

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Charity number 1119463

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2023



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COMMUNITY ACCOUNTING
WEST YORKSHIRE

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2023

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Prepared by West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Trustees' report for the year ended 30 September 2023

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
Sarah Jemison	Chair	
Heather Grinter	Vice Chair	
Martin Lewis	Treasurer	Appointed 24 January 2023
Barbara Clarke	Secretary	Resigned 24 January 2023
William Sutcliffe		
Mary Brooks		
Edward Sterling		
Lisa Ceesay		Appointed 12 September 2023
Charity number	1119463	Registered in England and Wales
Registered and principal address	Bankers	
c/o Touchstone	Unity Trust Bank plc	
4 Easby Road	Nine Brindleyplace	
Bradford	Birmingham	
BD7 1QX	B1 2HB	

Independent examiner

Rhys North ACA

West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Structure, governance and management

The charity is governed by a constitution adopted on 14 November 2006 as amended on 8 October 2019 and 28 January 2020.

Method of recruitment and appointment of trustees

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

The charity's objects

The relief of hardship among those seeking asylum in the UK or who are refugees who reside in the Bradford Metropolitan District and surrounding areas.

To advance the education of the public in general about the issues relating to refugees and those seeking asylum.

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 30 September 2023

The charity's main activities

All of BEACON's activities are underpinned by our vision that the Bradford district becomes a hospitable community where people seeking asylum and refugees are welcome, enjoy access to justice and fair treatment and are supported on their journey to independence and integration. We have enacted this primarily through our McKenzie Friends, CHAT and Hosting projects

McKenzie Friends support people seeking asylum through the legal system towards gaining sanctuary and refugee status; volunteers provide legal support and advocacy to navigate the complexities of the asylum system, including facilitating access to legal advice and accompanying unrepresented asylum seekers to appeal hearings.

CHAT hold weekly English conversation classes and activities group open to non-English speakers in the local community, for all abilities. The group provides a friendly and welcoming environment in which to improve English, form social connections, enhance wellbeing and enjoy a variety of additional activities from gardening, to theatre trips and cooking classes.

The Hosting project, which was suspended in July 2023, provided people who were seeking asylum accommodation in volunteer households; a weekly allowance to meet basic needs; and a travel pass to access local services and activities in order to prevent destitution.

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. In line with our charitable purposes:

1) Our work has been successful in relieving hardship among those seeking asylum and refugees who reside in the Bradford Metropolitan District and surrounding areas. Our three projects (McKenzie Friends, Hosting and CHAT) are dependent on a wide range of committed volunteers who enable us to deliver a high quality service. We have continued to recruit and train new volunteers thus increasing our capacity to support more people seeking asylum as they deal with the many challenges they face. This includes providing information, signposting, and support to access legal advice (McKenzie Friends), the relief of destitution and meeting of basic needs including food and money (Hosting Project) and the opportunity to improve English language skills, take part in volunteering activities and establish social networks leading to a reduction in isolation increased well-being and empowerment among those seeking asylum. (CHAT project).

In addition to the benefits to the people we have supported and the associated benefits gained by our volunteers, our work has a wider public benefit in enhancing social cohesion and opportunities for integration for people seeking asylum. Thus reducing the strain on other community services which are not as well placed to meet the unique needs of people seeking asylum.

2) We have furthered our objective to advance the education of the public in general about the issues relating to refugees and people seeking asylum.

We are members of the Together with Refugees and Hands Up for our Health coalitions, whose aims are to better educate the public and counter the effects of the 'hostile environment'. We have continued to support and spread awareness of the 'Lift the Ban' coalition on the right to work for those seeking asylum. Our annual sponsored walk during Refugee Week and presence at various local events, including the Saltaire Peace and Crafts Fair provide opportunities to increase information amongst the public. We have given presentations to local groups to help spread awareness of the increasingly challenging needs of people seeking asylum.

The public benefit arising from these activities is the increase in information given to the public which in turn enhances support for, and consideration of, the difficulties faced by the individuals we support, thus facilitating people to play a role in society as informed citizens, who are aware of humanitarian concerns affecting people seeking asylum.

The charity trustees have considered the major risks to which the charity is exposed and have a plan to manage identified risks.

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 30 September 2023

Achievements and performance

BEACON has continued to make a crucial difference to the lives of people seeking asylum and refugees in the Bradford district this year. In total, during the year ending 30th September 2023, we supported 169 people. The support we provided was thanks to the hard work of our small staff team (Team Leader, Finance and Administration Assistant, McKenzie Friends Coordinator, Volunteer Hosting Coordinator [until July 2023] and CHAT Coordinator) and our faithful team of trustees and volunteers. Our main achievements this year are summarised below.

During the year, our McKenzie Friends volunteers have supported 82 people whose countries of origin have mainly been from Iraq, Iran, Ethiopia, Sudan and Pakistan. In many instances the support given by McKenzie Friends involved signposting to other organisations to help with their issues or responding to one-off ad hoc enquiries. However, during the year, 17 people were supported to find legal representation of whom eight have made fresh application submissions and nine were granted Leave to Remain. At the year-end (September 30th 2023) we have 47 open cases being supported by 11 volunteers.

The CHAT project grew from strength to strength during the year. In addition to the weekly conversation classes held at our Bradford offices, we undertook a number of visits to local municipal facilities and landmarks including museums and galleries, a library, a community farm, and to Cartwright Hall, Cliffe Castle Museum and the Saltaire Mills. Eighty-five people from 22 different nations benefitted from the CHAT group activities during the year.

Over the 15 years that the Hosting project was running, 75 asylum seekers were hosted by our volunteer households. However, due to the record backlog in Home Office decision making on asylum applications and the closure of the key local destitution drop-in for people seeking asylum, from which we received the majority of our referrals over the years, the number of referrals we received reduced considerably. Sadly, our long standing volunteer Hosting project co-ordinator resigned and we had insufficient funding to appoint a part-time paid co-ordinator. At the start of the year, we were hosting two people, and the decision was taken to suspend the project when the last of these two no longer needed hosting support. That occurred in July 2023.

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion was progressed. We have continued to diversify our volunteer base. We have continued to involve people with lived experience in the recruitment and selection of new staff members. Following a full review of skills and diversity within our board of trustees, we have successfully recruited a new trustee with lived experience of the asylum system and treasurer. A potential trustee is well advanced through the recruitment process. All will strengthen our trustee board, helping us to better meet the needs of those seeking asylum in the UK.

Our relationships with partner agencies in Bradford remain strong and have enabled us to work together to support those who need our help. We have played an active role in the Destitution Concern Bradford network as it seeks ways to better meet the needs of the increasing numbers of people seeking sanctuary arriving in Bradford. A key current focus is the creation of a multi-agency drop in to replace the one run by Red Cross that closed during the Covid lockdowns.

With Right to Remain, we co-hosted a celebratory event marking the 10th Anniversary of 'The Tool Kit'. BEACON contributed to the formation of this resource providing people seeking sanctuary with knowledge and understanding of the process.

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 30 September 2023

Financial review

The net payments for the year were £18,549, including net payments of £19,733 on unrestricted funds and net receipts of £1,184 on restricted funds.

Reserves policy

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 guests) 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

The ideal amount of reserves has been set as an amount equivalent to between 6 and 12 months budgeted running costs, as this is deemed an appropriate period of time to achieve the above aims.

Anticipated expenditure is kept under constant review throughout the year and cash flow projections are amended to reflect any changes. Target reserve levels are adjusted accordingly.

At the end of the year our budgeted future running costs for the 2023/2024 financial year are £83,102. The target reserves range is therefore between £41,551 and £83,102.

The charity's free reserves, excluding fixed assets, at the year end are £41,895. This level of reserves sits within our target range.

Approved by the board of trustees on 9/1/2024

Martin Lewis (Trustee)

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

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

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2023, which are set out on pages 7 to 10.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity 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 as carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. 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 Charities Act;
- 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.

Rhys North ACA

22/1/2024

West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)
Receipts and payments account
for the year ended 30 September 2023

	Notes	2023	2023	2023	2022
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		funds	funds	funds	funds
		£	£	£	£
Receipts					
Grants	(2)	15,000	10,000	25,000	20,000
Donations - Faith Groups		4,505	-	4,505	4,887
Donations - Individuals		4,933	705	5,638	10,541
Donations - Other		2,084	-	2,084	2,098
Sponsored walk		1,139	-	1,139	876
Total receipts		<u>27,661</u>	<u>10,705</u>	<u>38,366</u>	<u>38,402</u>
Payments					
Salaries NI and pensions		34,128	8,259	42,387	39,651
Payroll charges		688	-	688	763
Rent		6,842	-	6,842	6,603
Insurance		591	-	591	793
Office costs		985	-	985	796
Publicity and fundraising		216	-	216	24
Training		105	-	105	655
Subscriptions		456	-	456	397
Project costs		1,457	1,262	2,719	9,389
IT costs		415	-	415	586
Volunteer expenses		199	-	199	298
Other expenses		165	-	165	5
Governance costs		727	-	727	317
Independent examination		420	-	420	390
Total payments		<u>47,394</u>	<u>9,521</u>	<u>56,915</u>	<u>60,667</u>
Net receipts / (payments)		<u>(19,733)</u>	<u>1,184</u>	<u>(18,549)</u>	<u>(22,265)</u>
Fund balances brought forward		<u>61,728</u>	<u>6,346</u>	<u>68,074</u>	<u>90,339</u>
Fund balances carried forward	(3)	<u>41,995</u>	<u>7,530</u>	<u>49,525</u>	<u>68,074</u>

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)
Statement of assets and liabilities
as at 30 September 2023

	2023	2023	2023	2022
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cash funds				
Cash at bank	31,714	7,530	39,244	56,879
Cash at bank - Bradford CPA	10,081	-	10,081	11,058
Cash in hand	200	-	200	137
Total cash funds	<u>41,995</u>	<u>7,530</u>	<u>49,525</u>	<u>68,074</u>

Debtors and prepayments

	2023
	£
Other debtors - Gift Aid	250
	<u>250</u>

Liabilities

	2023
	£
Accruals Independent examination	726
	<u>726</u>

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees on 9/1/2024

Martin Lewis (Trustee)

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended 30 September 2023

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 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.

Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern (BEACON)
Notes to the accounts continued
for the year ended 30 September 2023

2 Grants	2023	2023	2023	2022
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Society of the Holy Child Jesus (SHCJ)	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
The Methodist Church Yorkshire West District	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
The Lyndal Tree Foundation	5,000	-	5,000	
	<u>15,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>

3 Restricted funds	Balance b/f	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Balance c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
Society of the Holy Child Jesus	5,789	10,000	8,259	-	7,530
Hosting	557	705	1,262	-	-
	<u>6,346</u>	<u>10,705</u>	<u>9,521</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,530</u>

Fund name

Purpose of restriction

Society of the Holy Child Jesus To support the salary costs of the Team Leader and Finance & Administration Assistant.

Hosting To host people seeking asylum who are destitute.

4 Related party transactions

Donations from trustees and related parties

The total aggregate value of unconditional donations to the charity from the trustees or related parties was £180 (2022: £180).

Trustee expenses

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

Trustee remuneration and benefits

No trustee received any remuneration or benefit during this or the previous year.