



ANNUAL REPORT

October 2016 – September 2017

Chair of BEACON report

As BEACON continues to 'Welcome the Stranger', it does so in challenging times. Recent terrorist attacks contribute to a climate of fear which can so easily spill over into acts of hostility towards the vulnerable people we seek to support.

Following the bomb attack at Parson's Green earlier this year, Maurice Wren, Chief Executive of the Refugee Council, wrote:

"We cannot allow these deplorable events to be used as an excuse to turn our backs on vulnerable refugees, or to compromise our most cherished values of compassion, humanity and solidarity. This is a time for us all to stand together and face down those who would divide us. We cannot let hatred and fear win."

Through BEACON's projects we are helping to ensure that justice, compassion and concern for those seeking safety in our city win the day.

This has been a year of change for BEACON.

Farewell!

After three years, we wished our Team Leader, Lizzie Lowenstein, well as she moved on to a new post in June. BEACON is immensely grateful for her contribution, especially the way that she helped implement the recommendations of the 2016 organisational review. Lizzie was tirelessly committed to BEACON and the people we seek to serve. Before leaving, she raised £800 sponsorship for running the Hackney Half Marathon, which was donated to the Hosting Project to support destitute asylum seekers.

After 8 years, Eithne Dodwell is retiring from the Board of Trustees. During this time, Eithne has been Chair of McKenzie Friends, contributing significantly to its development. She has trained and supported a growing number of dedicated and competent volunteers. The Board has benefited greatly from her understanding of the asylum system and her stand for justice. We will miss her! But we're pleased she will continue to be involved with McKenzie Friends.

Hello!

In July, we welcomed Katy Armitstead, our new Team Leader. BEACON has gained an experienced and enthusiastic worker, who is already drawing together our diverse projects and addressing our funding strategy.

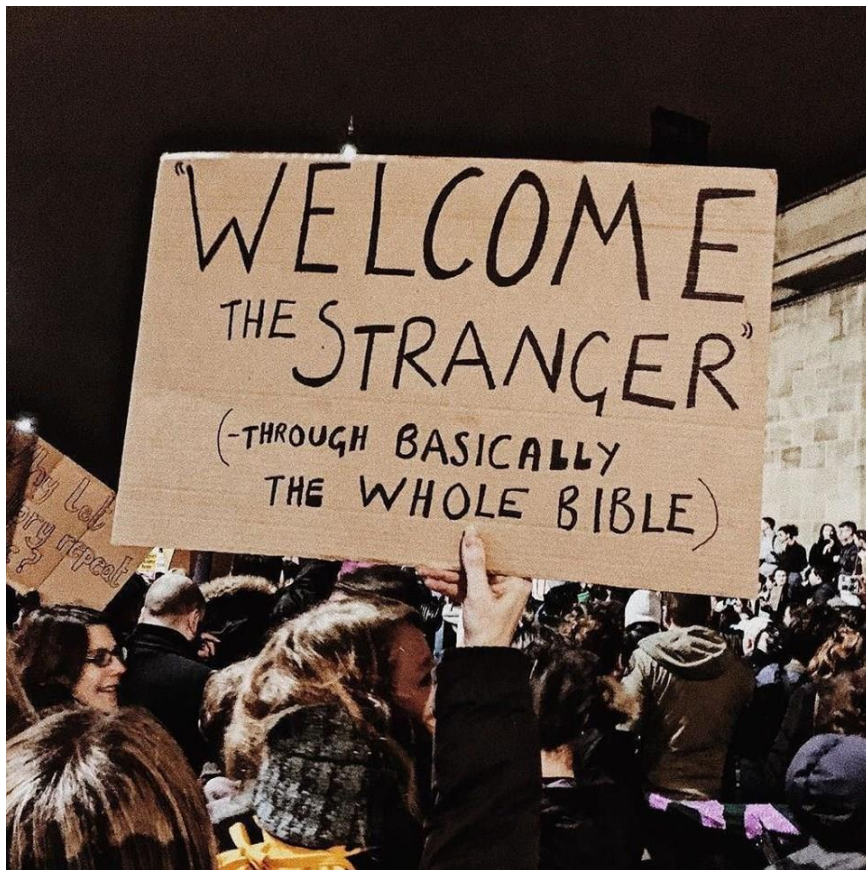
Alice Garrod took up the new post of CHAT Phoenix House Coordinator. We're delighted that Alice's skills are being put to good effect, building up and expanding the team of volunteers offering hospitality at Phoenix House.

Soon we hope to welcome a McKenzie Friends Coordinator, thus completing the team that was recommended in our review.

As you can imagine, our little office is now bursting at the seams. We are so pleased that during 2018 we will move, with Touchstone, into a new home with exciting new possibilities! As Bradford is home to over 800 asylum seekers, BEACON's work will be in demand for the foreseeable future.

I'd like to say an enormous thank you to our 60+ volunteers and all who have supported BEACON over the past year: praying for us, raising awareness of asylum seekers and refugees, raising money, walking for justice, opening your homes, pouring cups of tea, engaging in conversation, gathering information and accompanying people to the courts. And to the Board of Trustees: thank you for all your support through this first year and I look forward to another year of 'welcoming the stranger'.

Sarah Jemison (Chair of Trustees)



BEACON Team Leader report

I was thrilled to be appointed as Team Leader of BEACON in summer 2017. My predecessor, Lizzie Lowenstein, left BEACON in a strong position and paved the way for a smooth transition for me. Thank you Lizzie!

Having worked and volunteered with asylum seekers for some time, I have always admired the work of BEACON. My aim now is to see BEACON continue to thrive in reaching out to those who desperately need our support, and to develop our work to continuously meet the needs of those we serve. I'm confident we can continue to do this, with such a fantastic team of trustees, staff, volunteers and supporters working together to make it happen.

I've had a relatively busy first few months in post - getting ready for our AGM, recruiting a McKenzie Friends Coordinator, and outlining a funding strategy to name just a few things, as well as meeting lots of amazing and dedicated people!

Katy Armitstead (Team Leader)



The Hosting Project Report:

- **5 guests accommodated** for a total of more than **1,250 nights**
- **5 longer-term host households**, supported by **2 relief host households**
- Guests came from: **Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia and Sudan**

The statistics above are pretty remarkable but do not tell of the generosity and kindness of our hosts, or of the difficulties and frustrations faced by our guests, as they struggle to gather the evidence needed to submit fresh asylum claims – or of their battles with Home Office bureaucracy when they do.

There is an urgent need to develop the project. Having set up and coordinated the Hosting Project in a part-time, voluntary capacity for many years, I do not have the time and capacity to expand the project alongside other demanding work roles and so we are currently looking for someone able to commit to 5-10 hours/week on a flexible basis. If you know of anyone suitable who might be interested, please direct them to our <https://beaconbradford.org/can-support-beacons-hosting-project/> for further information. We would love to hear from you!

Will Sutcliffe (Hosting Coordinator)

*'I would like to thank you for all your help over the past two years
when I was homeless.*

I could never pass that day of hard time without you.

I will never forget BEACON wherever I go. God bless you.'

(Individual supported by BEACON)



McKenzie Friends report

The most exciting developments this year for McKenzie Friends have been the distribution, and use for training, of our McKenzie Friends Volunteer Handbook, and the steps taken towards appointing our designated McKenzie Friends Coordinator, who will hopefully be in post by the end of the year.

We have had generous support in compiling the handbook from Right to Remain, and from the legal representative Phill Wilcox. Phill has helped us understand more about the crucial difference between legal advice, which we cannot as yet offer, and legal support, which is our core activity. Right to Remain's online Toolkit remains an invaluable reference source for anyone wanting to get to grips with the asylum system in the UK.

As I say every year, our asylum system continues to suffer from delays, and often mistakes, stemming in part from counter-productive austerity matters. The ongoing delays mean that we have had to close several times to new referrals. We increasingly find ourselves supporting clients who have very little documentary evidence to support their claims in coming to terms with the implications of being 'Appeal Rights Exhausted'. Warlords, rebel militias, corrupt officials to name a few, do not leave arrest warrants, or medical reports of the effects of their activities. Underground protest movements do not issue membership cards. It is very difficult for their victims to provide the evidence demanded by the tribunals. Supporting these victims is valuable work, but emotionally very demanding. Several times recently, referrals that seemed to be straightforward requests to accompany a client to a hearing have turned out to be time-consuming Pandora's boxes. We continue to be inspired by the courage, optimism and strength of many of our clients in the face of the many obstacles that make it so difficult for them to build a new life for themselves and become meaningful contributors to our society. We are also indebted to our volunteers, who work tirelessly to seek justice for those we support.

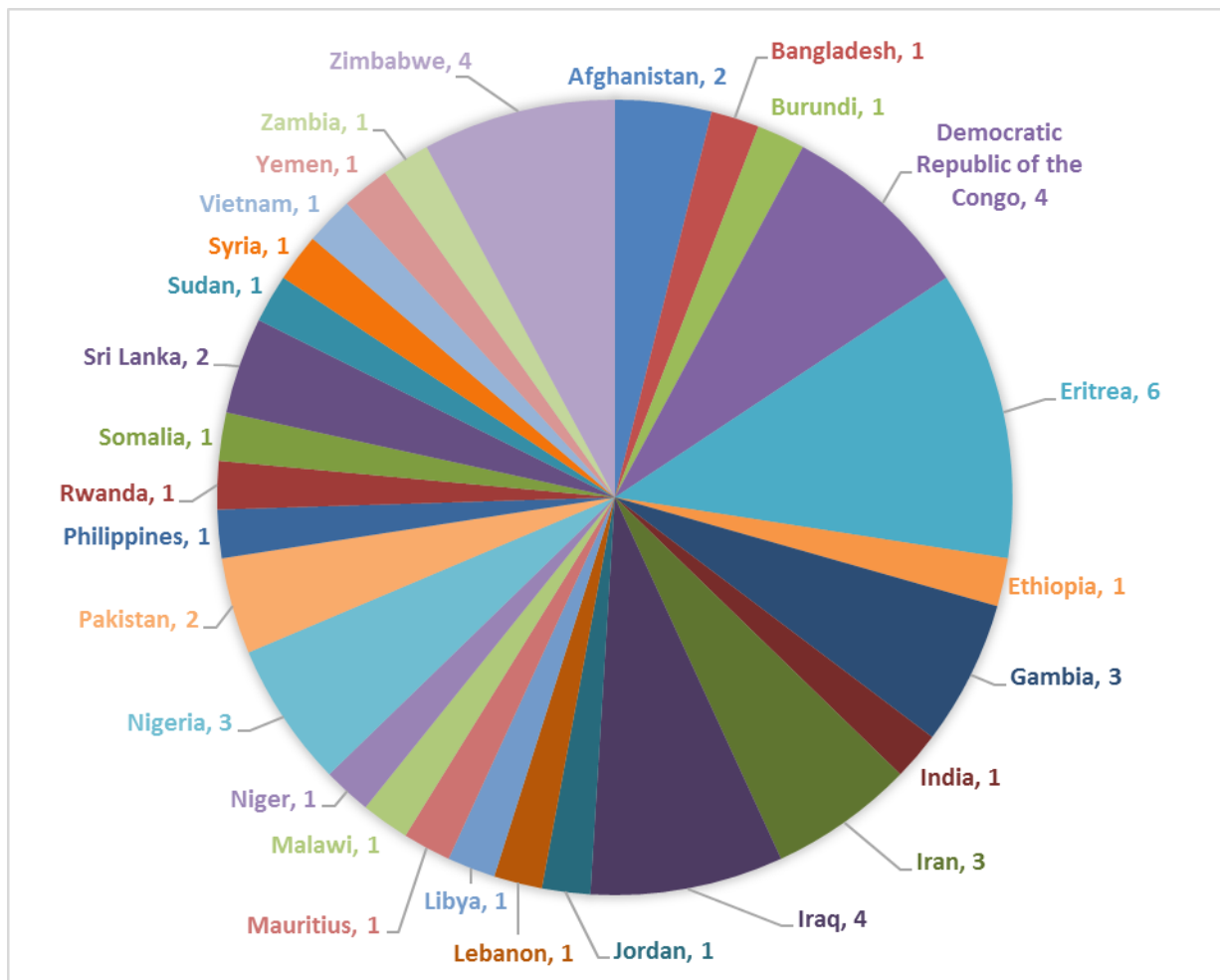
Eithne Dodwell (Chair of McKenzie Friends)

At 30th September 2017
we had:

- **28** open cases
- **29** new referrals
- **23** cases carried over from last year
- **28** different countries

Known outcomes for our
clients are as follows:

- **5** were granted leave to remain
- **17** found a solicitor or other legal support
- **28** cases are carrying over into next year



In the current climate, with increasing numbers of asylum seekers facing the legal system without legal representation, the need for the work of McKenzie Friends becomes ever more valuable. Even in cases where a client has legal representation, the amount of time lawyers can spend on each case is very limited. A McKenzie Friend may well spend longer with a client than a lawyer ever can, and spend valuable time in helping them prepare for the legal process. In a case where a client has a lawyer, this work is invaluable in supporting that representative and making best use of time.

I have really enjoyed working with BEACON's McKenzie Friends project and believe that this is both valuable and important work. I have been very impressed by the commitment shown by McKenzie Friends' in assisting vulnerable people access the legal process with support and dignity.

(Phill Wilcox, Manuel Bravo immigration caseworker)

CHAT Phoenix House Report

CHAT Phoenix House underwent a structural change in April this year as I took on the new role of Project Coordinator. While Heather, already giving so much time in her position as trustee, had been doing an excellent job ensuring that everything continued to run smoothly at Phoenix House, it was time for the BEACON staff team to grow and so I was welcomed as the newest addition, soon to be followed by our new Team Leader, Katy.



Since then, it has been a true pleasure becoming part of the CHAT project and BEACON as a whole. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know such a dedicated and kind team of volunteers so committed to supporting those seeking sanctuary here. By offering their time and compassion to ensure a brief moment of welcome during an otherwise distressing experience, they graciously remind those waiting for their asylum hearings that their humanity is valued here and now.

A huge thank you must be said to the CHAT volunteers for their dedication to the project, including those who have been with us since the beginning and those who have joined us throughout this year. In total, we have spoken to 342 asylum seekers as well as welcomed many other people attending Phoenix House for other reasons, including family reunion cases and spouse visa appeals. The people we've spoken to have originated from over 40 different countries and have travelled on the day from as far as Leicester, Newcastle and Blackpool. Our volunteers have not only provided them with a hot drink but have also been able to signpost those in need to relevant services in the areas from which they have travelled.

We are often told that our presence at the tribunal centre makes a considerable difference to the atmosphere in the waiting room, and the grateful comments and smiles we receive from appellants, their companions, support workers and Phoenix House staff reassure us that our service continues to be appreciated by many.

Alice Garrod (CHAT Phoenix House Coordinator)

Since 1st October 2016, we have been on **112** mornings and managed to serve **2146** hot drinks, a **30%** increase on last year!

The service is free to all, although some choose to donate, for which we are very grateful. In the past year, we have received **£759.44** in donations.

Thank you!

"It's wonderful to be able to support people at such an anxiety-filled time. The people we meet are inspiring and there is never a day at Phoenix House without an interesting conversation."

(CHAT Phoenix House volunteer)

CHAT English Club report



CHAT English Club has continued to develop in 2016-2017. Students are welcomed into a safe, supportive, friendly environment each week, to converse with skilled volunteers and with each other.

We usually open with a relaxed chat and refreshments, before moving on to the theme of the day. We aim to enable students to become more confident in speaking English, improving fluency and accuracy, and endeavour to work with wherever a person's starting point is. We often have complete beginners, through to those with a reasonably good command of English.

One of our strongest students has now transitioned into a volunteering capacity. Having gained Leave to Remain and now working in two jobs, he still comes to CHAT on his morning off and does a fine job supporting other learners. The whole team of volunteers goes from strength to strength, responding with skill, agility and sensitivity to the very wide range of students' language needs and to the ever-changing group of attendees.

When attendance in the group is steady, we have organised several trips in order to broaden students' awareness of pleasant spots to visit locally – chatting and learning in English as we go. This year, there have been visits to Saltaire, local parks, an art gallery and to Bradford cathedral. We also recently had an evening trip to Theatre in the Mill, to see a play called 'Free to Stay', which led to lively discussion afterwards. The new theatre director there had kindly agreed to offer complementary tickets, in order to encourage a new audience. Students ate together at a local restaurant beforehand; a rare treat for many, having the opportunity to share this social experience.

Understandably, our student body is a changeable one, and we expect that people will come and go because of uncertainty and change in their personal circumstances. We are constantly seeking students' opinions and ideas for the content of CHAT sessions and respond to requests for a particular focus. Student requests have focused on understanding directions, using the phone, and going to the doctor. More formally collated feedback from students has been invariably positive. We have a lot of laughs, and students also say they appreciate the way we are able to work in small groups each with a volunteer, so they have plenty of opportunity to learn from small mistakes, and to practise in a safe, comfortable setting.

Mandy Oates (CHAT English Club Coordinator)



In the last year, we have registered **58 students** from **18 different countries**. Most of our students have originated from **Iran (27%)**, followed by **Sudan, Eritrea, DCR and Iraq**. Most are asylum seekers. **Approximately 25% have Leave to Remain, or gain this while registered with us. 10% are EU nationals.**



Treasurer's report

At the time of the finalisation of last year's accounts, we had just put into place the necessary changes to our financial processes.

A year on, I am happy to report that our new in-house team, our external accountants and our Treasurer are working well together and operate an effective financial system.

We have a new accounting system as well as budgeting and financial reporting procedures. This coupled with our target of a level of reserves approximately equal to one year's expenditure means that we have a solid base from which to press forward to consolidate and expand our services to the benefit of this vulnerable section of society.

Thanks to all who continue to support us, both financially and in many other ways.

Roland Clark (Treasurer)



Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Trustees' report for the year ended 30 September 2017

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors

The trustees during the financial year and up to and including the date the report was approved were:

Name	Position	Dates
Rita Armitage	Chair	to 29/11/2016
Sarah Jemison	Vice-Chair	
Roland Clark	Treasurer	
Barbara Clarke	Secretary	
Heather Grinter	Trustee	
Jackie Coutts	Trustee	to 29/11/2016
Joe Batt	Trustee	to 29/11/2016
Eithne Dodwell	Trustee	
Will Sutcliffe	Trustee	
Awais Mughal	Trustee	to 29/11/2016
Suzanne Veron-Yorke	Trustee	from 29/11/16 to 1/3/17

Charity number

The charity was registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, number 1119463, on 01 June 2007.

Registered and principal address

c/o Touchstone
32 Merton Road
Bradford
BD7 1RE

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc
Nine Brindleyplace
Birmingham
B1 2HB

Independent examiner

Dave Collins

West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service

Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Structure, governance and management

The charity is governed by a constitution adopted on 14 November 2006.

Method of recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees of the charity are appointed by the members at the AGM.

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 30 September 2017

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects

- a) The relief of financial hardship among those seeking asylum in the UK or who are refugees who reside in the Bradford Metropolitan District..
- b) To advance the education of the public in general about the issues relating to refugees and those seeking asylum.

The charity's main activities

BEACON was set up out of a shared concern to address the needs and concerns of the many asylum seekers in Bradford. BEACON volunteers provide moral and informed support for asylum seekers through the BEACON projects. BEACON projects consist of McKenzie Friends, Chat, Hosting and Campaigning.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our Trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular the prevention and relief of poverty.

Achievements and performance

Please see detailed report

Financial review

The net receipts (before transfers) for the year were £11,648, including net receipts of £16,877 on unrestricted funds and net payments of £5,229 on restricted funds.

Reserves policy

The charity's free cash reserves at the year end were £36,432.

BEACON depends on grants and donations to sustain its activities. We run the risk of closure if funding difficulties were to happen, if there were a temporary shortfall in income, or an unforeseen rise in spending requirements and costs. To prevent immediate closure in these instances, the Trustees have agreed to keep a certain level of financial reserves to ensure that main operations can continue until alternative provision can be made.

The main concerns are to ensure:

- that service users (particularly our hosted asylum seekers) are supported to move on to other services in a timely and sympathetic manner
- an ability to develop new projects and grasp new opportunities should they arise.
- that staff can continue working to develop another funding stream to continue the work of BEACON
- or to provide staff with redundancy payments where applicable

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2017, which are set out on pages 5 to

Respective responsibilities of the trustees and the examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act, follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act and state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and

to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

D. Collins

Name: Dave Collins

Date:

30/11/2017

West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service

Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Receipts and payments account

for the year ended 30 September 2017

	Notes	2017 Unrestricted funds £	2017 Restricted funds £	2017 Total funds £	2016 Total funds £
Receipts					
Grants - Trusts	(2)	19,503	-	19,503	17,100
Donations - Churches		8,239	-	8,239	6,668
Donations - Individuals		5,296	8,660	13,956	5,512
Donations - Other		6,186	379	6,565	2,040
Sponsored walk		1,341	-	1,341	716
Total receipts		40,565	9,039	49,604	32,036
Payments					
Salaries	(3)	12,902	7,273	20,175	18,840
Rent		5,922	1,627	7,549	7,442
Insurance		130	520	650	920
Office costs (including phone and postage)		1,481	612	2,093	-
Publicity and fundraising (including printing)		1,090	-	1,090	1,125
Training		250	-	250	-
Subscriptions		666	-	666	-
Donations		110	-	110	-
Hosting		-	3,734	3,734	3,718
Other expenses		1,137	502	1,639	6,473
Total payments		23,688	14,268	37,956	38,518
Net receipts / (payments)		16,877	(5,229)	11,648	(6,482)
Transfers between funds		(8,063)	8,063	-	-
Cash fund balances brought forward		27,618	-	27,618	34,100
Cash fund balances carried forward	(4)	36,432	2,834	39,266	27,618

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Statement of assets and liabilities

as at 30 September 2017

	2017	2017	2017	2016
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cash funds				
Cash at bank	30,656	2,834	33,490	23,494
Cash at bank - Bradford CPA	5,743	-	5,743	4,079
Cash in hand	33	-	33	45
Total cash funds	36,432	2,834	39,266	27,618

Liabilities

Grants and donations received in advance
Independent examination

£

300

300

Approval of the accounts

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees on

Date: 28.11.2017

Signed:  (Trustee)

Name: SARAH ANN JEHISON

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended 30 September 2017

1 Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The trustees have taken advantage of section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 and have prepared the accounts on a receipts and payments basis.

There has been no change to the accounting policies since last year.

No changes have been made to the accounts for previous years.

Taxation

As a registered charity the organisation benefits from rates relief and is generally exempt from income tax and capital gains tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

2 Grants - Trusts

	2017	2017	2017	2016
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	funds	funds	funds	funds
	£	£	£	£
Lyndal Tree Foundation	6,000	-	6,000	6,000
Bradford Diocesan Council for Social Aid	3,000	-	3,000	-
GM Charitable Trust	5,503	-	5,503	-
Brelms Trust	-	-	-	3,000
Souter Trust	-	-	-	3,000
West Yorkshire Methodist District	5,000	-	5,000	5,000
Yorkshire Dales Millenium Trust (CHAT)	-	-	-	100
	<u>19,503</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,503</u>	<u>17,100</u>

3 Salaries

	2017
	£
Gross salaries	19,470
Social security costs	574
Pensions	53
Employers NI allowance	(574)
Payroll fees	652
	<u>20,175</u>

4 Restricted funds

	Balance b/f	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Balance c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
CHAT English	-	-	3,861	3,861	-
CHAT Phoenix	-	816	1,649	833	-
Hosting	-	992	4,361	3,369	-
McKenzie Friends	-	7,231	4,397	-	2,834
	<u>-</u>	<u>9,039</u>	<u>14,268</u>	<u>8,063</u>	<u>2,834</u>

Fund name**Purpose of restriction**

CHAT English	For English classes and trips
CHAT Phoenix	To provide support to asylum seekers at Phoenix House
Hosting	To host asylum seekers at risk of being homeless
McKenzie Friends	To support asylum seekers facing the legal system alone

The transfers are for the use of unrestricted funds on the projects

5 Trustee expenses

No trustee received any expenses during this year or the previous year.

6 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions during this year or the previous year.



Beacon32

@BEACON_32

www.beaconbradford.org