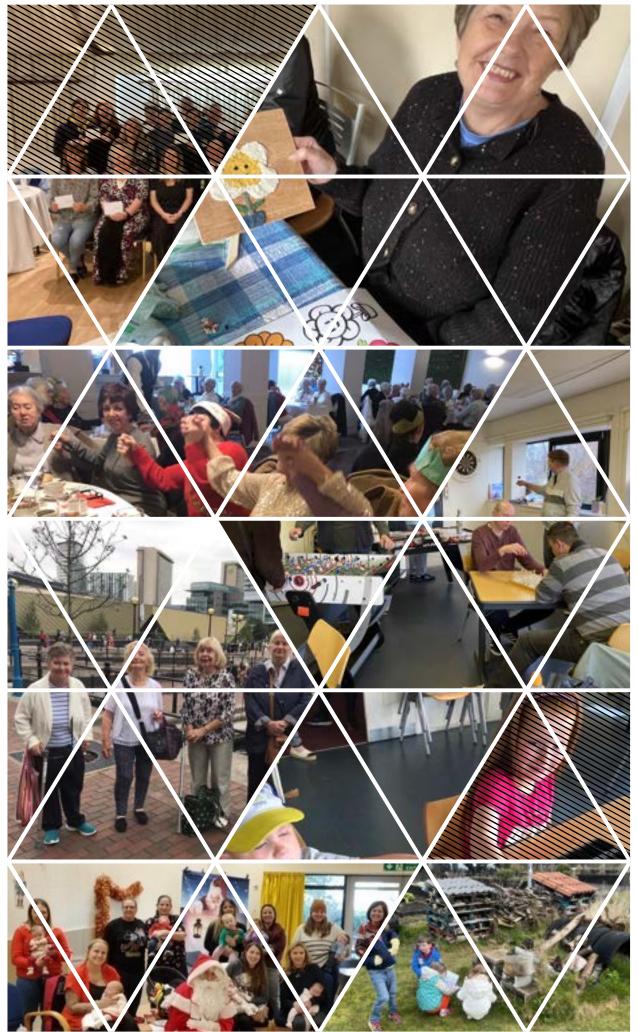


Improving Lives Promoting Health



Netherton Feelgood Factory ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

Charity Number - 1074508 | Company Limited by Guarantee - 3614799



Chief Executive's Introduction

2002-3 was a very difficult year in many ways, yet one that (as is often the case) also saw the first shoots of a brighter future.

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Financially we really struggled which in its turn meant that we struggled in terms of staff on the ground. Work to bring in funds was constantly delayed for a variety of reasons which meant we were existing month to month for a lot of the time. This was all exacerbated by rising costs, particularly in terms of energy.

We got through with the hard work of staff and volunteers who just kept going despite the issues.

Yet as I said, during this difficult time we began to see green shoots coming through. The pressure to "do something" about the environment enabled us to see a new avenue of work helping local people make small changes that will help the planet. We are now, with the Community Garden, a Green Community Hub, funded by the National Lottery for five years to develop a resource for the local area that will help people's pockets, health and the world in which they live.

The pressures of the cost of living crisis also really led to a push for the work of the Community Lounge and our community services, particularly among families and children. Over the last year we have developed many new important partnerships including with the LFC Foundation, Cash for Kids and Dunhelm. With these, and existing partners, we have been able to meet practical needs in a way that we did not think possible.

So the past year was difficult but we see the way forward now more clearly. There is still a lot of work to do but the Feelgood Factory is ready for it.

Once again, thank you to the trustees, staff and volunteers for your hard work and support.

STAFF 2022-2023

Sandra Duncan—Chief Executive Hayley Beer—Business Manager Andrea Sanderson—Healthy Living Services Manager Carol Miles—Breastfeeding Support Sefton Co-ordinator Kate Phillips—Breastfeeding Support Sefton Assistant (on long-term leave) Kirsty McCormick—Breastfeeding Support Sefton Aassistant Malcolm Bannon—Specialist Food Mentor David Martin-Corkill—Specialist Mental Health Mentor Clare Browne—Specialist Community Mentor Ann Anirah—Health and Wellbeing Mentor Martin Brecknock—Project Co-ordinator, Netherton Community Hub Eddy Murphy—Mow and Grow Worker Carol Robinson— Business Support Worker Dawn Brown—Community Support Worker





Volunteering has been a really positive experience for me. I've loved helping mums access the support and help they've needed. I started volunteering due to lack of support available and I wanted to help be part of the team that made that support available. I've been helping online in Facebook groups, face to face groups and through ABA study. Through the ABA study I have met pregnant mums and kept in touch with them through text to help support them at an important time. It's been wonderful being that point of contact and I feel I've helped many women keep going and help them fight for the support they deserve.

Tracy Wade Breastfeeeding Ambassador

Breastfeeding Support Sefton

Helping Mothers and Babies

It is recognised that breastfeeding has beneficial effects for mother and baby. According to the NHS breastfeeding can help to reduce a baby's risk of infections, diarrhoea and vomiting, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), obesity and cardiovascular disease in adulthood. For this reason Breastfeeding Support Sefton aims to support mothers who wish to breastfeed and to educate them on the benefits of breastfeeding.

Led by the co-ordinator, Carol Miles,, and her assistant, Kirsty McCormick (Kate Phillips is on long-term leave), most members of the team are volunteers who are trained and support mothers through groups and via the telephone and Facebook.

Carol says of the project:

I believe that breastfeeding is a fundamental right of every mother and baby, and it is our responsibility as a society to support them in every way possible.

As a breastfeeding coordinator, I have had the privilege of witnessing the transformative power of breastfeeding first hand. It has the ability to improve the health and well-being of both mother and baby and to create a strong and unbreakable bond between them.

My role as a coordinator involves providing support, guidance, and education to mothers who are breastfeeding or wish to breastfeed.

I work closely with Infant Feeding leads and other healthcare professionals, to create a supportive environment that encourages and promotes breastfeeding. I also work with mothers to overcome any challenges they may face during their breastfeeding journey, such as latching



difficulties, low milk supply, or other issues.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my job is seeing the positive impact that breastfeeding has on mothers and babies. I have witnessed the joy and satisfaction on a mother's face when she successfully breastfeeds her baby for the first time, and I have seen the health benefits that breastfeeding can provide to both mother and baby.



My role also includes working alongside some amazing women "our Ambassador's"

Breastfeeding support is vital for new mothers, and working with Ambassadors who are passionate about this cause is an incredibly rewarding experience.

Our Breastfeeding ambassadors are an essential part of the breastfeeding support service, providing invaluable assistance, education, and encouragement to mothers who are navigating the challenges of breastfeeding. Their selflessness, dedication, and passion for supporting mothers and babies are truly remarkable and deserving of celebration.

Our Breastfeeding ambassadors are experienced mothers who have breastfed their own children and are passionate about helping others. They are given training in open award breastfeeding support, which covers The Baby Friendly initiative.

Breastfeeding ambassadors offer support in a variety of settings,

including groups, online support, and some have signed up to be part of the ABA Study. They provide emotional support, practical advice, and education about the benefits of breastfeeding and help mothers overcome any Challenge's they may encounter.

The achievements of our breastfeeding ambassadors are numerous. They help mothers to achieve their breastfeeding goals, which can have a significant impact on the health and well-being of both mother and baby. They also promote breastfeeding as a cultural norm and help to reduce the stigma surrounding breastfeeding in public.

I would like to celebrate the achievements of our amazing breastfeeding ambassadors and express our gratitude for their tireless work in supporting mothers and babies. They are a vital part of the breastfeeding support offer, and their dedication and passion make a significant difference in the lives of countless families.

Fact File

Group Attendances—757

Phone Calls—265

1-1 support - 155

Private Messages on Facebook—587

Answered Social Media Posts-363



My name is Val Buxton and I volunteer at the Netherton Community Garden. I attend on Monday and Thursday and enjoy the outdoor space, meeting fellow volunteers and the satisfaction of the many jobs we do, whether its weeding, planting seeds in the polytunnel and the excitement seeing them grow and picking all the produce at various times of the year when they are ready.

I also enjoy making cakes, jams and even soups with some of the produce and volunteers enjoy them as well.

Netherton Community Garden

Helping Netherton Adapt for the Future

The Community Garden began to enter into an exciting new period of development as the year progressed. After a struggle for the last few years, when the money ran out and the future was unsure, this year saw the dawning of a new beginning.

At the end of summer 2022 we were approached by Natural England to do some pilot work around the idea of a Community Green Hub, which is an idea that is being rolled out around the country to support changes to improve the environment. Most people accept that there is a need to take action to prevent damage to the planet on which we live, but, practically speaking, this can cost money. Ordinary people often find that change can be expensive and difficult to understand. That is where Green Community Hubs come in. They are local projects, manned by local people, that aim to show and enable residents to make changes that will help them adopt environmentally friendly lifestyles at a pace and cost that is manageable.

Alongside this, such measures as are promoted will also be good for the pocket and health and will also bring communities together more.

A win-win all round.

Martin and the volunteers ran a two-week trial project for Natural England in March. This was a learning experience but the timing could have been better – March is not the best month for outdoor activities.

This did not matter though because we then received the news that we have gained a grant from the National Lottery to develop a Green





Starting Work on the Sensory Garden

Community Hub ourselves over the next five years.

The weather was an issue all through the year actually. We planned several events (including for the Jubilee) that should have been based in the garden but rain drove us into the Feelgood Factory instead. Young people were hardier though and our own children's groups and local schools have continued to use the garden for activities.

Despite the weather, Martin Brecknock and the volunteers have worked hard to set the foundation for the garden's next steps forward.

This has included the development of a sensory garden which will be a quiet area allowing some shelter from inclement weather as well as the opportunity to sit outside when it is fine. Martin says: "The Sensory Garden will help to bring people in from different groups and will improve mental health."

Thanks to the donation by Dowhigh Ltd of a second container, we are now able to offer a classroom area within the community garden so that groups can meet at all times of the year.

Martin has also been encouraging stakeholders to have a share in the garden, with Autism Initiative now developing three beds of their own and a polytunnel.

There are exciting times ahead for the Community Garden but, once again, a lot of the credit much go to the volunteers who have stuck with the project through the difficult times, worked hard and believed in its future.

Fact File

Volunteers – 12

Volunteer Hours - 202





My experience of the Man Cave is one of a safe place with lots of funny, friendly, beautiful people.

It helped me with my mental state. Ability to talk to people and to have fun. It also gives me a reason to go out of my comfort zone, which is my house. And to experience outside interests [such] as barbecues and barge trips. Generally getting into nature.

I have made a lot of friends going to the Man Cave.

A great social interaction. Lots of sound advice.

Allan



Feelgood Choices— Social Groups

Bringing people together in community.

Loneliness has a major detrimental impact on our health and wellbeing. The effect of loneliness and isolation on mortality is comparable to the impact of obesity, and has a similar influence as cigarette smoking. Loneliness puts people at greater risk of poorer mental health, including depression and is associated with more general practice contacts, emergency treatments, and hospital admissions.

For this reason the Feelgood Factory runs an increasing number of groups aimed at alleviating loneliness and isolation by bringing people together to enjoy the company of others.

The Good Afternoon Social Group (GAS) is run by Sandra Duncan, Ann Anirah and Lia Riozzi. This very lively group enjoys a menu of activities, socials and outings. During the year they have enjoyed a 1970s disco party, performed in a local history production and been on outings to Blists Hill Victorian Village and Salford Quays among many other things. The group loves getting dressed up in different outfits and many of them are very imaginative in creating characters to fit in with a theme. As Denise, one of the group members, likes to say "it is all about having fun!"

Lia is a volunteer who has supported GAS for a couple of years now. She feels it is not just about making tea and helping with bingo; "It is important to befriend group members, "she says. Lia adds, "It gives me a sense of self-worth and a feeling the I am giving something back to the community. I enjoy doing it."

All the GAS members are women (although they are more than willing to welcome men as well!) but the Man Cave is purely for men. This group, which is run by Martin Brecknock and Sam Chadwick, aims to provide a weekly club for men who are not socialising much in other venues. Man Cave has grown during the year and now the



Good Afternoon Social's '70s Party



Ladies Friendship Group—Christmas at the Park Hotel

Fact File

Members—58

Attendances—762

Number of Sessions—128

Timetable

Good Afternoon Social—Every Thursday from 1.45 p.m. until 3.15 p.m.

Ladies' Friendship Group—Every other Wednesday from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m.

Man Cave—Every Friday from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m.

members enjoy quizzes and games as well as the traditional darts and pool. Martin says, "They get very enthusiastic about the quizzes. [My wife] Faye, did a fundraiser to raise money to buy prizes for the quiz winners. These are all very practical to encourage members to look after themselves and improve their health, items such as soap, shampoo or even washing up liquid."

Man Cave also went on a day's outing on a barge up the Llangollen canal. More active developments are now in the pipeline due to the acquisition of a grant from Sport England.

The Ladies Friendship Group is co-ordinated by Carol Miles and aims to enable women to form friendships and arrange outings and activities among themselves as well as meeting for chat and cuppa (and often a nice selection of cakes) every fortnight in the Feelgood Factory.

The Ladies Friendship Group has always been aimed largely (although not exclusively) at women who are going through adjustments in life due to children leaving home or bereavement.

Carol says," The Ladies' Group has grown a lot during the years. The members have enjoyed many days out and they heel that it has helped their mental health.

"Members are in touch with one another on a daily basis using WhatsApp and they find that this provides emotional support."



I have lived in Netherton all my life and have always been interested in history. I have been coming to the History Class for over 10 years and I have learnt so much in the class about early civilisations, religion, medicine, politics, women rights and much more but it is our local history that interests me most....As the class ages are from 40 to 85 we all have many stories of our lives, our parents lives and grandparents lives we share.

On a personal note I suffered with my mental health all my life. Coming to the history class has given me something to look forward to every week. I have gained more confidence which has enabled me to join other classes like my walking group who I share my local history knowledge with. Since joining the history class I now feel part of the community and I don't feel so isolated.

Feelgood Choices— Interest Groups

Sharing interests together

Meeting with people can be easier if there are shared interests. Not everyone is comfortable in social groups so our interest groups provide ready-made topics for conversation and take the pressure off socialising. For this reason, the Feelgood Factory runs an expanding programme of interest groups to help people meet others who share similar passions.

The History Group is led by Sandra Duncan and Howard Parker. The group looks at a range of topics throughout the year which provide food for thought and discussion. During this period we looked at topics such as the Six Wives of Henry VIII, transport in Liverpool and the history of television.

Creative Writing is led by Sandra Duncan. The members explore different types of writing to fit in with their interests.. During the year they explored techniques for detective fiction and writing for children.

The Book Club is led by Ann Anirah and they enjoyed a series of different books during the year. Ann observes that the main thing is often that the books are different from the types that members would

normally choose for themselves. This expands their experience and provides talking points.

The Craft Group is facilitated by Helen Martin who uses her skills in crafting to teach a range of new techniques to members.

The Art Group is a new project led by Will





History Group visit to Erddig



Book Group meeting in the Community Garden

Taylor. This is not for budding Constables or Turners but for anyone with any levels of skills who may wish to enjoy this relaxing pastime.

The Music Group is also led by Will. This group has grown considerably during the year and now includes singers as well as musicians.

Knitting For Good is a group of knitters who meet together every week to have a cup of tea and a chat whilst the needles are busily producing items that are then donated to good causes. One of the group, Sue, says: "I look forward to my Monday afternoons to meet the ladies who I now consider to be my friends. It makes me feel really proud of myself for having the courage to get out and join a local knitting/crotchet group in my local community centre within the Feelgood Factory. It has helped me in many ways, built my confidence up, helped with my anxiety, and, of course, with my well-being in general. So pleased that I can help others whether its the ladies who are all here for the same reason as myself, or local organisations in something that I have loved doing since I was a young child, especially now that I have lost my best friend, my husband."

Rubbish Art is another new programme run by Martin Brecknock. Picking up the theme of re-using rather than throwing away, this group uses all kinds of discarded items to produce crafty items. As one of the group members, Pauline, says: "The works may not be the best but it is strangely relaxing creating something from rubbish!"

The interest groups are frequently led by our brilliant volunteers who come up with ideas themselves and use their own skills to teach others.

Fact File

Members-73

Attendances—786

Number of Sessions—264





Community Services

Supporting Local People

The Personal View

Sometimes helping people can take a significant period time. A mother approached us for a food bank voucher. She had fled from domestic violence with her young daughter and was put in emergency accommodation. One of our staff spoke with her but, initially, she was reluctant to engage. Over time, however, using a softly-softly approach, she began to open up more. The Feelgood Factory provided practical help such as a Christmas parcel but, more than that, it became a safe space for her and her confidence has developed. She regularly attends activities, has built a rapport with others and improved her appearance and approach to life.

Over the year the Feelgood Factory has continued to provide its longstanding services, the Shopping Service and Mow and Grow. We have also, however, developed further our work with families and others in need through our Community Lounge and Hub that used to be the reception area. Much of this work is, as ever, supported by our volunteers.

The Shopping Service has grown during the years. The service contacts older and vulnerable people during the week for their shopping lists and then deliveries are made on Thursdays by volunteers. Dawn Brown deals with the day-to-day administration of the project and she is usually the person who takes the lists. She explains that, "Some of the customers are very lonely and just want to chat. I am happy to do that because I know that in a few cases the next person they will speak to will be the volunteer on the Thursday. Many live in flats and can't get out without help. One client lives at the top of forty-seven steps. The volunteer often has to make two trips with heavy bags. The customer could not do that himself."

This loneliness is corroborated by Ann Anirah who has taken on visiting shopping clients in their homes. She explains: "There are a lot more issues than I was expecting, more than just shopping. I used to co-ordinate the shopping service but this is new." Ann finds it rewarding because she can refer on to other agencies. She is able to pass on information that the customers don't know about because they can't get out.



Homework on Community Computers



The Mow and Grow service provides a regular gardening service for those who struggle to tidy their gardens themselves. Eddie Murphy who runs the programme says that it is more than just gardening. "Many of them are pensioners and they worry about what the garden looks like," he says. "They feel better when it is presentable and this helps their mental health."

Eddie finds that some of the householders want to try and help him in whatever way they can. It is their way of staying involved and in contact with another person.

The Community Hub has become very busy during the year under the guidance of Clare Browne. She explains that families come forward for help and she is able to signpost for essential support. By working in partnership with a range of companies and agencies such as Dunhelm, Asda, Tescos, Morrisons, Cash for Kids, Halley's Hub and LFC Foundation she has been able to provide a range of help from football boots for children to cots and prams. For instance working with Mission Christmas she provided more than 100 children with gifts at Christmas. In response to the rise in energy prices she provided nine families with energy packs comprising hot water bottle and cover, fleeces etc.

Families having tea at Dunhelm

Fact File

Shops for vulnerable people—932 Gardening work for vulnerable people—200 Distributed frozen meals to families in need—5,100 Donated Christmas Dinner hampers to families—25 Donated essential food hampers—30



Improving lives for local people

The Personal View

Richard has suffered from mental health problems since his teen years . He had always lived with his mum and dad who helped him with everyday issues due to his mental health conditions and learning difficulties. When his parents died his social opportunities were much reduced and he was referred to the Feelgood Factory via Living Well Sefton.

Richard started to attend football for four weeks and then gradually increased his social opportunities to also attend Man Cave. LWS mentors met Richard at the football pitch and then showed him to the bus stop. A mentor then rang the family to say he was on his way home. When he started Man Cave he only stayed 20 minutes or so and seemed socially and physically exhausted after both sessions but bit by bit this improved.

After seven months Richard's physical fitness has improved. We can all see a huge difference in Richard as he interacts much more with people and his depression has lifted. A survey undertaken among local people by the Feelgood Factory in November 2022 showed the following:

Percentage of people who were feeling significantly more anxious since the pandemic – 51%

Percentage of people feeling significantly more depressed since the pandemic – 56%

Percentage of people who felt that their quality of life would be improved by meeting more people -73%.

This supports the priority that the Feelgood Factory places on programmes that support mental wellbeing.

We have continued to provide support for people who have suffered bereavement and also run the Think Differently, Cope Differently programme. Although we do not provide counselling, staff are available to support individuals when necessary. Ann Anirah is one of the staff members who supports individuals who are going through the bereavement process. "It is rewarding, "she says, "to see people make the move from desperation to realising that they can move forward into the future."

The Mental Health Drop-In

has continued to operate twice-weekly. On a Tuesday the group meets at the Feelgood Factory and on





Perinatal Support Group at Christmas



Me-Time Children's Session at Hallowe'en

Fridays it meets at the Linacre Mission. This group provides not just a meeting place but also a lot of support during the week to help group members cope with legal, financial and relationships problems. It is a non-judgemental safe haven for people who need that support.

The Perinatal Mental Health Project for parents who are struggling a bit, has continued to be run this year in association with Pandas Sefton. This group provides muchneeded group and one-to-one support for parents, enabling them to realise that they are not alone

An exciting (and very active) new programme was the pilot project, Me-Time, which aimed to help families under stress. The project provided separate activities for children and parents, for example parents would do cooking whilst the children played games or undertook crafts. In half-term holidays twice-weekly sessions were run (sometimes in the Community Garden) giving the children the opportunity to play and undertake activities alongside their parents. It became obvious early on that most of the parents were under a lot of stress as a significant number of the children had additional needs such as autism and ADHD.

This pilot has proved to be an important step forward for the Feelgood Factory and it is now being developed into a proper parenting programme.

On a sad note, this was a year of goodbyes for those working in mental health. Firstly Ged Barker, one of the long-term workers from the Drop-In, died and is much missed. In the summer of 2023, also, our Mental Health Worker, David Martin-Corkill retired.

Fact File

Mental Health Drop-In Attendances—318 Me-Time Family Sessions Attendances—33 Perinatal Mental Health Support Attendances—98



Physical Wellbeing

Improving lives for local people

As a healthy living centre, the Feelgood Factory still has at its core the mission to help local people to improve their physical health. To this end we have continued to provide programmes and individual support to improve health.

Our physical health programme combines exercise and social interaction. Many of the people who attend our programmes come to meet people as well as to keep fit and they will often stay on after sessions in the lounge for a cuppa and a chat. Classes that have run include Zumba, Line Dancing, Yoga, Aerobics, Pilates, and walking.

The ever-popular Walking Football has also gone on from strength to strength.

The Cooking Programme provided funding from the Obesity Strategy to run, in concert with the Netherton Activity Centre, Food Matters to help people lose weight. The Feelgood Factory provided the food and nutrition part of this programme that was well attended. Healthy Cooking and Cooking on a Budget programmes were also run.

Persuading people to adopt a healthy diet can be psychological as well as physical. Malcolm Bannon, our food specialist, recalls one client during the year who was a taxi driver in his thirties. His main concern was embracing a healthier diet as he mainly ate junk food so that could address his weight problem. Malcolm chatted to him about his current

diet and discussed the obstacles that existed for him about making positive changes. He described himself as a fussy



The Personal View

Lindsey is a mother of three adult children . She wanted to lose weight in order to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Her main concern was weight loss and how it can be a factor to poor physical health and how she felt about herself. She was introduced to the programme Food Matters and she also discussed how her anxiety and stress might be an obstacle to weight loss as she has a tendency to over think trivial things. To help with this she agreed to attend the next Think Differently, Cope Differently course.

Lindsey completed the Food Matters programme tasting dishes and ingredients that she had never tried.

Lindsey commented, "The whole experience was brilliant. It was an eye opener and it was the first time I had an opportunity to look at my diet and my relationship with food in this much detail..."



Children at After-School Club



Walking Football Tournament, March

eater, however he agreed that avoiding foods that he perceived as unpalatable is not the same as eating and trying the foods. He readily agreed to try things he hadn't tried before with an open mind. As promised Stephen tried all the dishes that he produced, the results of which were mixed but overall positive. The most important thing he said was that he wasn't frightened of trying new things and preparing food has given him so much confidence. He has started inviting friends and family round for dinner that he has made and is understandably delighted with this.

Another local need was the Warm Spaces Initiative which aimed to provide warm food together with a warm environment in the winter months. We targeted our project at people with mental health problems and this was so successful that we have continued it beyond the end of winter and now provide a hot meal for the Drop-In most Tuesdays.

As part of the move towards a Green Community Hub, Malcolm Bannon, our specialist food worker, and Eddy Murphy delivered a programme called Garden to Table in which sessions on growing food were coupled with cooking courses.

Finally, a revamped programme was a programme called Baby Solids (weaning). It is a few years since we have run this type of programme but there is again a gap in this provision so Malcolm combined with the Breastfeeding Programme to devise and deliver sessions aimed at mothers moving babies on to solids.

Malcolm has too worked on cooking programmes with the Orrell Trust and Autism Initiative to deliver cooking programmes for young people with autism and has also run food safety programmes throughout the Liverpool and Sefton area.

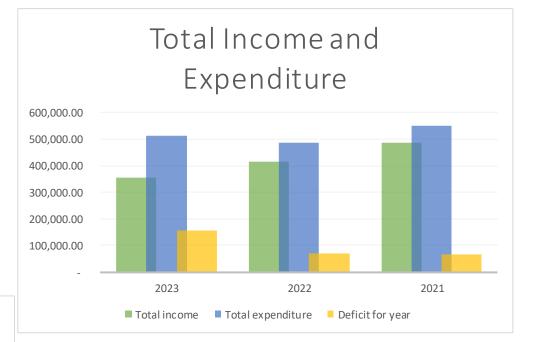
Fact File

Attendances at Physical Activity Sessions—2768 Attendances at Food and Nutrition sessions—427

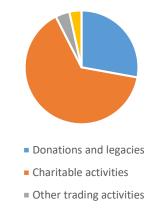




Finance



2023



- Investments
- Other income

Above is a financial overview of the last 3 year accounts. As you will see income is decreasing each year. 2023 income has decreased £127,782 from 2021 income. A five year forecast/plan has been put together to help rebuild the reserves. Policies & Procedures are carried out by the finance team. Day to day inputting of the finances are carried out by our Finance assistant, monthly reports are checked by project managers and quarterly checks by the Business Manager. The trustees have monthly meeting to discuss overall activities of the FGF and performance of the charity. Also a finance committee regularly meet to discuss the budgets and keep track of actual spend. Finances are managed by the finance department and require a two signature process for all transactios which are then overseen by the CEO.

Hayley Beer—Business Manager

WHO'S WHO

TRUSTEES

Bill Penney (Chair)

Jim Flynn

Les James

George Loughlin

Helen Martin

Ursula Ingham

Linda Glenn

Cllr Linda Cluskey

Mark Buxton

Margaret McEllenborough

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INSURERS

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