



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**  
*The MBE for volunteer groups*

**YOUTH  
LEADS.**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020**

**YOUTH LEADS UK  
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1155789**



“

**ON OUR OWN, WE CANNOT END WARS  
OR WIPE OUT INJUSTICE, BUT THE  
CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF THOUSANDS  
OF SMALL ACTS OF GOODNESS CAN BE  
BIGGER THAN WE IMAGINE.”**

**- HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN**

”

# CONTENTS

- 1 INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CHAIR**
- 2 LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAIL**
- 3 STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**
- 4 PRIORITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**
- 5 FUTURE PLANS**
- 6 FINANCIAL REVIEW**
- 7 STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 8 INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**
- 9 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS**

# INTRODUCTION

“

**YOUNG PEOPLE  
AREN'T OUR  
TOMORROW, THEY  
ARE OUR TODAY.  
NOW IT'S TIME TO  
ACCELERATE AND  
GROW OUR IMPACT**

”



The past twelve months have certainly been exciting and the thing that has stood out the most for me was our evolution from Xplode Magazine to Youth Leads UK.

When we made the announcement that we'd re-branded in September 2019, I said that we wanted to create a brand that says more about what we're here to do. This charity was initially established Xplode Magazine was in 2011 and we could never have foreseen where we are now - recognised with Her Majesty the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, having designed and delivered a peer-led employability training programme for over 5,000 young people and printed over 142,000 magazines full of content created by ambitious young people.

For a long time, this has been more than a magazine - young people aren't our tomorrow, they are our today. Now it's time to accelerate and grow our impact.

We have a vision of a country where youth leads and our new programmes, brand and focus are about to provide a real step-change in what we do.

Young people are thoughtful, engaged and ready to make a difference in their communities and we will make social action opportunities available for all young people, with all of the benefits, no matter their background or history.

**Saimah Malji, Chair of Trustees**

# LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAIL

## KEY PEOPLE

Chair  
Vice Chair  
Treasurer  
Trustee  
Trustee  
Trustee

Miss S Malji  
Mr A Toorawa  
Mr K Malji  
Miss C Bennett  
Miss L German  
Mr E Jankowski

Chief Executive Officer  
Project Support Executive

Mr S Atcha MBE DL  
Mrs Z Khan

## REGISTERED OFFICE

Youth Leads UK,  
106 Miller House,  
47-49 Market Street,  
Farnworth, Bolton,  
BL4 7NS.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

KM Accountants,  
1st Floor, Block C,  
The Wharf,  
Manchester Road,  
Burnley,  
BB11 1JG.

## BANKERS

**HSBC UK Plc,**  
Victoria Square,  
Bolton,  
BL1 1RJ.

**CAF Bank Ltd,**  
25 Kings Hill Ave,  
Kings Hill, West Malling,  
Kent, ME19 4JQ

# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## GOVERNING DOCUMENT

Youth Leads UK is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the registered number, 1155789. We are governed by a constitution that establishes the objectives and powers of the organisation.

## OBJECTIVES

As stated in our constitution, Youth Leads acts as a resource for young people by providing advice and assistance and organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities as a means of:

- a) Advancing in life and helping young people by developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;
- b) Advancing education;
- c) Relieving unemployment;
- d) Providing recreational and leisure time activity in the interests of social welfare for people living in the areas of benefit who have need by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty, or social and economic circumstances with a view to improving the conditions of life of such persons.

We also develop and promote innovative non-formal education programmes for and by young people, working with them to develop their full potential and we act as a platform for young people to develop business skills which are then applied practically through our publication, Xplode Magazine.

Details of services and activities delivered during 2019/20 are set out further in this report.

## APPOINTMENT OR RENEWAL OF TRUSTEES

New Trustees are elected by existing trustees at any point in the year and there are no restrictions on who can be nominated. New Trustees are supported through mentorship and an induction process which includes details of their responsibilities, Charity Commission publications and the governing document. All Trustees are encouraged to meet Youth Leads UK's volunteers and beneficiaries.

All Trustees give their time freely and are reimbursed for out of pocket expenses. Trustees are encouraged to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the CEO and withdraw for decisions where a conflict of interest may arise.



## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Board of Trustees meet at least 4 times per year and are responsible for the governance of the organisation as set out in, but not limited to, the constitution. Decisions on the day to day running of the organisation are taken by the Chief Executive and senior management team. The Board receives regular reports from the Executive. Decisions and matters with significant implications on the organisation are brought to the Board. These include:

- Policy Development
- Organisational Priorities
- Service Development
- Risk Identification (management, mitigation and review)
- Brand and Public Relations Development

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Youth Leads UK have identified risks by looking across all areas of the organisational strategy as well as any operational risks. Where appropriate, systems and procedures have been established to mitigate these risks.

Safeguarding remains a risk that we monitor very closely due to the nature of our work. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are carried out for all members of staff, trustees and volunteers who regularly work with children and vulnerable adults, in line with our safeguarding policies.

A principal risk is **the lack of staff capacity** that we have within the organisation and this is a priority for funding going forward. We will also introduce Full Cost Recovery in any grant application over £10,000 providing the grant-making organisation allows. **Another risk is strategic drift** and/or not meeting the targets outlined later in this report, and in our organisational strategy. The Trustees have improved reporting and monitoring against the business plan with regular updates from the Executive and all new work is put through a tested flowchart to see if it fits within our outlined strategic priorities.

The impact of **COVID-19 has created a risk around financial instability**, however, it is too early to say what the impact looks like. Initially, we have liaised with funders to improve cash flow and will continue to work to ensure that any adverse impact is mitigated.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations and all colleagues are advised of compliance with media law to minimise any risk within our magazine.



# MESSAGES FROM OUR YOUNG PEOPLE



"My journey at Youth Leads has been an incredible one. It has given me the confidence to get involved in things that I wouldn't have earlier. Being part of the social events and activities, I got an opportunity to enhance my communication skills and use my creativity to help make a difference. The love and support from the team has always encouraged me to put my best in everything we do in our community." - Abeer, 17



"Youth Leads has helped my social skills a lot. I didn't think I was confident enough to speak to people and I found it hard to leave the house. Just being able to interact with people is now a lot easier. Volunteering has changed my life and now I have got a job that I love because I've been able to develop myself." - Jacob, 18



"When I started volunteering with Youth Leads, I never could have anticipated how much it would change my life. For the first time in my life it feels like my voice is being heard and not only that my opinion matters, but it has the potential to change the world. Youth Leads has given me the confidence and the skills to embrace whatever challenges the next stage of my life throws at me." - Charlotte, 20



# PRIORITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

## VISION

A country where youth leads – young people feel listened to, part of their communities, and ready to make change through skills development opportunities.

## MISSION

Youth Leads supports young people aged 14-25 to enrich their skills, reach their potential, and influence change. We do this through peer-led programmes of volunteering, social action projects, and learning experiences, and by amplifying the voice of young people with key decision makers.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### SKILLS ENRICHMENT

We immerse young people into new and challenging environments enabling them to develop and learn new skills through:

- Industry Insight sessions led by employers
- Youth-led training sessions on life skills
- Work experience opportunities
- Mentorship
- Publishing Xplode Magazine

### SELF-EMPOWERING POTENTIAL

We enable young people to develop through increased responsibility, opportunities and recognition. We do this through: youth-led projects, co-design and pathways to progress into senior roles.

- Quarterly Youth-Led Social Action projects
- Co-design of all of our activities
- Dedicated Trustee roles on our Board for young people
- Advertising staff roles to volunteers first

### INFLUENCING CHANGE

We help to influence decision making across society through elevated youth voice opportunities. We work tirelessly to improve perceptions of young people, challenge decision makers and board representation through:

- Youth focused consultations
- Publishing positive stories of young people
- Taking part in the GMYCA involving policy scrutiny, challenge and support to the Mayor of Greater Manchester.

### ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to establishing a sustainable, skilled and effective organisation. Across this strategic priority, the past twelve months has focused on the following:

- A root and branch review of all policies and procedures
- The development of a brand new organisational strategy, business plan and fundraising strategy.

# SKILLS ENRICHMENT

The publication, Xplode Magazine, is our vehicle for skills development and youth voice. It is a tool for young people to express themselves, gain experience and support their CVs.

Young people involved in the magazine not only write, design or photograph, they lead it, too - from the planning to the delivery, young people are at the heart of the magazine.

The in-print magazines cover a variety of topics carefully striking the balance between popular content and 'life lesson' content. Music, fashion and entertainment are featured alongside more serious pieces covering mental health, employability and crime.

The magazines are printed and distributed to high schools, ASDA stores, youth centres, libraries and independent shops across Bolton, Bury and Manchester.

Having their work printed and showcased across the region, young people feel believed in, listened to and equipped with motivation and skills for their futures. Not only does the magazine benefit the young people involved in the creation, it benefits the wider readership with its positive 'life lessons' content written in a way that young people can relate to and act upon.

The young people who volunteer with the magazine receive regular skills training workshops and 'industry insight' sessions where local, regional and national organisations deliver hands-on workshops offering an insight into their industry. These sessions also offer our young people the opportunity to network with leaders and professionals who they can then contact for work experience and mentorship opportunities.

**25,000**  
COPIES OF XPLODE  
DISTRIBUTED

**42** YOUTH  
VOLUNTEERS



# SELF-EMPOWERING POTENTIAL

We believe in a society where the contributions young people make to their communities are valued, supported and recognised. Young people taking practical action in the service of others is central to their futures - it is linked to social mobility and not only supports the young people involved, but the community around them.

With far too many young people going to jobs for experience and getting turned down for a lack of it, Xplode has been offering opportunities for its' young people to act as employability champions - once they are trained by industry, they deliver peer-to-peer led workshops in youth settings. The training covers CV's, interviews, recruitment processes and job searching. Over the course of the programme, Youth Leads volunteers have trained over 7,480 young people in a variety of settings from schools and colleges to the National Citizen Service and youth clubs. This has led to a 20% reduction in youth unemployment across Greater Manchester.

In addition to the Employ programme outlined above, 4 times per year, our young people design and deliver a short-term high-impact social action project. Working with our cross-sector partners, they are creating real change in their communities and developing a whole host of skills from leadership and time management to planning and marketing. The first social action project was inspired by a volunteer who wanted to tackle child illiteracy in Greater Manchester: the team organised a book gifting day, established a partnership with the central library and organised crafts events. In the end, over 300 children had access to a book they owned and had also accessed the library service to start their reading journey. Another example of the social action element to our work saw Youth Leads' young people plant over 50 trees as part of The Woodland Trust's 'Big Climate Fightback'.

We believe that the contributions of young people should be recognised and celebrated. We held a celebration event and the Leader of Bolton Council, Cllr Linda Thomas awarded our young people a certificate at a reception held at Bolton Town Hall.

**We are proud to highlight the efforts of 3 of the young people that we work with. Aliyah Khan has established a film company aiming to tackle the lack of diversity in the media sector, Kasey Smith has had work published by over a dozen regional newspaper titles and Chloe Wilson has had dozens of articles published by around 20 local newspaper titles.**



# INFLUENCING CHANGE

Youth Leads UK is a member and 'Official Media Partner' to the Mayor of Greater Manchester's Youth Combined Authority. The Youth Combined Authority brings together a diverse group of young people who live, study and work in the region. They are responsible for critiquing, developing and championing policies of the Combined Authority. Our young people attend regular meetings to have their say and report on the GMYCA's activities through the magazine and social media channels.

We are committed to developing the next generation of charity leaders through trusteeship opportunities. 18-24 year olds account for less than 0.5% of all charity Trustees. At Youth Leads, they account for 100% with access to training, mentoring and development opportunities. Youth Leads has been advising a number of organisations over the past twelve months on their youth voice opportunities.

The NHS commissioned Youth Leads UK to consult young people and parents on the digital offer of the 0-19 health service. Working in collaboration with voluntary and community groups and health professionals, we produced a report with 8 key recommendations that are in the process of being worked through the health system.

Co-design is central to projects that involve young people. Youth Leads' volunteers have advised or supported a number of organisations with their youth engagement. These organisations include:

- The Ramblers
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Teach First
- TalentRISE
- Action 4 Conservation
- UpReach
- The Civil Service
- The Money and Pensions Service
- Virgin Unite



**£4,215,864**

**SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT**

**55%** OF VOLUNTEERS  
FROM 30% MOST DEPRIVED AREAS



# FUTURE PLANS

The next year for the organisation looks incredibly exciting as we start to deliver our new strategy. Towards the end of the 2019-2020 financial year, the COVID-19 pandemic began to impact our delivery. At the time of writing this Annual Report, we started to move our operations digitally and have been working with other youth-sector organisations to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on youth employment and skills. With an absence of academic evidence at this stage, we are working on the anecdotally evidenced-assumption that due to the closure of schools, a large number of young people will be without key skills needed for employment (this is due to schools usually prioritising these for the final six months of the academic year). We are also aware from our existing volunteers that a number of their employees do not expect to re-employ them following the end of their furlough leave. Dependent on funding, we aim to double our skills enrichment training target and our employability training target below. COVID-19 aside, we're very much looking forward to delivering our new strategy and supporting many more young people.

## OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS - APRIL 2020 - MARCH 2021

	Outcome/Output
<b>Skills Enrichment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated volunteer training programme established and 80 young people trained</li> <li>• 5 new corporate partnerships established</li> <li>• Two high-quality bumper magazines produced per year</li> <li>• Deliver skills enrichment training for 250 young people per year</li> </ul>
<b>Empowering Potential</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Greater Manchester Awards for Young People</li> <li>• Four social action projects delivered (two large and two small)</li> <li>• Volunteer leaders supported to deliver activities</li> <li>• Deliver employability training to 5,000 young people</li> </ul>
<b>Influencing Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people influencing 10 local/regional funding panels</li> <li>• 30 young people in Trustee/Governor roles (over 3 years)</li> <li>• 150 young people more informed (meaningfully) on becoming a Trustee/Governor</li> <li>• Work with the Greater Manchester Youth Combined Authority to challenge decision makers and influence policy.</li> </ul>

We measure impact through regular surveys, focus groups and interviews with our young people. We also use multimedia and storytelling as well images, video and press releases.





# OUR SUPPORTERS



## HOW YOU CAN HELP...

We're always on the lookout for organisations and individuals to support our work through mentoring young people, sponsoring our events and publications, providing venues and other in-kind support such as marketing, professional services and impact measurement.

**Visit: [youthleads.uk/support](https://youthleads.uk/support)**

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

As per Charity Commission guidance for CIO's, we have completed a receipts and payments accounts which has been examined independently. The accounts and examination can be found overleaf.

## PRINCIPAL FUNDING SOURCES

Our principal funding sources are through grant income, donations and the sale of training and media production. In the financial year ending 31 March 2020, the following grant-making organisations generously supported our work:

- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
- Trusthouse Charitable Foundation
- Bolton Council Community Empowerment Fund
- St. James's Place Charitable Foundation
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Zochonis Charitable Trust
- The #iwill fund
- COSARAF Foundation (with particular thanks for supporting us with emergency COVID-19 related funding)
- Greater Manchester High Sheriff's Police Trust
- TESCO
- The Foyle Foundation
- Shears Foundation

## RESERVES POLICY

The Board of Trustees' examination of the charity's need for reserves concludes that in order to allow the protection of current activities and the meeting of day-to-day responsibilities a sum is needed. The previous Trustees Annual Report stated "in view of the commitment made to service users, the optimum level of free reserves would be running costs for three months including magazine print. In the event of reserves needed to be used, Xplode can bow out gracefully with a final publication."

Due to the impact of COVID-19, unrestricted funds are showing signs of declination and the charity is actively seeking new sources of income, through income generation in order to continue to provide a broad range of services to meet the needs of young people. Sadly, COVID-19 has meant that a number of our income-generating activities have been cancelled and due to the move to work from home, the Trustees approved a £4,500 draw-down to purchase the relevant equipment to move activities online and to allow staff to work from home.

The Trustees at this stage consider that £2,000, from unrestricted funds, should be set aside for reserves to cover the legal wind-up costs and the Trustees wish to increase this to £15,000 in the upcoming financial year to cover three months running costs.

# STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity. In preparing these reports, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed;
- Prepare the financial accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate;
- To presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are also responsible for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of internal control across the organisation. They are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at the time, the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements follow best practice. They are further responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute reassurance against material misstatement of loss. Internal control processes implemented by the Trustees include:

- Agreement of policy and service development;
- An annual budget approved by the Trustees;
- Regular consideration by the Trustees of financial results;
- Delegation of authority to appropriate levels of management;
- Identification and management of risk.

By order of the Trustees dated 27 April 2020

*S. Malji*

**SAIMAH MALJI**  
**CHAIR**

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Youth Leads UK for the year ended 31 March 2020 which are set out on pages 18 and 19.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

As the charity's Trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

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

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records.

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



Mark Heaton FCCA FCIE DChA  
KM Chartered Accountants  
1st Floor, Block C  
The Wharf  
Manchester Road  
Burnley  
BB11 1JG

27 April 2020

# RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS

FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2019 TO 31 MARCH 2020

## Receipts and Payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>Receipts</b>				
Grants	0.00	94,780.00	94,780.00	74,946.00
Donations	6,859.47	-	6,859.47	15,015.16
Sales	8,300.00	-	8,300.00	700.00
Advertisement	0.00	-	-	779.00
Accounts Receivable	1,700.00	-	1,700	-
Grants Receivable	0.00	13,700	13,700	-
	0.00	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>16,859.47</b>	<b>108,480.00</b>	<b>125,339.47</b>	<b>91,440.16</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>16,859.47</b>	<b>108,480.00</b>	<b>125,339.47</b>	<b>91,440.16</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
Accommodation & services	0.00	9,224.64	9,224.64	9,322.61
Volunteer Management	3,420.37	16,069.02	19,489.39	13,310.46
IT & Software	0.00	5,761.63	5,761.63	1,058.47
Communications & Marketing	4,696.10	1,359.60	6,055.70	6,840.85
Magazine Print & Distribution	4,128.00	4,000.00	8,128.00	6,345.00
Travel & Subsistence	0.00	15,825.53	15,825.53	10,039.88
Legal & Governance	0.00	22,152.08	22,152.08	3,673.45
Stationary & Postage	0.00	3,170.31	3,170.31	2,040.16
Bank Charges	35.00	0.00	35.00	0.00
Staff Salaries & Costs	10,000.00	30,955.20	40,955.20	61,680.21
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>22,279.47</b>	<b>108,518.01</b>	<b>130,797.48</b>	<b>114,311.09</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>22,279.47</b>	<b>108,518.01</b>	<b>130,797.48</b>	<b>114,311.09</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>-5,420.00</b>	<b>-38.01</b>	<b>-5,458.01</b>	<b>-22,870.93</b>
Transfers between funds			-	-
Cash funds last year end	7,852.16	176.54	8,028.70	30,899.63
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>2,432.16</b>	<b>138.53</b>	<b>2,570.69</b>	<b>8,028.70</b>



# RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS

FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2019 TO 31 MARCH 2020

## Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
Cash funds	Bank	2,432.16	138.53
		-	-
		-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>2,432.16</b>	<b>138.53</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account (s))	OK	OK
		<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>
	<b>Details</b>	<b>to nearest £</b>	<b>to nearest £</b>
Other monetary assets	Debtors (Unpaid Invoices)		19,940.00
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-



**KHALIL MALJI**  
**TREASURER**  
**22 April 2020**



**ADAM TOORAWA**  
**VICE-CHAIR**  
**22 April 2020**

## BRIEF NOTES TO ACCOUNTS

The Board of Trustees' would like to highlight the increase in expenditure in the categories Legal & Governance, Travel and Subsistence and Stationary and Postage due an an external consultancy resulting in our new organisational strategy, business plan and fundraising strategy and increased geographical footprint of work.

Debtors stand at £19,940 at financial year end.



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**  
*The MBE for volunteer groups*

# YOUTH LEADS.

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BL4 7NS**

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**YOUTHLEADS.UK**

**YOUTH LEADS UK  
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1155789**