
Stronger Families	-	35,937	(35,937)	-	-
Warm Hub		3,125	(480)	-	2,645
	25,317	498,240	(502,903)	-	20,654
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	194,987	(194,987)	-	-
	-	194,987	(194,987)	-	-
Total	25,317	693,227	(697,890)	-	20,654

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

16 Analysis of movements in restricted funds (cont.)

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
Advice Service					
Asda Foundation	600	-	(600)		-
Burley Voices	-	79,563	(51,295)	(15,954)	12,314
Children's Centre Advice Service	-	52,349	(52,349)	-	-
Henry Smith 2020/2023	5,033	56,750	(49,606)	-	12,177
Horizons	20,245	27,090	(35,990)	(11,345)	-
Hyde Park Source	-	6,250	(4,533)	(1,717)	-
Leeds Advice Service	-	36,003	(36,003)	-	-
MaPS Trainee	-	22,900	(22,900)	-	-
Money Advice Service	-	102,521	(85,721)	(16,800)	-
My Place (Leeds)	14,640	-	(13,814)		826
Stronger Families	-	48,923	(48,923)		-
	40,518	432,349	(401,734)	(45,816)	25,317
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	175,966	(175,966)	-	-
	-	175,966	(175,966)	-	-
Total	40,518	608,315	(577,700)	(45,816)	25,317

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

16 Analysis of movements in restricted funds (cont.)

Name of restricted fund	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
Aviva Community Fund	The Aviva Community Fund helps local causes build stronger communities across the UK.
1 Burley: 170 Voices	This project supports people living in Burley to build a sustainable movement by them taking a lead in developing and delivering community activities bringing people together.
Children's Centre Advice Service	This is a scheme providing an outreach advice service at centres across Leeds
Henry Smith	This project provides holistic debt advice and support to clients referred by the Linking Leeds Project.
Housing Advice	This service delivers housing advice to Leeds residents
Household Support Fund	This is a project to help with the cost of Living crisis.
The Law Society Charity Fund	This service delivers housing advice to Leeds residents
Citizens Advice - Money & Pensions Debt Advice Project	This forms part of a national initiative to provide debt advice.
Stronger Families	This project provides debt and housing support to people referred by the wider Stronger Families Project.
The Cardigan Centre	originating from the Local Care Partnership (LCP) for the Woodsley and Holt Park area to deliver a 'Warm Hub' Project in the LCP area.
Linking Leeds	This is the integrated city-wide Social prescribing service for patients attending GP practices in Leeds.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

17 Analysis of movement in unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2023 £
General fund	425,774	49,698	(35,861)	(150,000)	289,611
Building fund	161,449	-	(16,256)	-	145,193
Maintenance and repair fund	-	-	-	150,000	150,000
	<u>587,223</u>	<u>49,698</u>	<u>(52,117)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>584,804</u>
Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2022 £
General fund	338,044	47,718	(5,804)	45,816	425,774
Building fund	177,705	-	(16,256)	-	161,449
	<u>515,749</u>	<u>47,718</u>	<u>(22,060)</u>	<u>45,816</u>	<u>587,223</u>
Name of unrestricted fund	Description, nature and purposes of the fund				
General fund	The free reserves after allowing for all designated funds				
Building fund	The fixed assets are essential for the future operation of the charity and so are excluded from free reserves.				
Maintenance and repair fund	Trustees agreed to allocate a designated reserve of £150,000 to ensure the high standard of maintenance and repair are preserved and any necessary upgrades can be undertaken.				

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	847	145,193	-	146,040
Net current assets/(liabilities)	288,764	150,000	20,654	459,418
Total	289,611	295,193	20,654	605,458
Previous reporting period				
	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	4,221	161,449	-	165,670
Net current assets/(liabilities)	421,553	-	25,317	446,870
Total	425,774	161,449	25,317	612,540

19 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods:

	Property		Equipment	
	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Less than one year	1	1	489	489
One to five years	4	4	-	489
Over five years	3	4	-	-
	8	9	489	978

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 (continued)

20 Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	(7,082)	56,273
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	19,630	19,715
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(2,465)	(111)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(11,654)	3,664
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	22,841	(5,875)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating	21,270	73,666

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2023

Prior year Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	8,078	-	8,078	37,069
Charitable activities:	4				
Advice Service		11,667	432,349	444,016	464,529
Communities and Families		-	175,966	175,966	175,969
Services and Room Hire		27,862	-	27,862	11,367
Investments	5	111	-	111	308
Total income		47,718	608,315	656,033	689,242
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	6				
Advice Service		-	401,734	401,734	424,825
Communities and Families		-	175,966	175,966	175,969
Services and Room Hire		22,060	-	22,060	48,218
Total expenditure		22,060	577,700	599,760	649,012
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		25,658	30,615	56,273	40,230
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	8	25,658	30,615	56,273	40,230
Transfer between funds		45,816	(45,816)	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		71,474	(15,201)	56,273	40,230
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		515,749	40,518	556,267	516,037
Total funds carried forward		587,223	25,317	612,540	556,267

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Accounts

Company registered number 1754257
Registered charity number 514371

Better Leeds Communities
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st March 2022

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

The Board presents its report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2022. Included within the trustees' report is the directors' report as required by company law.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

1. Reference and Administrative Information

Charity name	Better Leeds Communities Limited
Charity Registration Number	514371
Company Registration Number	1754257
Registered Office Better Leeds Communities	42-46 Burley Lodge Road Leeds LS6 1QP
Trustee/Directors	Neil Canwell (Chair) William Hird Sarah Walker John O'Dwyer – resigned 19/07/2022 Rajinder Saggu – resigned 16/11/2021 Steven Cochrane – resigned 16/11/2021 Christopher Eatwell – resigned 29/11/2022 Matt Farrar – joined 16/11/2021 & resigned 22/07/2022 Terri McGregor – joined 01/03/2022 Alexander Knight – joined 19/07/2022 Richard Napier – joined 31/05/2022 Kulvinder Richardson - joined 29/11/2022
Senior Management Team	Taira Kayani Tracey Simpson-Laing – resigned 31/08/2021
Auditors	Slade & Cooper Limited Chartered Certified Accountants and Registered Auditors Beehive Mill Jersey St Ancoats Manchester M4 6JG
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank plc COIF Nine Brindley Place 80 Cheapside Birmingham London B1 2HB Scottish Widows Bank plc 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ CCLA COIF Charities Deposit Fund Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Company Status and Governing Document

Better Leeds Communities is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19 September 1983 and registered as a charity on 21 July 1983. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. There are currently 10 members.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

All the directors of the company are also trustees of the charity. The trustees who served during the year under review and to date are set out on page 1. In accordance with the Articles of Association, one-third of the directors or, if their number is not three or a multiple of three, the number nearest to one-third, must retire from office and being eligible, can offer themselves for re-election. The directors to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment. If any directors became or were appointed directors on the same day those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) be determined by lot.

Our strategy continues to be to recruit individuals with skills we have identified as necessary to continue to ensure effective governance.

Anyone interested in joining the Board is first asked to submit a CV, which is scrutinised by the Chair. If appropriate, the prospective trustee is offered the opportunity to observe a Board meeting. By mutual agreement an interview is scheduled, a DBS check is carried out and references are taken up. A final recommendation is then made to the trustees. The final decision to appoint a new trustee is taken at a Board meeting.

Induction and Training of Trustees

All current trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity and many will participate in staff training, meetings, and away days. Trustees are informed of the provision of activities and meet all senior staff members.

Additionally, all new trustees receive a prepared Trustee Induction Pack, which includes the following Better Leeds Communities information:

- Publicity leaflet
- Latest annual accounts
- Latest annual report
- All organisational policies
- Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Minutes of the latest Board meeting
- Contact details for the Board
- Relevant Charity Commission leaflets
- The NCVO – Good Trustee Guide

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

Organisational Structure

Better Leeds Communities is organised, so the trustees meet regularly to manage its affairs and provide strategic direction. The organisations day-to-day management is undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer who is directly accountable to the Chair and collectively the wider Board of Trustees.

The CEO manages the Enterprise Manager, the Communities Manager, the First Contact Manager, the Debt Supervisor, Generalist, Housing and Support & Engagement staff; the Debt Team are managed by the Debt Supervisor; and the First Contact Team is managed by the First Contact Manager and the Communities Team is managed by the Communities Manager. The. Income generation is the responsibility of the Enterprise Manager. Remuneration for key personnel is reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis with reference to the NJC pay scales.

Risk Management

Consideration of risk is an ongoing aspect of all project planning, monitoring, and quality assurance. Many procedures such as authorisation, monitoring and reporting, staff vetting and appraisal, safety procedures for staff, property and clients, and adequate insurance cover are in place; and security equipment has been installed to safeguard against theft from the building. We continue to invest in training, resources, and development of new policies on all aspects of safety in the workplace.

The principal financial risk to the charity is the loss of income through major contracts coming to an end and the risk of being unable to secure continuation funding. The trustees review this risk on a regular basis and keep a risk register. The Board holds strategy meetings to plan for the future and ensure that the charity remains responsive to new opportunities. Decisions taken at these meetings inform the future direction of the charity.

3. Our Aims and Objectives

The main object of the charity is the promotion of any charitable purpose for the benefit of the inhabitants of, principally but not exclusively, the local government area of Leeds and its environs, and more particularly the promotion of learning and social inclusion amongst the inhabitants of the area and the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare, recreation, and leisure time occupation.

The organisation provides a range of services and activities in pursuance of these objectives including legal advice in welfare benefits, debt, and housing. We deliver social prescribing services across Leeds in partnership with service leads, and deliver intensive, holistic support packages to individuals in financial crisis. Additionally, we also work alongside local residents to develop participatory activities that they have pride in and ownership of, including coordinating and delivering community activities and fun days; and run a personalised community leadership programme developing skills, confidence, and civic participation. In addition, within our building we house specialist facilities (including training and interview rooms, an activity studio, and a kitchen) to run our own activities to cater for the needs of community groups, public and private sector organisations.

Having such excellent community-based facilities means that we can readily host a range of activities, public events and meetings for the benefit of the local community and beyond.

Better Leeds Communities' staff and volunteers are guided by the following set of values that positively influence the culture of the organisation: Our values are:

Excellence - We are ambitious for Leeds, we are committed to delivering high quality, continuous improvement and value for money.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

Collaboration - Partnership is at the centre of all we do, we work positively with others to achieve more for the people who use our services.

Inclusion - We value diversity, we promote equality. Our services are open, accessible and our opportunities are available to all. We are always welcoming, encouraging, and respectful.

Sustainability - We are innovative, forward looking, and creative. We are enterprising, relevant, and progressive in pursuit of our vision.

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims of the organisation and its future activities.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

4. Our Achievements and Performance

Chair's Report

I am pleased to introduce Better Leeds Communities Annual Report 2021-2022 which sets out for our clients, supporters, staff, funders and the public our work and achievements during the year and our future plans. I would like to thank the Directors/ Trustees, the Senior Management team and all of our staff for their hard work during a challenging period, which included an extended period of working from home and the start of a gradual return to more normal working patterns.

Better Leeds Communities is a long-established charity that has delivered vitally important services in Leeds for many years. The Directors/Trustees and the Senior Management team are very conscious of the need to ensure that it continues to operate for many years into the future and to do that financial stability is crucial. I am pleased to report that at the end of the 2021/22 financial year we continued to be financially stable. Although our income was down by £33k on the previous year, our costs were also down by £50k. Our net surplus in the year was £56k and our net assets increased to £612k.

Our funders continued to be extremely supportive during this period, and our service volumes gradually returned to levels experienced prior to the Covid outbreak, reflecting increased demand for our services as our client's lives gradually returned to something approaching pre Covid levels.

We invested in upgrades to our building and our IT facilities to improve our service standards even further and we are now seeing the benefits of this as our room hiring activity welcomes back clients who are returning to face-to-face activities.

Staff recruitment proved challenging during the year and posts remained unfilled for longer than we would have liked, reflecting the tightening in the jobs market post Covid. This placed extra demands on existing staff members, and we are extremely grateful for their hard work in providing cover.

During the course of 2021-2022 Rajinder Saggu and Steven Cochrane retired from our Trustee Board and we are very grateful for the time and experience that they contributed for a number of years. We were pleased to welcome Matt Farrar and Terri McGregor to the Board. Tracey Simpson-Laing, our Enterprise Manager, left during the year and we wish her good luck in her future career. I am very grateful to my fellow Trustees for continuing their involvement during what has been a very difficult period.

I would like to record my thanks to all our staff, funders and partners for their support.

Neil Canwell
Chair of Trustees

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

Chief Executive's Report

The last year was again hugely challenging globally, nationally, and locally for organisations and individuals alike. The Covid-19 pandemic lingered for most of the year, with periods in and out of lockdown for most of the country. This created a period of unique disturbance to our operational delivery and many of our service users were disproportionately affected by the consequences of the virus. Poverty, insecure employment and housing and health and race inequalities had combined to put many of our clients at significant and enduring disadvantage. Additionally, a closed down economy resulted in those of our clients that were 'just about' managing, finding themselves stretched to crisis point both financially and emotionally. Food and Fuel Poverty meant increasing numbers approached us in crisis for financial support.

We do not see this situation improving over the coming year and are concerned about the predicted increases in utility and food prices and the impact of this on service demand, further increasing pressure on our dedicated staff team. The challenges faced by our staff and the reliance and compassion demonstrated is a source of immense pride for me as are their achievements and creativity given the challenges they face on a daily basis.

In the coming year, we will increase the management resource by appointing a Deputy CEO and an in-house bookkeeper/accountant to support with fundraising and income generation as well as the increasing bookkeeping/finance requirements of the organisation.

The start of the financial year saw our staff team returning to working from the Burley Lodge Centre on a phased basis. We welcomed staff back to start to engage in their client work in the supportive environment of the workplace, amongst colleagues and managers.

Better Leeds Communities closes the year in a strong position both financially and strategically. We are expecting demand for services to surge over the next year as the impact of lockdowns and associated rising unemployment filters down to communities. We reaffirm our commitment to empowering people, working co-operatively with partners, and co-producing our services and activities. We remain committed to ensuring that we continue to work holistically with individuals and families in order to achieve demonstrable long-lasting change in their lives.

We thank all of our stakeholders, particularly our funders who have been understanding and supportive of our challenges. We look forward to working with all our supporters in the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our team of staff and volunteers for all their commitment and dedication, without their enthusiasm for the work and commitment to our service users we would be unable to achieve such excellent outcomes.

I am also extremely grateful to the Directors/Trustees for their continued energy and commitment to our mission.

Taira Kayani
Chief Executive Officer

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

5. Our Services

Advice Services

Debt Advice Service

The Debt Advice Service delivers debt advice sessions to Leeds residents. The service is funded by the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) through Citizen Advice.

The Debt Service provides detailed Debt Casework, when needed, and a wide range of support including negotiations with creditors, agreement to debt write offs, assistance with court proceedings, discussions with enforcement agents, and advice on the full range of statutory debt solutions; plus help with income maximisation and financial capability.

Referrals come from a wide variety of agencies and organisations including education settings, Leeds Voluntary Sector organisations, Housing Support Workers, GP surgeries, self-referral and from Better Leeds Communities services.

The services Specialist Debt Advisors deliver advice on a range of debt issues including credit cards, loans, rent, utilities, and council tax arrears; and all are qualified to act as approved intermediaries for Debt Relief Orders when appropriate to client situations. As with previous years, Advisors have seen an upward trend in the complexity of debt problems and in the number of debts each client presents with, and the added complexity of appointments being via telephone or video due to the COVID-19 pandemic – this has resulted with an increase in the time spent supporting clients.

The contract requires our Advisors to engage in continuing professional development to ensure delivery is up to date and appropriate advice is given; and there continues to be an emphasis on quality as well as being target driven.

As a result of Government COVID-19 legislation once again we found ourselves in a period of national 'Lockdown', delivering the service via telephone, video, and email. We continued the year in lockdown periods and took a cautious approach to returning to the office and face-to-face delivery. As all restrictions were lifted in March 2022, it was planned to return to face-to-face delivery in the next financial year.

The project dealt with 473 new cases in year, continued to work with 76 clients from the previous year and supported clients responsible for the care of 470 children. In-year, the funder 'relaxed' project targets in recognition of the reduced ability for people to engage with support agencies due to COVID-19 legislation and because of the government support packages that introduced 'payment holidays' for monies owed.

In the year, the project managed debts totalling £3,180,049.13 and over £130,000 of debt was written off completely.

The average number of creditors a client had was 5, with 10 clients dealing with over 20 creditors.

Children's Centres

The Children's Centre service is funded by Citizen Advice Leeds and is aimed at those responsible for (or expecting) a child under 16 years of age in Leeds and focusing on those expecting a baby or that have children under the age of 5.

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Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

Referrals are received from numerous sources, including Citizen Advice Leeds, Family Support Workers, and self-referrals.

Our Generalist Advice Workers deliver advice on Welfare Benefits, housing, debt, and immigration; assist clients with form filling, benefit appeals and mandatory reconsideration; and signpost to other services provided by Better Leeds Communities and those of appropriate external organisations depending on client needs.

Due to the continuation of COVID-19 related national lockdowns and reluctance for Children's Centres to host visitors, we continued to deliver the service via telephone and virtual appointments until early March 2022 when we returned to City & Holbeck Children's Centre with plans in place to ramp up the face-to-face delivery to other Children's centres over the following months.

In-year we continued the previous year's promotion of the service through the Advice Service, First Contact Team and social media as well as through our networks and partnerships. Additionally, we distributed printed media to a large proportion of education settings across the city.

In-year the funder 'relaxed' project targets in recognition of the reduced ability for people to engage with support agencies due to COVID-19 legislation and because of the government support packages that introduced 'payment holidays' for monies owed.

Due to ways of working changing internally and with our external referral partners, we saw a downturn in referral numbers, though the project still supported new clients who received benefit gains of around £28,000.

Housing Advice Service

Our Housing Service delivers housing advice to Leeds residents and is funded by Citizen Advice Leeds

The service provides detailed advice to 'Casework' level; supports those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or in need of help with an urgent housing issue - including referral to some temporary accommodation schemes; and advises on a wide range of other issues including renting, housing options after relationship breakdowns, tenants' rights and obligations, harassment, repairs and legal procedures, and can also refer clients to some temporary accommodation.

Clients continue to present with complex housing needs that increases the time and intervention required; and we are also seeing clients that have multiple complexities in their lives including debt and poor wellbeing.

As a result of Government COVID-19 legislation once again we found ourselves in a period of national 'Lockdown', delivering the service via telephone, video, and email.

We continued the year in lockdown periods and took a cautious approach to returning to the office and face-to-face delivery. As all restrictions were lifted in March 2022, it was planned to return to face-to-face delivery in the next financial year. However, due to a 92% of client engagement level, it was decided that the focus for the project would be telephone advice.

During the year, Housing Advice delivered 260 appointments who all but 5 were new clients.

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Henry Smith 2020-2023

In late September 2020 we were awarded a new three-year contract by The Henry Smith Charity. The service commenced in November 2020 and has worked predominantly under Government COVID-19 restrictions and national 'Lockdowns'.

The Henry Smith Project offers holistic Debt Advice and support to clients referred by the Linking Leeds Project. The project has the resource to offer Debt Advice alongside holistic support to empower clients to address issues that have impacted on their health and wellbeing.

Initial client feedback replicates that seen previously. Clients feel that our support has resulted in them feeling more optimistic and that they have an improved sense of how to deal with problems; that they feel more relaxed and were thinking more clearly; that their financial stability had improved; and were less likely to become homeless. However, it is also evident that the social effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are putting an extra strain on clients.

During the operational period of the financial year the service has supported 130 new clients which is has increased significantly from the previous year.

Stronger Families

Stronger Families is a collaboration of third sector organisations across Leeds and Bradford. It is funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the National Lottery and managed by the DWP – local management is provided by Leeds City Council.

Stronger Families supports parents to access training, start job searching and find employment - Better Leeds Communities supports parents to do this by providing Specialist Debt and Housing Advice for families struggling with unemployment, low school attendance, physical health, social emotional and mental health issues, and financial exclusion.

To be eligible for support people must:

- have a dependent child
- have the right to work in the UK
- not be in paid work

Clients are allocated a Key Worker to support them to access specialists who can help with:

- Health and wellbeing
- Debt issues, housing advice, budgeting, and benefits advice
- Preparation for work

As a result of Government COVID-19 legislation once again we found ourselves in a period of national 'Lockdown', delivering the service via telephone, video, and email. We continued the year in lockdown periods and took a cautious approach to returning to the office and face-to-face delivery. As all restrictions were lifted in March 2022, it was planned to return to face-to-face delivery in the next financial year.

During the year the client referral flow has been consistent due to the Stronger Families programme consistently achieving their targets.

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Our Specialist Debt & Housing Advisors continue to report that those accessing support continue to present with complex issues and require longer periods of support; and it is evident that the restrictions of the pandemic are affecting families' lives.

The service aims to support 64 clients during a contract year. During the year the service supported 121 new clients, 45 more than the previous year; and our work with new clients supported the carers of 177 children. The number of debts has increased when compared to the previous year. 34% of clients had less than 5 creditors, with the highest being 28. The average number of creditors amongst all clients was 8. The project managed debts totalling £482,235.96.

Horizons

Horizons is a five-year project funded by the Big Lottery which is delivered in partnership with Leeds Mind. In April 2021 the project started its final few months of delivery.

Horizons works to reduce the immediate and medium-term impacts of severe financial hardship, and levels of hardship-related crisis for Leeds residents; and aims to better equip people to manage and exit hardship-related crisis through peer support, advice, and advocacy. It seeks to do so by:

- Improving the circumstances of people experiencing financial hardship and/or destitution
- Developing crisis management skills; and
- Providing a safe space and increased opportunities for those experiencing hardship crisis to shape policy

The service remit is to deliver independent, professional, and impartial advice through attendance at Foodbanks and through one-to-one ongoing support - our Support & Engagement Workers support clients to access services and assist with relevant paperwork. Horizons also runs Peer Support workshops and courses to share knowledge and learn life skills as a way to prevent future crisis.

We continued the year in lockdown periods and took a cautious approach to returning to the office and face-to-face delivery.

Throughout the remainder of the project clients continued to experience difficulties due to the city's Foodbanks being closed.

Leeds City Council Covid Business Support

Our Burley Lodge Centre was classed as a business that was unable to trade or had restricted trading due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result of this classification, our Business Rates for the financial year were reduced and we received financial support through the available grants.

HMRC Furlough Scheme

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the inability of our Room Hire business to trade due to Government COVID-19 legislation restrictions, we placed a number of staff on furlough who have remained on the scheme until September 2021.

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Communities and Families

1 Burley: 170 Voices

After a successful Bid to the Reaching Communities Fund from the National Lottery, in the last financial year, we started the project on 01 April 2021 whilst we were still in the throws of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Project ended its first year as participants grew in engagement and continue to develop confidence in themselves and each other. We hear them facing into their fears of the impending 'Cost of Living Crisis' and continue to be aware of the changing needs and general mood of the community. Despite struggling to achieve our project outputs and the quantitative outputs; qualitatively we are proud of the achievements.

Our volunteers are central to what we do and provide us with the steer on how and what the project delivers. We have now taken the approach to be on a continuous recruitment drive as part of our day-to-day work paying particular attention to those participants that appear keen to give. We have recently inducted a small team of 4 who have shown commitment and dedication to their roles so far.

Our Networks and partnerships are strengthening and growing locally. It has been great to get back to inviting people back into the building, getting out to their own homes and really feeling a sense of connection and working together.

Our local Councillors are big supporters of the project and understand that it is a good reach into a community that may not otherwise be as easily accessible. They signpost those they see would benefit from being involved into us and often attend our events and call into the groups to hear from residents.

"I have found the Women's group to be very focused and dedicated to getting their lives back after the last two difficult years.

Their resilience and creativity have been very impressive, and I am proud to support them. The Burley Lodge Centre has been a safe place for the Women's group. **Abigail Marshal Katung** – Ward Councillor

The project has worked closely with the Youth Service who share what is being tried and tested in other parts of the city when it comes to liaison and diversion for some of the more 'at risk' of offending young people. This is valuable in our decision making and something the participating parents have expressed a wish to be addressed.

We continue to signpost into other local community organisations and commonly into Better Leeds Communities' own specialist advice services. We have seen a spike in referrals to financial and money advice over the last month of the year as our contact with families has highlighted diminishing incomes and household funds being squeezed.

The Window display box of the Burley Lodge Centre is regularly full of advertisements of our initiatives and is proving a great way of showing our local residents what's on offer via the project.

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Amongst our activity was:

Leeds 2023 Artist

An enormous success for the project was 'my neighbourhood, my city, my world' which brought local community artist Cassy Oliphant into our community to inspire and empower dreaming big for the city-wide celebration:

Here is what Cassy has to say about the group's journey,

"The group came together to share their ideas, their backgrounds, as well as learning new skills such as filming each other and their area. There was also a noticeable desire to help new members joining and work inclusively. It was great getting to know the community from my point of view as a community artist - and I think there's huge scope to support the creative voice of the women."

Recipe Sharing

This group has been one that has been in continuous demand and is always well received. A large percentage of the group have attained their level 1 Food Safety and Hygiene Certificate with us, and we are now looking at supporting this interest through to level 2.

1Burley Christmas Market

Having a wide range of skills between them, a group of participants made the decision to hold a Christmas Market. The group decided to make homemade gifts (crafts, food stuff,) and create a few stalls (tombola, raffle) to raise money for the local children's hospital. Everything for sale was sold at a low price and the success of this small-scale event has given participants the confidence to do the same again, and perhaps venture out into the wider community to reach a larger audience.

My Place

My Place, funded by the Lloyds Foundation, provides Housing Support alongside our existing Specialist Housing Advice provision. The service commenced in September 2018 and is initially funded for three years.

The service works with people experiencing multiple disadvantages at a critical point in their life such as living in the private rented sector and struggling to pay high rent costs due to low incomes, reducing housing benefit, the introduction of Universal Credit and the benefits cap which are causing many vulnerable people to become homeless, on the verge of homelessness or vulnerably housed.

My Place's aim is to transition people from a position of no accommodation or being vulnerably housed to managing a tenancy/accommodation; and works to address a range of other transition and progression outcomes that are linked to participants being able to manage a tenancy/accommodation.

My Place supports people to feel safer, build resilience, be independent and able to make positive choices; be more able to manage mental health issues; to have improved self-esteem/confidence and physical health, it aims to reduce isolation and stress/anxiety; and have increased support networks.

The service is normally delivered face to face by a Support Worker who attends appointments with clients and where appropriate undertakes interventions on their behalf. However, we started the year as we had ended the previous working under Government COVID-19 legalisation and delivering the service via telephone, video, and email.

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During the year, the project exceeded its target.

Social Prescribing

Linking Leeds

Linking Leeds is the integrated city-wide Social Prescribing service for people in Leeds that links individuals attending GP practices or living in the community with a range of local community services to improve social, emotional, and mental wellbeing. It is commissioned by NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group.

The service is a consortium of seven local partners, including Better Leeds Communities, who have over a decade of collective experience delivering Social Prescribing to the people of Leeds. The Linking Leeds service commenced delivery on the 1st September 2019. Linking Leeds provides Social Prescribing for all Leeds residents aged 16 years and above and responds to the specific health profiles of communities.

Linking Leeds is aimed at anyone who may benefit from better links with their local community, including those who want to improve their general health and wellbeing. It can connect people with a range of services in their area, including mental health support, fitness classes, volunteering or employment opportunities, faith groups, money or housing services and hobby groups.

Our Wellbeing Coordinators started the year as they had ended the previous, working from home, and delivering the service via telephone, video, and email as a result of Government COVID-19 legislation. Client numbers were below target throughout the year as patients were not visiting General Practice Surgeries and so not being referred to the service. Throughout the year discussion took place about a return to surgeries but come the autumn and the return to restrictions this did not take place.

Services and Room Hire

First Contact Service

The First Contact Team, which includes our Casual First Contact Team who work evenings and weekends, are the welcoming face of the organisation and is the first point of contact for all clients, customers, contractors, and funders coming into Better Leeds Communities services and facility.

At the start of the Government COVID-19 legislation restrictions we placed members of the team on to the Government's Job Retention Scheme (Furlough) due to the requirements to close our Burley Lodge Centre to Room Hire customers. As restrictions were lifted and some customers returned, we were able to bring staff back on reduced hours and in line with the scheme's requirements, but due to the lack of custom during the year staff have remained on Furlough through part of the year.

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The First Contact deliver element that support our service delivery and have adopted a hybrid working pattern to ensure Room Hire Bookings were taking place and client contact was maintained. They ensured that calls were answered in a timely manner and that emails were replied to within 3 days.

Room Hire

In year, and as a reflection of bookings during 2020/2021 we had hoped to begin to re-grow the business. However, the room booking income target was reduced significantly due to periods of complete closure, some limited operation under strict regulatory COVID-19 guidance and a reluctance or inability of some groups to return due to concerns over their group's health.

We have continued to make improvements to the building including the purchase of additional furniture to alleviate the need to move furniture from room to room.

6. Financial review

2021/22 was a particularly challenging year in terms of new or renewed funding being available. Many funders closed their programmes or altered the length of any potential continuation of funding in order to reassess their programmes and ensure their funds were best placed to support people on the road to Covid recovery. Some of our funding was under threat of withdrawal and this created a great deal of uncertainty for both the organisation and the individuals working for us. We lost some experienced, skilled staff and recruitment and retention issues threatened our ability to fulfil contract obligations. Thankfully, towards the end of the financial year, we received news that the impending cuts to funding would not in fact materialise and we were able to meet all our funding outputs and outcomes.

Income in the year decreased from £689,242 to £656,033. Expenditure also decreased in the year from £649,012 to £599,760. This left an overall net movement in funds in the year of £56,273 made up of £71,474 in unrestricted funds and (£15,201) restricted funds.

Funding came from a variety of statutory and non-statutory bodies. Better Leeds Communities is grateful to all our funders, especially in these difficult times, for helping the organisation to work towards its mission of creating opportunities that enable Leeds residents to achieve their potential by raising aspirations, removing barriers, and developing abilities that lead to a better life.

Reserves policy

The trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets (the free reserves) held by the charity should be adequate to ensure that current levels of activity could continue for at least six months during a period of unforeseen difficulty. At 31 March 2022 the total reserves were £612,540. Of this £25,317 are restricted and not available for general use and £165,670 are held as functional fixed assets. This leaves the level of free reserves amounting to £421,553. The trustees are mindful of their responsibilities for the maintenance and repair of the Burley Lodge Centre building. Significant investment has been made to improve and maintain the building to date, however, there are ongoing issues with the building infrastructure and design. Trustees will next year consider allocating a designated reserve to ensure the high standard of maintenance and repair are preserved. This provides adequate wind down costs should this be necessary. This reserve level, together with ongoing sources of income, give the trustees the confidence to consider that this reserve is sufficient to meet the above objective.

Better Leeds Communities
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The free reserves are required to:-

1. Finance new and existing projects until such time as funds are received from the relevant grant making body, where appropriate.
2. Finance an orderly close-down of BLC should the need arise.
3. To ensure that there are adequate Reserves to finance repairs to the building – we are responsible for full repair costs

7. Funders

Better Leeds Communities would like to thank its funders during the 2021-2022 financial year . It is only with the continuation of funding being available that we have been able to continue to deliver the much-needed services for Leeds residents.

Big Lottery Community Fund
Citizens Advice
Citizens Advice Leeds
The Henry Smith Charity
European Structural and Investment Funds/Leeds City Council
Leeds City Council
Lloyds Foundation
Community Links
Hyde Park Source

8. Plans for future periods

During the forthcoming financial year we will revert to our long-term plan to continue to explore how we can ensure the sustainability and expansion of services to Leeds residents. We will continue with a focus on the development of community assets and strong local partnerships; and continue to empower our clients to make informed choices about their lives via the provision of quality services.

In the financial year 2021-2022 the organisational plan was to review our services and income streams with an aim to expand services going forward. However, the slower than expected resumption of activity post COVID-19 has mean that progress has been slower than anticipated. During 2022-2023 we will continue to apply for funding and market our Room Hire Business. In addition, we aim to improve our internal resources with the appointment of a full time Deputy CEO with specific responsibilities around fundraising and marketing activity. We have strongly held principles in regard to how and where we want to work with our clients, we look to resume face to face activity as a matter of priority and hope to have Outreach locations operational from the start of the 2022/23 financial year. We have started to get our staff back in the building to work from the office at least 60% of their working week so we can support and encourage the return to face to face work.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2022

10. Statement of the Board of Directors' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Better Leeds Communities for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Board of Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Board of Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation The Board of Directors is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In so far as the Board of Directors is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware
- The Board of Directors has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information The Board of Directors is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

11. Auditors

Slade & Cooper Ltd were re-appointed as the charitable company's auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Board of Directors and signed on its behalf by

Neil Canwell (Chair)

Date: 30/11/2022

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Better Leeds Communities

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Better Leeds Communities (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2022, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (including the income and expenditure account), the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 17, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view,

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims.
- enquiry of the charity's staff, management and those charged with governance to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Audit/Audit-and-assurance/Standards-and-guidance/Standards-and-guidance-for-auditors/Auditors-responsibilities-for-audit/Description-of-auditors-responsibilities-for-audit.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Catherine Hall FCCA DChA

Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of

Slade & Cooper Limited
Statutory Auditors
Beehive Mill
Jersey Street
Manchester
M4 6JG

Date: 20/12/2022

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	8,078	-	8,078	37,069
Charitable activities:	4				
Advice Service		11,667	432,349	444,016	464,529
Communities and Families		-	175,966	175,966	175,969
Services and Room Hire		27,862	-	27,862	11,367
Investments	5	111	-	111	308
Total income		47,718	608,315	656,033	689,242
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	6				
Advice Service		-	401,734	401,734	424,825
Communities and Families		-	175,966	175,966	175,969
Services and Room Hire		22,060	-	22,060	48,218
Total expenditure		22,060	577,700	599,760	649,012
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		25,658	30,615	56,273	40,230
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	8	25,658	30,615	56,273	40,230
Transfer between funds		45,816	(45,816)	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		71,474	(15,201)	56,273	40,230
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		515,749	40,518	556,267	516,037
Total funds carried forward		587,223	25,317	612,540	556,267

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Better Leeds Communities
Company number 1754257
Balance sheet as at 31 March 2022

	Note	2022	2021
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	165,670	185,385
Total fixed assets		165,670	185,385
Current assets			
Debtors	14	20,634	24,298
Cash at bank and in hand		444,135	370,358
Total current assets		464,769	394,656
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	15	(17,899)	(23,774)
Net current assets		446,870	370,882
Total assets less current liabilities		612,540	556,267
Net assets		612,540	556,267
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	16	25,317	40,518
Unrestricted income funds	17	587,223	515,749
Total charity funds		612,540	556,267

These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006 and are for circulation to members of the company.

The notes on pages 25 to 41 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 30/11/2022 and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Neil Canwell (Chair)

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ending 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	20	73,666	55,275
<i>Cash flows from investing activities:</i>			
Dividends, interest, and rents from investments		111	308
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-	(7,346)
Cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		111	(7,038)
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		73,777	48,237
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		370,358	322,121
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		444,135	370,358

Better Leeds Communities
Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgments and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Better Leeds Communities meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b Reconciliation with previous Generally Accepted Accounting Practice

In preparing the accounts, the trustees have considered whether in applying the accounting policies required by FRS 102 and the Charities SORP FRS 102 the restatement of comparative items was required.

c Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

d Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of a provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

e Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised; refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

f Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

g Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

h Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities includes delivery costs undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

i Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charity's programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 7.

j Operating leases

Operating leases are leases in which the title to the assets, and the risks and rewards of ownership, remain with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

k Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

Leasehold improvements	Over the period of the lease
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	25% reducing balance
Computer equipment	33.3% straight line

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

l Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

m Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

n Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

o Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

p Pensions

Employees of the charity are entitled to join a defined contribution 'money purchase' scheme. The

2 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales and has no share

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
CJRS grants	5,078		5,078	37,069
Donations	3,000	-	3,000	-
Total	8,078	-	8,078	37,069
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2021</i>	<i>37,069</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>37,069</i>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Advice UK	1,000	-	1,000	-
Asda Foundation	-	-	-	600
Big Lottery Fund	-	106,653	106,653	117,409
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	125,421	125,421	127,282
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	88,352	88,352	114,500
Clothworkers' Foundation	-	-	-	1,120
George A. Moore Foundation	-	-	-	630
Henry Smith Charity	-	56,750	56,750	28,350
Hyde Park Source	-	6,250	6,250	-
Leeds City Council	10,667	-	10,667	630
Stronger Families	-	48,923	48,923	35,599
Lloyds Foundation	-	-	-	29,993
Natwest	-	-	-	8,416
Advice Service	11,667	432,349	444,016	464,529
Linking Leeds	-	175,966	175,966	175,969
Communities and Families	-	175,966	175,966	175,969
Other income - room hire	27,634	-	27,634	11,277
Other income	228	-	228	90
Services and Room Hire	27,862	-	27,862	11,367
Total	39,529	608,315	647,844	651,865
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2021</i>	<i>11,367</i>	<i>640,498</i>	<i>651,865</i>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

Previous reporting period	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2021 £	
Advice Service				
Asda Foundation	-	600	600	
Big Lottery Fund	-	117,409	117,409	
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	127,282	127,282	
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	114,500	114,500	
Clothworkers' Foundation	-	1,120	1,120	
George A. Moore Foundation	-	630	630	
Henry Smith Charity	-	28,350	28,350	
Leeds City Council	-	630	630	
Stronger Families	-	35,599	35,599	
Lloyds Foundation	-	29,993	29,993	
Natwest	-	8,416	8,416	
Advice Service	-	464,529	464,529	
Communities and Families				
Linking Leeds	-	175,969	175,969	
Communities and Families	-	175,969	175,969	
Services and Room Hire				
Other income - room hire	11,277	-	11,277	
Other income	90	-	90	
Services and room hire	11,367	-	11,367	
Total	11,367	640,498	651,865	
Investment income				
	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 £	2021 £
Income from bank deposits	111	-	111	308
	111	-	111	308

All investment income in the previous year was unrestricted

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

6 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Staff costs	281,581	148,177	-	429,758	469,063
Administration	11,033	1,413	-	12,446	26,762
Depreciation	-	-	19,715	19,715	18,868
Project costs	17,544	-	-	17,544	16,057
Governance costs (see note 7)	-	-	3,172	3,172	6,303
Support costs (see note 7)	91,576	26,376	(827)	117,125	111,959
	<u>401,734</u>	<u>175,966</u>	<u>22,060</u>	<u>599,760</u>	<u>649,012</u>
Previous reporting period	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2021 £	
Staff costs	322,243	146,820	-	469,063	
Administration	26,666	96	-	26,762	
Depreciation	-	-	18,868	18,868	
Project costs	16,057	-	-	16,057	
Governance costs (see note)	-	-	6,303	6,303	
Support costs (see note)	59,859	29,053	23,047	111,959	
	<u>424,825</u>	<u>175,969</u>	<u>48,218</u>	<u>649,012</u>	
				2022 £	2021 £
Restricted expenditure				577,700	600,794
Unrestricted expenditure				22,060	48,218
				<u>599,760</u>	<u>649,012</u>

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

7 Analysis of governance and support costs

	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2022 £
Staff costs	Time spent	72,167	-	72,167
Office costs	Time spent	44,958	-	44,958
Audit fees	Governance	-	3,120	3,120
Legal and professional	Governance	-	52	52
		117,125	3,172	120,297
Previous reporting period	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2021 £
Staff costs	Time spent	77,619	-	77,619
Office costs	Floor area	34,340	-	34,340
Audit fees	Governance	-	3,944	3,944
Legal and professional	Governance	-	2,359	2,359
		111,959	6,303	118,262

8 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):	2022 £	2021 £
Depreciation	19,715	18,868
Auditor's remuneration - audit fees	3,120	3,000

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

9 Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	441,117	482,899
Social security costs	35,967	38,739
Pension costs	20,698	23,737
Recruitment, training and travel	4,143	1,308
	501,925	546,682
Allocated as follows:		
Charitable activities	429,758	469,063
Support costs	72,167	77,619
	501,925	546,682

No employees has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2021: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the period was 24 (2021: 27).

The average full time equivalent number of staff employed during the period was 16 (2021: 19).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £55,405 (2021: £55,346).

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

10 Trustee remuneration and expenses, and related party transactions

Neither the management committee nor any persons connected with them received any remuneration or reimbursed expenses during the year (2021: Nil).

No members of the management committee received travel and subsistence expenses during the year. (2021:£nil).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity, including guarantees, during the year (2021: nil).

11 Government grants

The government grants recognised in the accounts were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Leeds City Council	59,590	55,660
CCG - Linking Leeds	175,966	175,969
HMRC job retention scheme	5,078	17,638
	240,634	249,267

There were no unfulfilled conditions and contingencies attaching to the grants

12 Corporation tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

13 Fixed assets: tangible assets

Cost	Leasehold improvements £	Computer equipment £	Total £
At 1 April 2021	398,137	13,956	412,093
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	398,137	13,956	412,093
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2021	220,432	6,276	226,708
Charge for the year	16,256	3,459	19,715
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	236,688	9,735	246,423
Net book value			
At 31 March 2022	161,449	4,221	165,670
At 31 March 2021	177,705	7,680	185,385

14 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Other debtors	1,796	1,736
Prepayments and accrued income	18,838	22,562
	20,634	24,298

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Other creditors and accruals	8,865	13,331
Taxation and social security costs	8,492	10,443
Deferred income	542	-
	17,899	23,774

No accrual for holiday pay was required at the end of March 2022 (March 2021: £0)

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

16 Analysis of movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
Advice Service					
Asda Foundation	600	-	(600)	-	-
Burley Voices Children's Centre	-	79,563	(51,295)	(15,954)	12,314
Advice Service Henry Smith	-	52,349	(52,349)	-	-
2020/2023	5,033	56,750	(49,606)	-	12,177
Horizons	20,245	27,090	(35,990)	(11,345)	-
Hyde Park Source Leeds Advice Service	-	6,250	(4,533)	(1,717)	-
MaPS Trainee Money Advice Service	-	36,003	(36,003)	-	-
	-	22,900	(22,900)	-	-
	-	102,521	(85,721)	(16,800)	-
My Place (Leeds)	14,640	-	(13,814)	-	826
Stronger Families	-	48,923	(48,923)	-	-
	40,518	432,349	(401,734)	(45,816)	25,317
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	175,966	(175,966)	-	-
	-	175,966	(175,966)	-	-
Total	40,518	608,315	(577,700)	(45,816)	25,317

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
Advice Service					
Asda Foundation	-	600	-	-	600
100% Digital Fund	-	630	(630)	-	-
Burley Voices	-	9,993	(9,993)	-	-
Children's Centre	-	111,300	(94,229)	(17,071)	-
Clothworkers'	-	1,120	(1,120)	-	-
George A. Moore	-	630	(630)	-	-
Debt Outreach	17,210	-	(17,210)	-	-
Henry Smith	-	28,350	(23,317)	-	5,033
Horizons	14,542	107,416	(89,474)	(12,239)	20,245
Leeds Advice	-	3,200	(3,200)	-	-
MaPS Trainee	-	18,888	(18,888)	-	-
Money Advice	-	108,394	(87,809)	(20,585)	-
My Place (Leeds)	14,192	24,857	(23,602)	(807)	14,640
My Place (Covid-19)	-	5,136	(5,136)	-	-
Money Matters	5,572	8,416	(13,988)	-	-
Stronger Families	-	35,599	(35,599)	-	-
	51,516	464,529	(424,825)	(50,702)	40,518
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	175,969	(175,969)	-	-
	-	175,969	(175,969)	-	-
Total	51,516	640,498	(600,794)	(50,702)	40,518

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

Name of	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
Children's Centre Advice Service	This is a scheme providing an outreach advice service at centres across Leeds
Debt Outreach	This is a project run to offer a debt outreach service.
Horizons	This is a project to support people facing hardship crisis.
Money Advice Service	This forms part of a national initiative to provide debt advice.
Stronger Families	This project provides debt and housing support to people referred by the wider Stronger Families Project.
Linking Leeds	This is the integrated city-wide Social prescribing service for patients attending GP practices in Leeds.
Henry Smith	This project provides holistic debt advice and support to clients referred by the Linking Leeds Project.
1 Burley: 170 Voices	This project supports people living in Burley to build a sustainable movement by them taking a lead in developing and delivering community activities bringing people together.

17 Analysis of movement in unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2022 £
General fund	338,044	47,718	(5,804)	45,816	425,774
Building fund	177,705	-	(16,256)	-	161,449
	515,749	47,718	(22,060)	45,816	587,223

Name of	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
General fund	The free reserves after allowing for all designated funds
Building fund	The fixed assets are essential for the future operation of the charity and so

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2021 £
General fund	270,560	48,744	(31,962)	50,702	338,044
Building fund	193,961	-	(16,256)	-	177,705
	<u>464,521</u>	<u>48,744</u>	<u>(48,218)</u>	<u>50,702</u>	<u>515,749</u>

18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	4,221	161,449	-	165,670
Net current assets/(liabilities)	421,553	-	25,317	446,870
	<u>425,774</u>	<u>161,449</u>	<u>25,317</u>	<u>612,540</u>
Total	425,774	161,449	25,317	612,540

Previous reporting period	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	7,680	177,705	-	185,385
Net current assets/(liabilities)	330,363	-	40,518	370,881
	<u>338,043</u>	<u>177,705</u>	<u>40,518</u>	<u>556,266</u>
Total	338,043	177,705	40,518	556,266

19 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as

	Property		Equipment	
	2022 £	2021 £	2022 £	2021 £
Less than one year	1	1	489	489
One to five years	4	4	977	977
Over five years	8	8	-	-
	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>1,466</u>	<u>1,466</u>

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 (continued)

20 Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	56,273	40,230
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	19,715	18,868
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(111)	(308)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	3,664	(7,180)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(5,875)	3,665
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating	73,666	55,275

Accounts

Company registered number 1754257
Registered charity number 514371

Better Leeds Communities
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st March 2021

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

The Board presents its report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2021. Included within the trustees' report is the directors' report as required by company law.

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

1. Reference and Administrative Information

Charity name	Better Leeds Communities Limited
Charity Registration Number	514371
Company Registration Number	1754257
Registered Office Better Leeds Communities	42-46 Burley Lodge Road Leeds LS6 1QP
Trustee/Directors	Neil Canwell (Chair) William Hird Sarah Carter John O'Dwyer Rajinder Saggu Steven Cochrane Chloe Coles – resigned 22 October 2020 Christopher Eatwell
Company Secretary	T Kayani
Senior Management Team	Taira Kayani Tracey Simpson-Laing
Auditors	Slade & Cooper Limited Chartered Certified Accountants and Registered Auditors Beehive Mill Jersey St Ancoats Manchester M4
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank plc COIF Nine Brindley Place 80 Cheapside Birmingham London B1 2HB 1.EC2V 6DZ Scottish Widows Bank plc 67 Morrison Street Edinburgh EH3 8YJ CCLA COIF Charities Deposit Fund Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Company Status and Governing Document

Better Leeds Communities is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19 September 1983 and registered as a charity on 21 July 1983. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association. In the event of the charity being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. There are currently 15 members.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

All the directors of the company are also trustees of the charity. The trustees who served during the year under review and to date are set out on page 1. In accordance with the Articles of Association the Chair and two trustees will retire at the next Annual General Meeting, and being eligible, can offer themselves for re-election. In addition, any trustees appointed since the last Annual General Meeting will offer themselves for re-election.

Our strategy continues to be to recruit individuals with skills we have identified as necessary to continue to ensure effective governance.

Anyone interested in joining the Board is first asked to submit a CV, which is scrutinised by the Chair. If appropriate, the prospective trustee is offered the opportunity to observe a Board meeting. By mutual agreement an interview is scheduled, a DBS check is carried out and references are taken up. A final recommendation is then made to the trustees. The final decision to appoint a new trustee is taken at a Board meeting.

Induction and Training of Trustees

All current trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity and many will participate in staff training, meetings, and away days. Trustees are informed of the provision of activities and meet all senior staff members.

Additionally, all new trustees receive a prepared Trustee Induction Pack, which includes the following Better Leeds Communities information:

- Publicity leaflet
- Latest annual accounts
- Latest annual report
- All organisational policies
- Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Minutes of the latest Board meeting
- Contact details for the Board
- Relevant Charity Commission leaflets
- The NCVO – Good Trustee Guide

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

Organisational Structure

Better Leeds Communities is organised, so the trustees meet regularly to manage its affairs and provide strategic direction. The organisations day-to-day management is undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer who is directly accountable to the Chair and collectively the wider Board of Trustees; and the Enterprise Manager who is directly responsible to the CEO.

The CEO manages the Debt, Generalist, Housing, Support & Engagement and Community Teams; the Debt Team are managed by Debt Supervisor; and the First Contact Team is managed by the Enterprise Manager. The Enterprise Manager is responsible to the Chief Executive Officer and the Board for managing the charity's finances. Income generation is the responsibility of the Enterprise Manager. Remuneration for key personnel is reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis with reference to the NJC pay scales.

Risk Management

Consideration of risk is an ongoing aspect of all project planning, monitoring, and quality assurance. Many procedures such as authorisation, monitoring and reporting, staff vetting and appraisal, safety procedures for staff, property and clients, and adequate insurance cover are in place; and security equipment has been installed to safeguard against theft from the building. We continue to invest in training, resources, and development of new policies on all aspects of safety in the workplace.

The principal financial risk to the charity is the loss of income through major contracts coming to an end and the risk of being unable to secure continuation funding. The trustees review this risk on a regular basis and keep a risk register. The Board holds strategy meetings to plan for the future and ensure that the charity remains responsive to new opportunities. Decisions taken at these meetings inform the future direction of the charity.

3. Our Aims and Objectives

The main object of the charity is the promotion of any charitable purpose for the benefit of the inhabitants of, principally but not exclusively, the local government area of Leeds and its environs, and more particularly the promotion of learning and social inclusion amongst the inhabitants of the area and the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare, recreation, and leisure time occupation.

The organisation provides a range of services and activities in pursuance of these objectives including legal advice in welfare benefits, debt, and housing. We deliver social prescribing services across Leeds in partnership with service leads, and deliver intensive, holistic support packages to individuals in financial crisis. Additionally, we also work alongside local residents to develop participatory activities that they have pride in and ownership of, including coordinating and delivering community activities and fun days; and run a personalised community leadership programme developing skills, confidence, and civic participation. In addition, within our building we house specialist facilities (including training and interview rooms, a dance studio, and a kitchen) to run our own activities and to cater for the needs of community groups, public and private sector organisations.

Having such excellent community-based facilities means that we can readily host the local MP and Councillors' surgeries, and many other public events and meetings.

Better Leeds Communities' staff and volunteers are guided by the following set of values that positively influence the culture of the organisation: Our values are:

Excellence - We are ambitious for Leeds, we are committed to delivering high quality, continuous improvement and value for money.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

Collaboration - Partnership is at the centre of all we do, we work positively with others to achieve more for the people who use our services.

Inclusion - We value diversity, we promote equality. Our services are open, accessible and our opportunities are available to all. We are always welcoming, encouraging, and respectful.

Sustainability - We are innovative, forward looking, and creative. We are enterprising, relevant, and progressive in pursuit of our vision.

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims of the Centre and its future activities.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

4. Our Achievements and Performance

Chair's Report

I am pleased to introduce Better Leeds Communities. Annual Report 2020-2021 which sets out for our clients, supporters, staff, funders, and the public our work and achievements during the year and our future plans. I would like to thank the Directors/ Trustees, the Senior Management team and all of our staff for their hard work during a challenging period, which included a full year of responding to the Covid 19 emergency.

The services that we provide continue to be much needed by our clients. However, the emergency meant that because of government regulations and guidance we were unable to provide these services face to face with our clients. Nevertheless, client services were maintained during the year by the use of telephone and video technology. Our staff and managers deserve great credit for the way that they adapted to this technology and the Board of Trustees are very grateful for their flexibility and resilience during this difficult time.

During 2019-20 we managed to restore our financial reserves to previous levels, and I am pleased to report that that this trend continued in 2020-21. A reasonable surplus was achieved in 2020-21, notwithstanding the very difficult working conditions caused by the Covid emergency. Our funders were extremely supportive during this period, allowing our services to continue to be provided and accepting that it was impossible to meet previously agreed volume targets because of the legal and health constraints that had to be implemented. We entered the current financial year with healthy cash balances which enable us to face the future with confidence.

We are very keen that the Burley Lodge Centre is seen as a community resource and that the building is well used by community groups and other partners. Unfortunately, government restrictions meant that these activities were severely restricted during the year. We have taken the opportunity of the closure period to upgrade our building and our IT facilities to improve our service standards even further. We will be actively promoting the use of our facilities as regulations and safe working practices allow.

During the course of 2020-2021 we retained all existing Trustees and held regular Board meetings via Zoom. I am very grateful to my fellow Trustees for continuing their involvement during this very difficult period.

I would like to record my thanks to all our staff, funders, and partners for their support during these difficult times and to reinforce our determination to play an active part in the challenges that we all face in the years ahead.

Neil Canwell
Chair of Trustees

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

Chief Executive's Report

The last year was a huge challenge globally, nationally, and locally for organisations and individuals alike. The Covid-19 pandemic created a period of unprecedented disturbance to our operational delivery and many of our service users were disproportionately affected by the consequences of the virus. Poverty, insecure employment and housing and health and race inequalities had combined to put many of our clients at significant and enduring disadvantage. Additionally, a closed down economy resulted in those of our clients that were 'just about' managing, finding themselves stretched to crisis point both financially and emotionally. Food and Fuel Poverty meant increasing numbers approached us in crisis for financial support.

As society closed down and staff were mandated to work from home, we had secured the infrastructure to afford our staff the resources they needed to fulfil the duties of their roles. However, our organisational responsibilities for our staff became focussed equally on their health and wellbeing as they undertook complex and emotionally charged work from their private homes. The challenges faced by our staff and the reliance and compassion demonstrated is a source of immense pride for me as are their achievements and creativity given the challenges they faced.

In the coming year, the Government will publish a landmark Levelling Up White Paper, articulating how improving living standards and bold new policy interventions will improve opportunity and boost livelihoods across the country as we recover from the pandemic. We await the paper in anticipation of it offering hope and resources to support the rebuilding of communities and individuals.

The close of the financial year saw our staff team returning to working from the Burley Lodge Centre on a phased basis. We welcomed staff back to start to engage in their client work in the supportive environment of the workplace, amongst colleagues and managers.

Better Leeds Communities closes the year in a strong position both financially and strategically. We are expecting demand for services to surge over the next year as the impact of lockdowns and associated rising unemployment filters down to communities. We reaffirm our commitment to empowering people, working co-operatively with partners, and co-producing our services and activities. We remain committed to ensuring that we continue to work holistically with individuals and families in order to achieve demonstrable long lasting change in their lives.

We thank all of our stakeholders, particularly our funders who have been understanding and supportive of our challenges. We look forward to working with all our supporters in the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our team of staff and volunteers for all their commitment and dedication, without their enthusiasm for the work and commitment to our service users we would be unable to achieve such excellent outcomes.

I am also extremely grateful to the Directors/Trustees for their continued energy and commitment to our mission.

Taira Kayani
Chief Executive Officer

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

5. Our Services

Advice Services

Debt Advice Service

The Debt Advice Service delivers debt advice sessions to Leeds residents. The service is funded by the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) through Citizen Advice.

The Debt Service provides detailed Debt Casework, when needed, and a wide range of support including negotiations with creditors, agreement to debt write offs, assistance with court proceedings, discussions with enforcement agents, and advice on the full range of statutory debt solutions; plus help with income maximisation and financial capability.

Referrals come from a wide variety of agencies and organisations including Leeds Voluntary Sector organisations, Housing Support Workers, GP surgeries, self-referral and from Better Leeds Communities services.

The services Specialist Debt Advisors deliver advice on a range of debt issues including credit and store cards, mortgages, and utilities; and they are qualified to act as approved intermediaries for Debt Relief Orders when appropriate to client situations. In year Advisors have continued to see an increase in the complexity of debt problems and in number of debts each client presents, and the added complexity of appointments being via telephone or video due to the COVID-19 pandemic – this has resulted with an increase in the time spent supporting clients

The contract requires our Advisors to engage in continuing professional development to ensure delivery is up to date and appropriate advice given; and there continues to be an emphasis on quality as well as quantity of deliver required.

As a result of Government COVID-19 legislation we started the year, during the first national 'Lockdown', delivering the service via telephone, video, and email. With the lifting of restrictions over the summer we had planned to recommence face-to-face delivery from October 2020. However, with the guidance to return to 'home working' during September 2020 and then subsequent 'Lockdowns' this was not possible during the financial year.

The project dealt with 463 new cases in year, continued to work with 76 clients from the previous year and supported clients responsible for the care of 492 children. In year the funder 'relaxed' project targets in recognition of the reduced ability for people to engage with support agencies due to COVID-19 legislation and because of the government support packages that introduced 'payment holidays' for monies owed.

A breakdown of client debt levels show that:

8 clients had between 20 and 27 debts

61 clients had between 10 and 20 debts

163 clients had between 5 and 9 debts

Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) and Citizen Advice – Increased Debt Advice Capacity 2020

In September 2020 we were awarded funds to 'onboard' a Trainee Specialist Debt Adviser. The

Better Leeds Communities
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Adviser commenced training on the 30th November 2020 and the post is funded for 12 months.

Training has taken place online due to Government COVID-19 legislation and the Adviser will start to support clients in the new financial year.

Children's Centres

The Childrens Centre service is funded by Citizen Advice Leeds and is aimed at those responsible for (or expecting) a child under 5 years of age in Leeds - with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic we held discussions with the funder, at the end of the previous year due to concerns that many families with children over 5 years of age would struggle due to the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result, it was agreed that we could support families with children 16 years and under during the year.

Referrals are received from numerous sources, including Citizen Advice Leeds, Family Support Workers, and self-referrals.

Our Generalist Advice Workers deliver advice on Welfare Benefits, housing, debt, and immigration; assist clients with form filling, benefit appeals and mandatory reconsideration; and signpost to other services provided by Better Leeds Communities and those of appropriate external organisations depending on client needs.

In year we had planned to continue to deliver our services from the previous year's venues of 8 Centre Centres and Community locations; however, this was not possible due to Government COVID-19 legislation, and we continued to deliver as we had ended the previous year via telephone, video, and email. At several points during the year, we had discussions with two Childrens Centres to commence face-to-face delivery, but this was not possible due to the guidance to return to 'home working' during September 2020 and then subsequent 'Lockdowns'.

In year we continued the previous year's promotion of the service through the Advice Service, First Contact Team, social media. Additionally, we had new printed literature produced and distributed this to Foodbanks, Leeds Baby Bank, and schools in the Burley area.

In year the funder 'relaxed' project targets in recognition of the reduced ability for people to engage with support agencies due to COVID-19 legislation and because of the government support packages that introduced 'payment holidays' for monies owed.

During the year, the Advice Workers supported nearly 400 new parents/carers clients, which supported 593 Children and led to a calculated financial gain of £153,619.0.

Housing Advice Service

Housing Our Housing Service delivers housing advice to Leeds residents and is funded by Citizen Advice Leeds The service provides detailed advice to 'Casework' level; supports those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, or in need help with an urgent housing - including referral to some temporary accommodation schemes; and advises on a wide range of issues including renting, housing options after relationship breakdowns, tenants' rights and obligations, harassment, repairs and legal procedures, and can also refer you to some temporary accommodation.

Clients continue to present with complex housing needs that increases the time and intervention required; and we are also seeing clients that have multiple complexities in their lives including debt and poor wellbeing.

Better Leeds Communities
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Due to Government COVID-19 legislation we started the year, during the first national 'Lockdown', delivering the service via telephone, video, and email. With the lifting of restrictions over the summer we had planned to recommence face-to-face delivery from October 2020. However, with the guidance to return to 'home working' during September 2020 and then subsequent 'Lockdowns' this was not possible.

During the year, Housing Advice delivered 208 appointments which supported 181 people

Henry Smith

The Debt Outreach Service, funded by The Henry Smith Charity, aims to bring about lasting change to people's lives through reducing social and economic disadvantage. The service is client focused and works with individuals to plan and identify routes forward to improve their health and wellbeing at their own pace. Clients are identified through the city-wide Social Prescribing service Linking Leeds which works in city's General practice Surgeries. In April 2020, the service entered the final three months of its then contract.

Clients have a wide range of needs including substance misuse, homelessness, mental ill health, long term health conditions, and disabilities which impact on their ability to engage with services. The service offers a flexible and person-centred model of delivery with appointments arranged to accommodate the

complexity of clients' life circumstances - flexibility around location allows clients to engage and reduces barriers such as transport and childcare costs which can prevent people from accessing mainstream advice services.

When additional issues are identified clients are supported to access Better Leeds Communities wider services or partners to ensure a holistic approach to their needs.

In year, as with previous years, client feedback continued to evidence the excellent outcomes achieved. Clients told us that our support resulted in them feeling more optimistic; that they have had an improved sense of how to deal with their problems; felt more relaxed and could think more clearly; had improved financial stability; and were more likely to avoid homelessness.

Demand for the service reduced during the first three months of the year as a result of COVID-19 legislation, the first national 'Lockdown' and General Practice surgeries closing. Our Specialist debt Advisor spent their time providing additional support for existing clients and ensured that support was either completed or in place for the project cessation.

During the operational period of the financial year the service supported 8 new clients and continued support for 14 clients from the previous year.

The service ended in June 2020.

Henry Smith 2020-2023

In late September 2020 we were awarded a new three-year contract by The Henry Smith Charity. The service commenced in November 2020 and has worked under Government COVID-19 restrictions and national 'Lockdowns'.

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Initial client feedback replicates that seen previously that they feel that our support has resulted in them feeling more optimistic and that they have an improved sense of how to deal problems; that they feel more relaxed and were thinking more clearly; that their financial stability had improved; and were less likely to become homeless. However, it is also evident that the social affects of the COVID-19 pandemic are putting an extra strain on clients.

During the operational period of the financial year the service has supported 29 new clients which is lower than expected, but has been affected by COVID-19 legislation, the second and third national 'Lockdowns' and General Practice surgeries still being closed.

Stronger Families

Stronger Families is a collaboration of third sector organisations across Leeds and Bradford. It is funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) via the Community Lottery and managed by the DWP – local management is provided by Leeds City Council.

Stronger Families supports parents to access training, start job searching and find employment - Better Leeds Communities supports parents to do this by providing Specialist Debt and Housing Advice for families struggling with unemployment, low school attendance, physical health, social emotional and mental health issues, and financial exclusion.

To be eligible for support people must:

- have a dependent child
- have the right to work in the UK
- not be in paid work

Clients are allocated a Key Worker to support them to access specialists who can help with:

- Health and wellbeing
- Debt issues, housing advice, budgeting, and benefits advice
- Preparation for work

As we had ended the previous financial year, we continued from April 2020 to deliver the service via telephone, video, and email as a result of Government COVID-19 legislation. In year as with our other advice services we aimed to restart face-to-face delivery from October 2020. However, with the guidance to return to 'home working' during September 2020 and subsequent 'Lockdowns' this was not possible during the financial year.

During the year the client referral flow has been sporadic – potential clients have not come into the Stronger Families programme due to Government COVID-19 legislation and the pandemic; and engagement has been more difficult with clients due to the inability of their Keyworkers to provide in person support.

Our Specialist Debt & Housing Advisors continue to report that those accessing support continue to present with complex issues and require longer periods of support; and it is evident that the restrictions of the pandemic are affecting families lives.

Better Leeds Communities
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The service aims to support 64 clients during a contract year. During the year the service supported 66 new clients, 50 less than the previous year, and continued support to 33 clients from the previous year; and our work with new clients supported the carers of 117 children. Whilst most clients had fewer than 5 debts 8 had over 15 debts with the total client debt being £591,928. Additionally, families had a calculated financial gain of £120,709.00.

Horizons

Horizons is a five-year project funded by the Big Lottery which is delivered in partnership with Leeds Mind. In July 2020 the project started its fifth and final year of delivery.

Horizons works to reduce the immediate and medium-term impacts of severe financial hardship, and levels of hardship-related crisis for Leeds residents; and aims to better equip people to manage and exit hardship-related crisis through peer support, advice, and advocacy. It seeks to do so by:

- Improving the circumstances of people experiencing financial hardship and/or destitution
- Developing crisis management skills; and
- Providing a safe space and increased opportunities for those experiencing hardship crisis to shape policy

The service remit is to deliver independent, professional, and impartial advice through attendance at Foodbanks and through one-to-one ongoing support - our Support & Engagement Workers support clients to access services and assist with relevant paperwork. Horizons also runs Peer Support workshops and courses to share knowledge and learn life skills as a way to prevent future crisis.

We started the year delivering the service via telephone, video, and email as a result of the closure of Foodbanks and Government COVID-19 legislation.

In year we undertook discussions to restart face-to-face delivery at 2 of our previous 8 Foodbank locations but this was put on hold with the guidance to return to 'home working' during September 2020 and subsequent 'Lockdowns'.

Throughout the year engagement with potential clients has been difficult due to the city's Foodbanks being closed – we have had Horizon's literature placed in food parcels that have been delivered by the Foodbanks, but we know that initial interaction with our client group is key to engagement.

During the financial year Horizons has supported 88 new clients and 22 clients from year four continued to receive support; 32 clients were aged over 50 years of age with the oldest client being 87 years of age; and there was a financial gain for clients of £81,312.00.

Lloyds Foundation – Response to COVID-19

We successfully applied to Lloyds Foundations for funding that was exclusively for organisations already receiving project funding to support our work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funds were used to purchase equipment to improve the working experience of our staff whilst home working; and ensure we delivered the best possible service experience to our clients

The Clothworkers Foundation

Better Leeds Communities were awarded funds to purchase printers and consumables, and phones to

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

enable us to be able to deliver our services during Government COVID-19 legislation restrictions. These purchases allowed our staff to be able to work safely from home during the COVID-19 pandemic and stopped the need for travel to the office for administration functions.

The George A Moore Foundation

We applied to the Foundation for funds to purchase USB and Bluetooth Telephone Headsets so that our staff could provide our services whilst working from home Government COVID-19 legislation restrictions. Additionally, when we are able to return to working from the office the headset will improve the work experience of our staff and the quality of service for those we support.

100% Digital Leeds City Council

The 100% Digital Fund created by Leeds City Council to support the voluntary sector and local communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Better Leeds Communities were awarded funds to purchase equipment to enhance our telephony service to clients supported by our service offer.

Asda Foundation

As part of their response to the COVID-19 pandemic Asda Foundation made awards to help those in crisis due to financial difficulties.

Better Leeds Communities were awarded funds to provide emergency food parcels for clients we are supporting across our service provision.

Leeds City Council Covid Business Support

Our Burley Lodge Centre was classed as a business that was unable to trade or have restricted trading due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result of classification our Business Rates for the financial year was cancelled, and we received financial support through the available grants.

HMRC Furlough Scheme

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the inability of our Room Hire business to trade due to Government COVID-19 legislation restrictions we placed a number of staff on furlough who have remained on the scheme throughout the financial year.

Communities and Families

Burley Voices

In September 2020 we were awarded funding from The National Lottery Community Fund Coronavirus Community Support Fund to fund Burley Voices a Digital Community for women living in the Burley area of Leeds that would provide them with support and keep them connected during COVID-19 social restrictions.

‘Burley Voices’ enabled women living in Burley to spend time together doing things they enjoyed and could benefit from; improved personal wellbeing and community cohesion; and reduced social isolation.

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Burley Voices digitally offered a range of activities and groups run on a video platform; and the project worked to build confidence in attendees to return to 'actual' events in the community when the COVID-19 situation allowed.

The project commenced in October 2020 and ended on 31st March 2021.

Co-op Food In-Kind Support

We were nominated by the local Co-op store on Cardigan Lane, Leeds to receive support for members of the local community during the COVID-19 pandemic who were participating in the Burley Voices project.

The purchases were Burley Voices mugs, hand creams, 3 Fire Tablets, 10 Yoga Mats and Craft Supplies.

My Place

My Place, funded by the Lloyds Foundation, provides Housing Support alongside our existing Specialist Housing Advice provision. The service commenced in September 2018 and is initially funded for three years.

The service works with people experiencing multiple disadvantage at a critical point in their life such as living in the private rented sector and struggling to pay high rent costs due to low incomes, reducing housing benefit, the introduction of Universal Credit and the benefits cap which are causing many vulnerable people to become homeless, on the verge of homelessness or vulnerably housed.

My Place's aim is to transition people from a position of no accommodation or being vulnerably housed to managing a tenancy/accommodation; and works to address a range of other transition and progression outcomes that are linked to participants being able to manage a tenancy/accommodation.

My Place supports people to feel safer, build resilience, be independent and able to make positive choices; be more able to manage mental health issues; to have improved self-esteem/confidence and physical health, aims to reduce isolation and stress/anxiety; and have increased support networks.

The service is normally delivered face to face by a Support Worker who attends appointments with clients and where appropriate undertakes interventions on their behalf. However, we started the year as we had ended the previous working under Government COVID-19 legalisation and delivering the service via telephone, video, and email.

During the year, the project exceeded its target of supporting 70 Leeds residents providing support to 123 people, 32 of whom were over 50 years of age.

Money Matters

Money Matters was funded by NatWest Skills & Opportunities Fund and commenced in November 2018. The project was extended to June 2020 during the 2019/2020 financial year; and in April 2020 it was agreed that the service could be extended until November 2020.

Our Money Matters Mentor supported parents to better manage their finances and financial priorities, improve income levels and build skills to help prevent financial difficulties; aimed to alleviate high levels of child poverty experienced by children when their parent's income is lower than average household incomes; and to improve their mental and physical wellbeing.

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The Mentor undertook income and benefit checks; gave basic support with budgeting; and signposted to services appropriate to their needs.

Due to Government COVID-19 restrictions the service was delivered via telephone and video as we were unable to offer one-to-one support sessions from our Burley Lodge Centre, Foodbanks, community venues or community events. In year the service supported 68 but we were unable to deliver workshops.

Money Matters ended in November 2020.

Social Prescribing

Linking Leeds

Linking Leeds is the integrated city-wide Social Prescribing service for people in Leeds that links individuals with a range of local community services to improve social, emotional, and mental wellbeing. It is commissioned by NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group.

The service is a consortium of seven local partners, including Better Leeds Communities, who have over a decade of collective experience delivering Social Prescribing to the people of Leeds. The service commenced delivery on the 1st September 2019. Linking Leeds provides Social Prescribing for all Leeds residents aged 16 years and above and responds to the specific health profiles of communities.

Linking Leeds is aimed at anyone who may benefit from better links with their local community, including those who want to improve their general health and wellbeing. It can connect people with a range of services in their area, including mental health support, fitness classes, volunteering or employment opportunities, faith groups, money or housing services and hobby groups.

Our Wellbeing Coordinators started the year as they had ended the previous, working from home, and delivering the service via telephone, video, and email as a result of Government COVID-19 legislation. Client numbers were below target throughout the year as patients were not visiting General Practice Surgeries and so not being referred to the service. Throughout the year discussion took place about a return surgeries but come the autumn and the return to restrictions this did not take place. During the final few months of the financial year staff assist with the promotion of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme and at Vaccination Centres.

Services and Room Hire

First Contact Service

The First Contact Team, which includes our Casual First Contact Team who work evenings and weekends, is the welcoming face of the organisation and is the first point of contact for all clients, customers, contractors, and funders coming into Better Leeds Communities services and facility.

At the start of the Government COVID-19 legislation restrictions we placed members of the team on to the Government's Job Retention Scheme (Furlough) due to the requirements to close our Burley Lodge Centre to Room Hire customers. As restrictions were lifted and some custom returned, we were able to bring staff back on reduced hours and in line with the scheme's requirements, but due to the lack of custom during the year staff have remained on Furlough throughout.

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The First Contact delivery element that supports our service delivery continued throughout the year working from home except when Room Hire Bookings were taking place. They ensured that calls were answered in a timely manner and that emails were replied to within 3 days.

Room Hire

In year, and as a reflection of bookings during 2019/2020 we had hoped to grow the business. However, the room booking income target of £55,000 fell short by over £40,000 due to periods of complete closure, some limited operation under strict regulatory COVID-19 guidance and a reluctance or inability of some groups to return due to concerns over their group's health.

During the summer we took the opportunity of the building not being open to customers, and with staff working from home, for decoration internally and externally; and new lighting has been fitted in the majority of the building. Further new chairs have been purchased along with new projector screens and white boards for the training rooms.

6. Financial review

Much of the new funding available for the voluntary sector during the 2020-2021 financial year was directed towards efforts to support organisations and individuals affected by the global Coronavirus Pandemic. The response from many funders was helpful to organisations that were either already preparing for IT infrastructure changes to enable remote working or those that needed to quickly move to remote working. Long term funding programmes were put on hold and funds were instead directed towards the immediate concerns associated with delivering services to those adversely affected by the global pandemic, either by way of effects on health or the financial fallout of the associated economic situation. Better Leeds Communities has successfully applied for several funds that have supported our move to cloud computing and a web-based telephone platform. The funds have enabled our staff to have access to headsets and printers as well as laptops. We have also been able to access project funds to support clients with digital inclusion through access to tablets and data. These funds have provided a lifeline to people who did not have the technology to engage in support sessions and other services only available to them digitally.

Income over the year decreased from £707,582 to £689,242, which was due to COVID-19 and Government COVID-19 legislation restrictions which resulted in the closing of our building. As a result of investment in the building and equipment there was a small increase in costs from £635,463 in 2019/2020 to £649,012 in 2020/2021. This left an overall net gain of £40,230 made up of £51,228 of unrestricted funds and (£10,998) of restricted funds.

Funding came from a variety of statutory and non-statutory bodies. Better Leeds Communities is grateful to all our funders, especially in these difficult times, for helping the organisation to work towards its mission of creating opportunities that enable Leeds residents to achieve their potential by raising aspirations, removing barriers, and developing abilities that lead to a better life.

Reserves policy

The trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets (the free reserves) held by the charity should be adequate to ensure that current

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

levels of activity could continue for at least six months during a period of unforeseen difficulty. At 31 March 2021 the total reserves were £556,267. Of this £40,518 are restricted and not available for general use and £185,385 are held as functional fixed assets. This leaves the level of free reserves amounting to £330,364 . This provides adequate wind down costs should this be necessary. This reserve level, together with ongoing sources of income, give the trustees the confidence to consider that this reserve is sufficient to meet the above objective.

The free reserves are required to:-

1. Finance new and existing projects until such time as funds are received from the relevant grant making body, where appropriate.
2. Finance an orderly close-down of BLC should the need arise.
3. To ensure that there are adequate Reserves to finance repairs to the building – we are responsible for full repair costs

7. Funders

Better Leeds Communities would like to thank its funders during the 2020-2021 financial year . It is only with the continuation of funding being available that we have been able to continue to deliver the much-needed services for Leeds residents.

Asda Foundation
Big Lottery Fund
Citizens Advice Bureau
Citizens Advice Leeds
Coop Food
The Henry Smith Charity
European Structural and Investment Funds/Leeds City Council
Leeds City Council
Lloyds Foundation
NatWest
NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group
The Clothworkers Foundation
The George A Moore Foundation

8. Plans for future periods

During the forthcoming financial year, as our plans were not achievable in during 2020-2021, we will revert to our long-term plan to continue to explore how we can ensure the sustainability and expansion of services to Leeds residents during the financial year 2021-2022; we will continue with a focus on the development of community assets and strong local partnerships; and continue to empower our clients to make informed choices about their lives via the provision of quality services.

In the financial year 2020-2021 the organisational plan was to review our services and income streams with an aim to expand services going forward. However, the advent of COVID-19 made us reassess our plans and consider financial implications that the pandemic may bring. During 2021-2022 we will continue to apply for funding and look to grow our Room Hire Business when conditions allow.

Better Leeds Communities
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During the year there is a plan to continue with the upgrade of the Burley Lodge Centre and invest in the Room Hire business.

9. Response to COVID-19 2020/2021 2021/2022

We started the financial year 2020-20 as we ended the previous year with the staff team working from home due to the Government COVID-19 legislation restrictions and this position remained until the guidance was updated in the summer of 2020.

Impact on achievements and performance in year were limited throughout due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When our service delivery model changed at the end of the previous year, we initiated conversations with funders to explain our position, about how we would deliver services and to discuss any implications to targets; and continued this into the 2020-2021 financial year. Funders assured us of the understanding across the sector that targets would not be achievable and agreed to relax them and expand client criteria so that we could ensure that Leeds residents continued to be supported in challenging times.

Discussions with one funder, for a project due to end in June 2020, led to the project being extended to the end of November 2020 to enable us to provide continued support during this challenging time for many.

Our future plans have been affected by COVID-19. Two funding decisions due in March and April 2020 - with an aim to launch services in July 2020 - were delayed until September and November 2020. However, as these applications funds have not been included in our 2020/2021 Budget there were no financial implications to the organisation, although it meant support for vulnerable people and a resumption of community activities were delayed. Additionally, our plans to grow in year were hampered by the shift of funders to mainly providing short-term COVID-19 funding; whilst other funds were delayed in opening until the later months of the year.

During 2021-2022 we will continue to seek funds to grow the organisation but recognise that this may be difficult due to a reduced number of suitable funds to apply to.

The organisation investments (reserves) are held in FCA approved investments. Interest received was already at a low level due to the continued effects of the 2008 Financial Downturn and we had not planned for any increase in monies during the 2020-2021 financial year. Although we had not budgeted to call on our Reserves in year there was the uncertainty of when we could restart our Room Hire business and with prudent management of our finances the need did not arise. Going forward we have budgeted for reduced Room Hire income to reflect the slow reopening up of society over the Spring of 2021 and taking into account that there may be further restrictions over the winter months if 2021/2022. However, if the need did arise, we do not see any call affecting our ability to operate or affect the legal financial requirements of being an employer, charity, or business.

In year we made improvements to the facilities and equipment associated with our Room Hire business and are seeking to do so further during 2021-2022 so that we have a quality offer in what may be a more competitive market after social distancing restrictions end.

During the previous financial year there was an aspiration to develop our fundraising strategy to increase unrestricted funds starting at a low level of under 1% of income. Due to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic we have not included this as a component of the 2021-2022 budget as we feel that the 'market' will be crowded and that there are causes that people will see more attractive.

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

We continued to support our staff during the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. Weekly team meetings are held on a digital platform, an encrypted social media group has been setup to keep staff in contact and support each other with work related issues; and our new 'Softphone' platform allows staff to keep in

contact. The CEO undertakes monthly one-to-one communication with all staff. We also helped our staff with the costs of working from home as we recognised the additional costs of being at home.

As we move back to working from our Burley Lodge Centre there is a phased return to help readjust to working from the office; we have registered to be a COVID-19 Workplace Test Centre and have been provided with 'Lateral Flow Tests', and we have been provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

The 'Casual First Contact' team members, due to the Room Hire business being closed or working at a reduced capacity have remained on the Government Job Retention Scheme (Furlough) throughout the year and it is likely that they will remain on it until September 2021. In year the Board agreed to pay the additional 20% of the 'Casual First Contact' team members monthly pay for the first three months.

We continued to support those clients we were working with prior to the 'lockdown' and have worked with new clients in year. Whilst across the projects we saw fewer clients than normal staff reported throughout the year that they were supporting people for longer periods of time due to their anxieties, and difficulties with obtaining relevant paperwork. However, it was also found that some clients were more forthcoming about their issues due to not being in a face-to-face situation.

Throughout the year we have been able to offer face-to-face support in exceptional circumstances after, seeking guidance from the Local Authority, but we found that clients have preferred not to seek support in person. There is a concern going forward that many people will find it difficult to interact in person again and there will be others who do not wish to. Going forward as restriction are lifted, we are aiming to return to face-to-face work in the autumn but see our offer going forward as being blended, with telephone and video as an option.

In year we were fortunate to obtain funds to purchase IT equipment; moved our telephone system to 'Softphones'; and had a new Wi-Fi system installed. We are now able to offer our clients an improved service experience and improved the working experience of our staff. Additionally, we are now in a position of that if there were a need to return to 'home working' during the period November 2021 to October 2022 that this would not be an issue and could be undertaken with the minimum of disruption to service.

We will continue to consider costs that may continue with regard to the impacts of future COVID-19 control measures, to open our building, and have calculated that these will remain minimal. However, we are aware that these will need to be kept under consideration in line with any future government guidelines.

Considering our position at the end of the 2020/2021 financial year, funding for the 2021/2022 financial year, plans for service expansion, and the reserves position the Board are confident that the organisation can continue operating and paying liabilities as they fall due for at least twelve months from when the accounts are signed and that there are no material uncertainties

10. Statement of the Board of Directors' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Better Leeds Communities for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Board of Directors and the financial statements in accordance

Better Leeds Communities
Report of the Board of Trustees/Directors for the year ended 31st March 2021

with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Board of Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Board of Directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation The Board of Directors is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In so far as the Board of Directors is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware
- The Board of Directors has taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information The Board of Directors is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

11. Auditors

Slade & Cooper Ltd were re-appointed as the charitable company's auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Board of Directors and signed on its behalf by

Neil Canwell (Chair)

Date: 28/09/2021

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Better Leeds Communities

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Better Leeds Communities (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (including the income and expenditure account), the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 19, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view,

Independent Auditor's Report (continued)

and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims.
- enquiry of the charity's staff, management and those charged with governance to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Audit/Audit-and-assurance/Standards-and-guidance/Standards-and-guidance-for-auditors/Auditors-responsibilities-for-audit/Description-of-auditors-responsibilities-for-audit.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Independent Auditor's Report
(continued)**

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Catherine Hall FCCA DChA

Senior Statutory Auditor

for and on behalf of

Slade & Cooper Limited
Statutory Auditors
Beehive Mill
Jersey Street
Manchester
M4 6JG

Date: 22/10/2021

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Financial Activities
(including Income and Expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2021 £	Total funds 2020 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	37,069	-	37,069	6,250
Charitable activities:	4				
Advice Service		-	464,529	464,529	467,476
Communities and Families		-	175,969	175,969	182,086
Services and Room Hire		11,367	-	11,367	51,139
Investments	5	308	-	308	631
Total income		48,744	640,498	689,242	707,582
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	6				
Advice Service		-	424,825	424,825	412,504
Communities and Families		-	175,969	175,969	185,244
Services and Room Hire		48,218	-	48,218	37,715
Total expenditure		48,218	600,794	649,012	635,463
Net income/(expenditure) before net gains/(losses) on investments		526	39,704	40,230	72,119
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	8	526	39,704	40,230	72,119
Transfer between funds		50,702	(50,702)	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		51,228	(10,998)	40,230	72,119
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		464,521	51,516	516,037	443,918
Total funds carried forward		515,749	40,518	556,267	516,037

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Better Leeds Communities
Company number 1754257
Balance sheet as at 31 March 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	185,385	196,907
Total fixed assets		185,385	196,907
Current assets			
Debtors	14	24,298	17,118
Cash at bank and in hand		370,357	322,121
Total current assets		394,655	339,239
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	15	(23,774)	(20,109)
Net current assets		370,881	319,130
Total assets less current liabilities		556,266	516,037
Net assets		556,266	516,037
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	16	40,518	51,516
Unrestricted income funds	17	515,749	464,521
Total charity funds		556,267	516,037

These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006 and are for circulation to members of the company.

The notes on pages 28 to 44 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 28/09/2021 and signed on their behalf by:

Neil Canwell (Chair)

Better Leeds Communities
Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ending 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	20	55,275	90,664
<i>Cash flows from investing activities:</i>			
Dividends, interest, and rents from investments		308	631
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(7,346)	(3,030)
Cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(7,038)	(2,399)
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		48,237	88,265
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		322,121	233,856
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		370,358	322,121

Better Leeds Communities
Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgments and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Better Leeds Communities meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b Reconciliation with previous Generally Accepted Accounting Practice

In preparing the accounts, the trustees have considered whether in applying the accounting policies required by FRS 102 and the Charities SORP FRS 102 the restatement of comparative items was required.

c Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

d Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of a provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

e Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised; refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

f Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

g Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

h Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Expenditure on charitable activities includes delivery costs undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

i Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charity's programmes and activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 7.

j Operating leases

Operating leases are leases in which the title to the assets, and the risks and rewards of ownership, remain with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

k Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

Leasehold improvements	Over the period of the lease
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	25% reducing balance
Computer equipment	33.3% straight line

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

l Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

m Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

n Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

o Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

p Pensions

Employees of the charity are entitled to join a defined contribution 'money purchase' scheme.

2 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales and has no share

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
CJRS grants	37,069		37,069	-
Donations in kind	-	-	-	6,250
Total	37,069	-	37,069	6,250
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2020</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Asda Foundation	-	600	600	-
Big Lottery Fund	-	117,409	117,409	104,831
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	127,282	127,282	133,049
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	114,500	114,500	111,300
Clothworkers' Foundation	-	1,120	1,120	-
George A. Moore Foundation	-	630	630	-
Henry Smith Charity	-	28,350	28,350	47,500
Leeds City Council	-	630	630	-
Stronger Families	-	35,599	35,599	37,156
Lloyds Foundation	-	29,993	29,993	24,640
Natwest	-	8,416	8,416	9,000
Advice Service	-	464,529	464,529	467,476
BARCA Leeds	-	-	-	45,583
Home Office	-	-	-	18,451
Leeds Mind	-	-	-	15,403
Linking Leeds	-	175,969	175,969	102,649
Communities and Families	-	175,969	175,969	182,086
Other income - room hire	11,277	-	11,277	49,081
Other income	90	-	90	2,058
Services and Room Hire	11,367	-	11,367	51,139
Total	11,367	640,498	651,865	700,701
<i>Total by fund 31 March 2020</i>	<i>51,139</i>	<i>649,562</i>	<i>700,701</i>	

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

Previous reporting period	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2020 £
Advice Service			
Big Lottery Fund	-	104,831	104,831
Citizens Advice Bureau	-	133,049	133,049
Citizens Advice Leeds	-	111,300	111,300
Henry Smith Charity	-	47,500	47,500
Stronger Families	-	37,156	37,156
Lloyds Foundation	-	24,640	24,640
Natwest	-	9,000	9,000
Advice Service	-	467,476	467,476
Communities and Families			
BARCA Leeds	-	45,583	45,583
Home Office	-	18,451	18,451
Leeds Mind		15,403	15,403
Linking Leeds		102,649	102,649
Communities and Families	-	182,086	182,086
Services and Room Hire			
Other income - room hire	49,081	-	49,081
Other income	2,058	-	2,058
	-	-	-
Services and room hire	-	51,139	51,139
Total	51,139	649,562	700,701

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 £	2020 £
Income from bank deposits	308	-	308	631
	308	-	308	631

All investment income in the previous year was unrestricted

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

6 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Staff costs	322,243	146,820	-	469,063	498,677
Administration	26,666	96	-	26,762	16,810
Depreciation	-	-	18,868	18,868	16,340
Project costs	16,057	-	-	16,057	21,075
Governance costs (see note 7)	-	-	6,303	6,303	6,901
Support costs (see note 7)	59,859	29,053	23,047	111,959	75,660
	<u>424,825</u>	<u>175,969</u>	<u>48,218</u>	<u>649,012</u>	<u>635,463</u>
Previous reporting period		Advice Service £	Communities and Families £	Services and Room Hire £	Total 2020 £
Staff costs		351,167	147,510	-	498,677
Accommodation		-	-	-	-
Administration		10,543	17	6,250	16,810
Depreciation		-	-	16,340	16,340
Project costs		18,374	2,701	-	21,075
Governance costs (see note)		-	-	6,901	6,901
Support costs (see note)		32,420	35,016	8,224	75,660
		<u>412,504</u>	<u>185,244</u>	<u>37,715</u>	<u>635,463</u>
				2021 £	2020 £
Restricted expenditure				600,794	603,998
Unrestricted expenditure				48,218	31,465
				<u>649,012</u>	<u>635,463</u>

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

7 Analysis of governance and support costs

	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2021 £
Staff costs	Time spent	77,619	-	77,619
Office costs	Time spent	34,340	-	34,340
Audit fees	Governance	-	3,944	3,944
Legal and professional	Governance	-	2,359	2,359
		111,959	6,303	118,262
Previous reporting period	Basis of apportionment	Support £	Governance £	Total 2020 £
Staff costs	Time spent	32,011	-	32,011
Office costs	Floor area	43,649	-	43,649
Audit fees	Governance	-	2,760	2,760
Legal and professional	Governance	-	4,141	4,141
		75,660	6,901	82,561

8 Net income/(expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation	18,868	16,340
Loss or profit on disposal of fixed assets	-	-
Auditor's remuneration - audit fees	3,000	2,760

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

9 Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	482,898	465,352
Social security costs	38,739	35,918
Pension costs	23,737	20,958
Recruitment, training and travel	1,308	8,460
	546,682	530,688
Allocated as follows:		
Charitable activities	469,063	498,677
Support costs	77,619	32,011
	546,682	530,688

No employees has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2020: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the period was 27 (2020: 24).

The average full time equivalent number of staff employed during the period was 19 (2020: 18).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £55,346 (2020: £52,686).

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

10 Trustee remuneration and expenses, and related party transactions

Neither the management committee nor any persons connected with them received any remuneration or reimbursed expenses during the year (2020: Nil).

No members of the management committee received travel and subsistence expenses during the year. (2020:£nil).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity, including guarantees, during the year (2020: nil).

11 Government grants

The government grants recognised in the accounts were as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Leeds City Council	55,660	37,156
CCG - Linking Leeds	175,969	102,649
HMRC job retention scheme	17,638	-
Home Office - Building a Stronger Britain	-	18,451
	249,267	158,256

There were no unfulfilled conditions and contingencies attaching to the grants

12 Corporation tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

13 Fixed assets: tangible assets

Cost	Leasehold improvements £	Computer equipment £	Total £
At 1 April 2020	398,137	6,610	404,747
Additions	-	7,346	7,346
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2021	398,137	13,956	412,093
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2020	204,176	3,664	207,840
Charge for the year	16,256	2,612	18,868
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2021	220,432	6,276	226,708
Net book value			
At 31 March 2021	177,705	7,680	185,385
At 31 March 2020	193,961	2,946	196,907

14 Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Other debtors	1,736	2,954
Prepayments and accrued income	22,562	14,164
	24,298	17,118

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Other creditors and accruals	13,331	10,899
Taxation and social security costs	10,443	9,210
Deferred income	-	-
	23,774	20,109

No accrual for holiday pay was required at the end of March 2021 (March 2020: £0)

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

16 Analysis of movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
Advice Service					
Asda Foundation	-	600		-	600
100% Digital Fund	-	630	(630)	-	-
Burley Voices	-	9,993	(9,993)	-	-
Children's Centre	-	111,300	(94,229)	(17,071)	-
Clothworkers'	-	1,120	(1,120)	-	-
George A. Moore	-	630	(630)	-	-
Debt Outreach	17,210	-	(17,210)	-	-
Henry Smith					
2020/2023	-	28,350	(23,317)	-	5,033
Horizons	14,542	107,416	(89,474)	(12,239)	20,245
Leeds Advice					
Service	-	3,200	(3,200)	-	-
MaPS Trainee	-	18,888	(18,888)	-	-
Money Advice					
Service	-	108,394	(87,809)	(20,585)	-
My Place (Leeds)	14,192	24,857	(23,602)	(807)	14,640
My Place (Covid-19					
Funds)	-	5,136	(5,136)	-	-
Money Matters	5,572	8,416	(13,988)	-	-
Stronger Families	-	35,599	(35,599)	-	-
	<u>51,516</u>	<u>464,529</u>	<u>(424,825)</u>	<u>(50,702)</u>	<u>40,518</u>
Communities and Families					
Linking Leeds	-	175,969	(175,969)	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>175,969</u>	<u>(175,969)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>51,516</u>	<u>640,498</u>	<u>(600,794)</u>	<u>(50,702)</u>	<u>40,518</u>
Total					

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2020 £
Advice Service					
Children's Centre	-	111,300	(89,372)	(21,928)	-
Debt Outreach	15,799	47,500	(46,089)	-	17,210
Horizons	14,111	104,831	(83,042)	(21,358)	14,542
Money Advice	-	133,049	(119,370)	(13,679)	-
My Place (Leeds)	12,762	24,640	(23,210)	-	14,192
Money Matters	10,836	9,000	(14,264)	-	5,572
Stronger Families	-	37,156	(37,156)	-	-
	<u>53,508</u>	<u>467,476</u>	<u>(412,503)</u>	<u>(56,965)</u>	<u>51,516</u>
Communities and Families					
Building a Stronger Burley	-	24,701	(24,701)	-	-
Linking Leeds	-	102,649	(102,649)	-	-
Connect for Health	-	15,403	(15,403)	-	-
Patient Empowerment Project	3,159	45,583	(48,742)	-	-
	<u>3,159</u>	<u>188,336</u>	<u>(191,495)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	<u>56,667</u>	<u>655,812</u>	<u>(603,998)</u>	<u>(56,965)</u>	<u>51,516</u>

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

Name of	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
Children's Centre Advice Service	This is a scheme providing an outreach advice service at centres across Leeds
Debt Outreach	This is a project run to offer a debt outreach service.
Horizons	This is a project to support people facing hardship crisis.
Money Advice Service	This forms part of a national initiative to provide debt advice.
Stronger Families	This project provides debt and housing support to people referred by the wider Stronger Families Project.
Building a Stronger Burley	This project provides community activities, events, classes and workshops for residents living in the Burley area.
Connect For Health	This is a social prescribing service for people living in south and east Leeds
Linking Leeds	This is an integrated city-wide Social Prescribing service for people in Leeds that links individuals with a range of local community services to improve social, emotional, and mental wellbeing.
Money Matters	This project provides individual budget support and workshops to people living in postcode areas of deprivation.
Patient Empowerment Project	This is a social prescribing service for people living in west Leeds

17 Analysis of movement in unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2021 £
General fund	270,560	48,744	(31,962)	50,702	338,044
Building fund	193,961	-	(16,256)	-	177,705
	464,521	48,744	(48,218)	50,702	515,749

Name of	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
General fund	The free reserves after allowing for all designated funds
Building fund	The fixed assets are essential for the future operation of the charity and so

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2020 £
General fund	177,034	51,770	(15,209)	56,965	270,560
Building fund	210,217	-	(16,256)	-	193,961
	<u>387,251</u>	<u>51,770</u>	<u>(31,465)</u>	<u>56,965</u>	<u>464,521</u>

18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	7,680	177,705	-	185,385
Net current assets/(liabilities)	330,363	-	40,518	370,881
	<u>338,043</u>	<u>177,705</u>	<u>40,518</u>	<u>556,266</u>
Previous reporting period				
	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	2,946	193,961	-	196,907
Net current assets/(liabilities)	267,614	-	51,516	319,130
	<u>270,560</u>	<u>193,961</u>	<u>51,516</u>	<u>516,037</u>

19 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as

	Property		Equipment	
	2021 £	2020 £	2021 £	2020 £
Less than one year	1	1	489	-
One to five years	4	4	977	-
Over five years	8	8	-	-
	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>1,466</u>	<u>-</u>

Better Leeds Communities

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 (continued)

20 Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	40,230	72,119
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	18,868	16,340
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(308)	(631)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(7,180)	1,460
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	3,665	1,376
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating	55,275	90,664