
ACTION TOGETHER CIO

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

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Action Together

2022 / 2023

Annual Report

Highlights of our impact in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside

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1. Introduction from our Chair

Welcome to Action Together's annual report for the financial year ending 31 March 2023.

Once again, I am proud to share the work of our charity with you. You will see highlights in this report of how we have engaged people to help others, supported local groups to develop and grow, brought organisations together across sectors, funded brilliant projects and activities, and helped people turn their community ideas into action. All of this is done with the aim of creating stronger communities.

Unfortunately, our communities have been hit by the Cost of Living Crisis. Coming so quickly after the pandemic and to an already fragile sector, this has been a challenge to us all. You will see the impact of the crisis throughout the report, and how we have supported the sector to respond. The people and organisations who make up our sector always do respond, standing up and supporting the communities that need them, and it is essential that, in turn, they are supported and given the tools and resources they need. Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside are stronger with a thriving voluntary and community sector.

I want to thank all the volunteers and voluntary organisations in our boroughs for their amazing work, passion, ideas and strength. It is incredible to see the breadth of life-changing work taking place in our communities.

I also want to thank the staff team at Action Together, who delivered the work you will read about in this report. Their commitment, knowledge and skills make everything we do possible. You will see just some of the work of our teams, but it would take many more reports to cover everything they do and all the people they support. I hope you can take pride in your work featured in this report, and in all that you do that we haven't managed to include.

Finally, thank you to the Board of Action Together who give their time and skills to govern the charity. They are also volunteers, and people who are deeply passionate about the places they live and the people who make up our communities.

I was proud to launch our new strategy this year. It will steer us through the next five years, guiding our work in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside with these shared strategic priorities:

1. Strengthen social infrastructure for connected communities
2. Advance our approach to social change
3. Grow and transform as a local funder

You will see sections of this report dedicated to the ways we are already delivering against these objectives, with pioneering new work building on our established services.

I hope you enjoy reading this report, and if it prompts you to take action, please get in touch with us.

Camilla Guereca, Chair, Action Together

2. Who we are and what we do

Action Together is the infrastructure organisation for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector in Oldham, Rochdale, and Tameside.

We connect people with what's happening in their community, develop community ideas into action, strengthen local organisations, and provide strategic influence for the charity and voluntary sector. Membership of Action Together is free and open to any voluntary organisation, charity or social enterprise in Oldham, Rochdale, or Tameside.

Action Together supports people to volunteer in their area, and assists local organisations in developing volunteer programmes, policies, and roles.

We provide support for voluntary, community and charity organisations to establish and develop, including specialist information, advice, and training for staff, volunteers and trustees.

Action Together works in partnership with other charities, infrastructure organisations and public bodies and collaborates on key thematic work. We also promote and advocate for the work of organisations locally, and across Greater Manchester and the wider area.

We invest in the sector, and members can apply for funding from our grants programmes. We also provide support for groups seeking and applying for investment, and direct members to appropriate sources of funding.

3. Our Year in Numbers

- 1,229 people registered to volunteer through Action Together
- We provided 1,695 organisations with 1-2-1 support, advice and mentoring
- We hosted 188 training sessions and events
- 2,310 people attended our training and events
- 1,333 people took part in our partnership and thematic networks
- We secured and invested £2,526,834 into the sector
- 819 local organisations benefitted from funding we provided
- 4,936 people were referred through our Social Prescribing services

4. Our new strategic objectives

We launched our new five-year strategy in December 2022, to take us from 2023 to 2028.

The strategy will cover our work in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside, with these shared strategic priorities:

1. Strengthen social infrastructure for connected communities
2. Advance our approach to social change
3. Grow and transform as a local funder

1. Strengthen social infrastructure for connected communities

We will do this by:

- Working in neighbourhoods to build deep relationships with groups and strengthen what they do
- Addressing barriers and making Action Together's offer accessible to all parts of our communities of place, identity and experience
- Strengthening community ownership and control of local land, buildings and assets
- Developing and championing volunteering to empower more local people to share their skills, capacity and social capital

How will we know we've succeeded?

- Annual membership feedback shows a deepening of our relationship with groups that helps them create change
- The economic difference the sector makes is better understood and wealth-building approaches are more widespread
- More people volunteering from all parts of our community

2. Advance our approach to social change

We will do this by:

- Developing our social change networks so they are owned by members with shared learning, power and decision-making
- Investing in networks to identify opportunities for social change, take shared action and make a demonstrable impact in communities
- Developing our skills so that every team across Action Together understands their role in enabling social change
- Strengthening community leadership and the role of community anchors in shaping neighbourhoods

How will we know we've succeeded?

- We can tell powerful impact stories about collective action addressing root causes that has led to real change
- We have developed successful new practices and investment models that increase trust and collaboration
- More sector leaders feel supported and believe they can affect change

3. Grow and transform as a local funder

We will do this by:

- Establishing a strategic investment fund in each borough for public and private partners

- Committing to being an open and trusting grantmaker, making longer-term, strategic investments into the core of what our members do
- Connecting and enhancing our development support so we invest time and skills as well as money
- Supporting our members to have a stronger collective voice influencing local funding priorities and bringing investment into their communities

How will we know we've succeeded?

- There is a recognised way for partners to invest in each borough, creating more strategic and collective decision making
- Amazing impact stories are made possible by getting money to the right organisations and working with them to achieve their aims

Throughout this report you'll see examples of how we're turning our objectives into action across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside.

Find our full strategy at this link: [Action Together Strategy 2023 - 28](#)

5. Our year in Volunteering

The Cost of Living Crisis had an impact on the kinds of volunteering roles we developed or worked in partnership to fulfil. We worked with volunteers from local businesses Wilmott Dixon and BizSpace, New Pioneers, local Councillors and Action Together to produce Winter Warmer packs for distribution to people across Rochdale Borough as part of Rochdale's Warm Spaces Programme. In Oldham, we developed new volunteering roles to support the delivery of the Borough's Warm Bank initiative, as part of our wider work in responding to the Cost of Living Crisis.

Place-based volunteering

Volunteering is a key part of our objective to strengthen social infrastructure for connected communities.

We want to:

- Work in neighbourhoods to build deep relationships with groups and strengthen what they do
- Address barriers and make Action Together's offer accessible to all parts of our communities of place, identity and experience
- Develop and champion volunteering to empower more local people to share their skills, capacity and social capital

We launched our Community Team model in the previous year, embedding our teams in neighbourhoods and taking Action Together's offer into community venues and spaces.

Having established a weekly presence, we developed the model with the addition of Volunteer Hubs. Our Volunteering teams in Oldham and Tameside are based in the heart of communities, with extensive knowledge of local roles that might suit volunteers. By working closely with our Development and Social Prescribing teams, we can connect potential volunteers with roles that suit them at organisations in their local area - helping connect communities, strengthen people's connection to their neighbourhood, and create local social action. Our teams in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside can meet people in a place that's convenient to them, and as we work across the three boroughs, if a volunteer is looking for a specific role we can also connect them with a relevant opportunity that might not be in their area.

Employer Supported Volunteering

We launched a campaign in January to promote Employer Supported Volunteering.

Employer supported volunteering, or corporate volunteering, is where the employees of an organisation take time to volunteer during work hours or organise volunteer activities. Employees might choose to support a charity or community group, or take up an opportunity provided by their workplace.

We promoted the benefits of volunteering for businesses, and the types of roles they can get involved in. We also held an online training session with our member organisations to share ways they might appeal to and engage with local businesses, which has been [viewed 1,193 times on our YouTube channel](#).

We want to empower more local people to volunteer from all parts of our communities. As businesses look to prioritise their corporate social responsibility and create positive impact and links to the communities in which they're based, we'll continue to promote our brokerage service and offer more ways to connect workplaces with local voluntary organisations.

"I'm getting to meet all these great colleagues I wouldn't have necessarily known before and I know I'm helping out a very, very valued cause."

[One of nine Timberland UK volunteers we connected with a community allotment volunteering day](#)

"It's a fantastic opportunity for people like me who are office based."

[One of 70 British Gas volunteers who volunteered at The Bread and Butter Project over the course of two months](#)

"We really want to encourage other businesses to get involved!"

One of 40 Findel Education and Irwell Homes volunteers who helped Corrie Primary School create a community space

Volunteers' Week

Volunteers' Week is a time to say thanks, so in June we used the week to say a big thank you to the volunteers and voluntary organisations that help create stronger communities in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside.

We used the week to launch our annual Volunteer Celebration Fund. We wanted to support local groups in saying thanks to their volunteers, so provided grants of up to £500 for events and activities that create opportunities to come together, involve, and celebrate volunteers for the fantastic contribution they make.

“We usually celebrate just two to three volunteers each year but with this funding we were able to dedicate a segment of our Awards Evening to the importance of volunteers and award every single volunteer, regardless of how much contribution they made. The funding put a smile on 18 people’s faces and we have no doubt that they will continue to volunteer. Since the event we have had more young people and adults approach us for volunteering opportunities. We were able to make every single volunteer feel special.”

Moinul Islam, Outta Skool. Action Together’s Volunteer Celebration Fund supported their Awards Evening

“The volunteers support such a range of areas at Dr Kershaw’s and this was my first opportunity to meet with other volunteers - it was amazing to see so many people having such a lovely time. Everyone I met and had opportunity to talk with thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the event.”

Dr Kershaw’s Hospice Volunteer. Action Together’s Volunteer Celebration Fund supported their Volunteer Celebration Evening

We also spoke to volunteers and local voluntary organisations about why they volunteer, and the difference volunteering makes. [Watch here.](#)

Volunteer Voices

"I wanted to reach out and help in my neighbourhood. I received an email from Action Together about different volunteering roles, and doorstep donation food bank collections caught my eye. It has been the perfect way for us to help out.

"It's given us great pleasure knowing we are helping others.

"We have established good relationships with our neighbours, who donate every month. They even bring their donations straight to me if they are going to be away."

Sumi and Ram Nathoo, Doorstep Donation Volunteers

We met 'D' at an event in Rochdale. He was looking to make a positive change in his life, as well as gain experience to help with a sport qualification at college. Through our local knowledge and connections we helped enlist D on a community Sports Leader course, and matched him with a volunteer role helping people with disabilities engage with and enjoy sport.

"Thank you for changing my life! I really feel I am making a difference to others now."

'C' had been feeling isolated throughout the pandemic, and was introduced to Action Together by an organisation we work closely with. We met C and discussed their interests, experience and what they'd like to get involved with. They are now actively volunteering, and in their first week gave a fantastic 14 hours volunteering.

"I am truly impressed with how inclusive the team is through engaging with volunteers, supporting them and promoting volunteer opportunities. The impact the Volunteer Centre makes to people's lives is truly inspirational."

Sarinah, Action Together volunteer

"I needed to give something back and this is an ideal way to do it."

Geoff, Foodbank Volunteer

“For children living in poverty, receiving a gift will mean so much, and give them a little bit of Christmas joy in tough times. I’d like to take a moment to thank the extraordinary Tameside Toy Appeal volunteers and staff who make this annual initiative such a success.”

Andrew Gwynne, MP for Denton and Reddish

Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation

Towards the end of the year we applied for a renewal of our Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside.

The Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (VCQA) is the quality mark for organisations delivering Volunteer Centre functions. It provides assurance to members of the public seeking volunteering opportunities, volunteer involving organisations, partner, commissioner and funding organisations, that the holder provides a high quality and effective local service.

Accreditation takes place via a peer assessment and is valid for three years. It covers the Five Functions of a Volunteer Centre’s work:

- Strategic Development of Volunteering
- Good Practice Development
- Developing Volunteering Opportunities
- Voice of Volunteering
- Brokerage

Action Together has been an accredited Volunteer Centre for a number of years in Oldham and Tameside. Our close engagement with volunteers and volunteer organisations have helped Action Together be recognised as the place to go if you want to get into volunteering, or want to recruit volunteers in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside.

Place-Based Volunteering

Our model of place-based working means our teams in Oldham and Tameside, including our volunteering service, are embedded in neighbourhoods working alongside communities and have established relationships with grass-root organisations, community leaders, local networks, and system partners. This has given us invaluable insight into the ways in which people choose to give their time as well as developing a deeper understanding of the support needs of our members, for example creating opportunities that are hyper-local, task-based and more flexible.

Our experienced volunteer officers are available to meet with individuals in neighbourhoods. They combine 1-1 support with up-to-date local knowledge, in an informal, supportive settings using a tried and tested strength-based approach.

We are well placed to understand and respond to needs within communities through our community development capacity and volunteering service in neighbourhoods. Through our thematic networks we regularly seek to understand barriers to volunteering and find solutions with our members. Through our database we have a good understanding of volunteer profiles based on geographic areas.

We work with system partners and referral agencies to support engagement of potential volunteers and reduce barriers to them e.g., employment providers / DWP, Children and Young People Services, Mental Health Services, Social Prescribing teams.

Our Volunteer Coordinator forum is regularly attended by groups and referral agencies working with volunteers. Feedback from participants is invariably positive.

We are connected to wider support across 10GM, national Volunteer Managers networks, and are a member of NCVO / NAVCA.

Developing our Volunteering Service

Members organisations and potential volunteers can access our Volunteering service in a variety of different ways; in person within neighbourhoods, via our networks, over the phone or online, in addition to having access to a suite of online learning resources, with clear guidance and 'how to' guides on a fully accessible website

We have developed a bank of accessible resources on our website for potential volunteers, including a series of bite-sized volunteer training videos covering GDPR, safeguarding, lone working and equality, diversity and inclusion.

We developed our social media engagement with borough-based Facebook groups for volunteers. These were developed during the pandemic when face-to-face contact wasn't always possible, but have continued to grow in the time since as a way to maintain and grown engagement with existing and new volunteers. We can quickly share new opportunities, and have found volunteers themselves engaging and taking the lead on sharing their own volunteering activities.

Stronger connections have been made through the pandemic with local businesses to broker relationships with the sector and increase volunteering activity. We have been able to develop targeted communications and marketing to promote the benefits of volunteering to corporates and their employees. We ran an Employer Supported Volunteering campaign in Q4, encouraging local employers to support voluntary organisations in a number of ways, and sharing advice and guidance to our members on ways they can engage businesses and create volunteering opportunities that appeal to workplaces.

Our Volunteering teams work closely across our localities, meaning we can share best practice, processes, ideas and a shared route into volunteering wherever someone might live in our three boroughs.

We recognise that people might live in one borough but want to take a volunteer opportunity in another. That means our member organisations have a larger pool of

potential volunteers they can reach through Action Together. Working as one team means we can connect volunteers with wider opportunities, helping connect communities and benefitting volunteer organisations in all three localities.

We launched a new [Volunteer Manager Zone](#) in order to support member organisations in working with volunteers. Our aim was to help ensure that volunteering is an inclusive, high quality and rewarding experience, and that those working with volunteers have the resources and support they need to make this possible.

[We produced videos](#) and [resources](#) on recruiting, managing and retaining volunteers, hosted regular sessions to connect volunteer managers from different organisations, and developed templates, factsheets and videos on core topics. We've received feedback from member organisations who now use these materials in their own inductions and volunteer engagement.

“You have some fab videos, thank you for providing such great resources.”

Our Vision For Volunteering

Having launched Action Together's five-year strategy, we developed our own Volunteering focused strategy - [Our Vision For Volunteering](#).

We believe that volunteering is at the heart of creating, supporting and maintaining social infrastructure. We want to develop and champion volunteering to empower more local people to share their skills, capacity and social capital.

Our Vision For Volunteering was co-designed with volunteer involving organisations, as we hosted consultation events across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside. We combined this with our organisational strategy and NCVO's Vision for Volunteering to produce three core aims.

By 2028:

- The Boroughs of Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside will be great places to volunteer
- Volunteering is understood, appreciated, and appropriately resourced
- Volunteers are supported and recognised for the valuable contribution to the social infrastructure of Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside

All of the above contributed to our application for Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation.

We were delighted to achieve Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation after the end of this year. This a credit to our teams who are passionate about volunteering and the difference it makes to people and communities. We look forward to continuing to champion and develop volunteering in our central role as the Volunteer Centre for Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside for years to come.

Thanking our volunteers

“Thank you so much for giving your time to volunteer as part of the Action Together team. What you do makes a huge difference to us internally at Action Together but most importantly to the people that come to us for support. I’m inspired by the stories I hear about the work you do, and I wanted you to know that we appreciate you!”

Liz Windsor-Welsh, CEO, Action Together

As well as registering 1,229 volunteers and connecting them with local voluntary organisations, Action Together is also supported by a number of volunteers in different roles.

Thank you to these volunteers who supported Action Together over the course of this year:

Adrian Ball	Jim Whewell	Natalie Paintin
Alan Buckley	Jo O’shea	New Pioneers volunteers
Aminul Choudhury	John Mellor	Nick Lowther
Andy Wiggans	Jonathan Yates	Olivia Kenyon
Anne Parkes	Kath Scanlon	Pat Davies
Anthony Collins	Katy Jones	Patrick Davies
Asma Begum	Kim Tranter	Paul Finn
Camilla Guereca	Kim Tranter	Phil Nokes
Caroline Gregory	Lara Orton	Philippa Robinson
Claire Costigan	Lauren Stradling	Rehna Yaseen
Claire Orton	Leah Iqbal	Ron Smith
Claire Yardley	Linda Cullen	Ronnie Rowston
Clare Barlow	Lucia Hall	Sarah Cross
Cllr Iram Faisal	Lucy Holland	Sarinah Khaliq
Craig Bent	Martin Campbell	Sean Bostock
Elvis Austin	Mary Johnson	Sean Nichol
Equans volunteers	Matty Jones	Stephen Mallinson
Eric Fulham	Michael Quinn	Steve Fallows
Gillian Healey	Michael Walker	Steve Lewis
Hebe Reily	Michelle Facchinello	Steve Mallinson
Ian Cochrane	Mohammed Sarwar	Suen Adekoya
Itohan Akpoviri	Muhammad Abdulaleem	Tania Miguel
Jackie Moores	Naila Akhter	Tim Rodgerson
Javed Rehman	Naomi Burke	Valerie Fallows
Jeff Rimmer	Nasir Hussain	Warren Doyle
		Wilmott Dixon volunteers

6. Creating social infrastructure for connected communities

Creating social infrastructure for connected communities in Rochdale

The Cost of Living Crisis affected both our member organisations and the communities they support. The sector already faced challenges following the Covid pandemic, and rising costs created more hardship for many of the borough's residents, particularly those on low incomes, meaning a greater demand for the voluntary sector's services.

Our learnings and connections from the pandemic meant we had experience in connecting communities and social infrastructure. Our member organisations are on the ground every day - they know their communities, and know the complex issues people face. They're the eyes and ears in a community response, well placed to see what is happening in the moment, and they were seeing people approach them for their services and support who they'd never seen before.

We joined Rochdale's cross-partnership Anti-Poverty Working Group as a link between public sector partners and the local sector to co-ordinate the borough's response. The group pulled together existing resources to ensure that targeted support was provided to those who needed it most.

As part of this work, our Digital Tech Consortium, made up of a partnership of VCFSE organisations and Rochdale Borough Council representatives, collected over 300 donated devices from the council and local businesses. They were distributed to benefit VCFSE groups running digital skills sessions, and residents who may not have access to suitable technology.

We also helped shape the Anti-Poverty Group's winter plan, including launching a grants fund to enable groups to make up Winter Warmer packs to distribute to their beneficiaries, and funded 33 groups a total of £16,115. This enabled groups to make packs that suited different communities of identity and experience across the borough and distribute them through their networks. In addition, Action Together collated and distributed 500 Winter Warmer packs to venues across the borough who are part of Rochdale's Warm Spaces Programme.

We worked with the Economic Support Network, local groups, Public Health, Citizens' Advice and Rochdale Council to develop and relaunch the popular Cost of Living Toolkit. The toolkit provides residents and support workers with a simple step-by-step guide that will help to work out people's first priority, what options there are available to them in the borough, and who they need to contact to find help.

Our team also attended the Money Max roadshow at Middleton Arena in July, to promote the toolkit and share information on our work to support VCFSE organisations to be able to respond to the Cost of Living crisis.

Thanks to funding from RBC Public Health, we launched a Cost of Living Crisis Response Fund, offering grants of up to £2,500 to enable emergency, one-off provision for people in crisis or longer term projects to reduce inequality and build resilience, working with residents to improve health and wellbeing, and safeguarding and supporting our most at risk residents. The Cost of Living Crisis Response Fund supported 47 applicants with a total of £105,766.

Creating social infrastructure for connected communities in Tameside

Community Anchors are organisations embedded deeply in neighbourhoods. They act as cogs connecting local services, organisations, and people to place. While they have a specific remit in the area, they also have the capacity to develop and offer additional support to communities.

During the Covid pandemic, it was clear how important Community Anchors were in Tameside. We saw how they could offer a vital service to continue beyond lockdowns and become part of Tameside's social infrastructure.

We worked closely with Community Anchor organisations to research and understand their work. In Tameside, we pioneered Action Together's place-based Community Team model. Each area of Tameside is supported by a Community Development Worker, Volunteer Officer, and Social Prescriber. These teams within our larger team can really get to know an area, working together to support residents and organisations based in neighbourhoods. Working together and connecting with our wider Action Together team means we can address local issues while mapping out the state of the sector across the borough, and connecting different communities in order to address challenges. The success of this model has been demonstrated in the way we've rolled it over into our wider work at Action Together, helping us connect communities at a deeper level.

We're now seeing Community Anchors develop into fully fledged CIO's, with formal structures and ideas and projects taking shape. We need to provide capacity to help these new organisations develop so they can build on the fantastic work they do to support our communities.

We have extensive experience in asset-based community development, and now feel we need to focus on the sustainability of assets and anchors. With ongoing challenges like the Cost of Living Crisis, and the inevitable challenges to come to a fragile voluntary and community sector, we need to ensure Community Anchors have the tools and support to continue to deliver essential support to communities.

Creating social infrastructure for connected communities in Oldham

Action Together took on the role of co-ordinating the voluntary and community sector response to the Cost Of Living Crisis in Oldham

This involved co-ordinating funding through Household Support Fund 3 and One Oldham Fund - Cost of Living grants, workforce development, driving the Cost-of-Living Response through existing ongoing work, development and training on the Money Advice Referral Tool, and the development of Warm Banks.

Warm Banks are community spaces across Oldham where people can go to get warm, stay warm, have a free hot drink and some company if they want it.

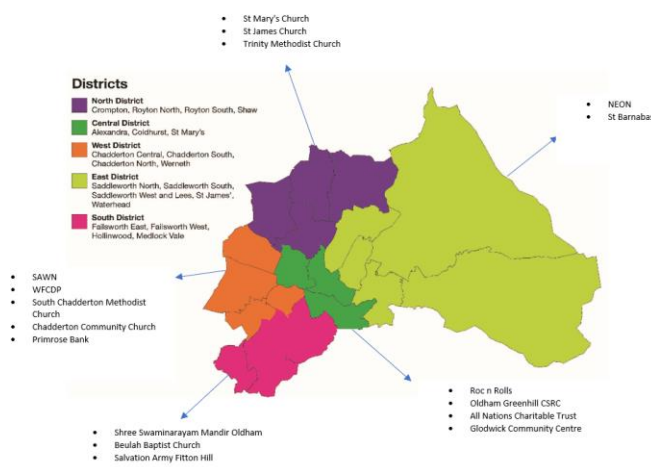
Oldham Libraries were identified as community spaces that could offer Warm Bank provision. Working with the council's district team, Action Together connected up community organisations who were considering offering some similar provision, or those who had community spaces and venues that could add to the Libraries offer.

To support the delivery of Warm Banks Action Together:

- Worked alongside Oldham Council district team to identify and onboard 17 additional warm bank community venues
- Developed a checklist for potential Warm Bank community venues to ensure they have the essential things in place to host a Warm Bank, eg health and safety considerations, safeguarding considerations, volunteer considerations
- Developed a set of resources to support those managing volunteers in the Warm Banks, these included a volunteer role description, induction pack, and bitesize training videos. The aim was that these resources would guide safer recruitment and supervision processes and help to establish some consistency in terms of the expectations and responsibilities of volunteers across the warm banks, as well as supporting the provision of a good induction for volunteers into their new roles
- Ensured our Volunteering brokerage offer was available to any organisations needing to build capacity and recruit additional volunteers; we promoted these vacancies via our online directory and in our community outreach work
- Encouraged all community Warm Bank staff and volunteers to attend the Money Advice Referral Tool training, to ensure that they were equipped to signpost residents to wider crisis support
- Ensured all staff and volunteers were confident around safeguarding children and vulnerable adults by delivering Level 1 safeguarding training, specifically tailored for Warm Bank volunteers
- Connected groups to additional training opportunities, including:
 - Pension Credit training
 - Connect 5 - bringing mental wellbeing conversation into everyday practice
 - NEA fuel poverty training
- Invested in Warm Bank community venues helping them towards the additional costs incurred to operate the Warm Banks such as utilities and staff and volunteer expenses

Oldham residents were able to access additional support at Warm Bank visits and have taken part in additional activities, helping them feel connected and reduce isolation.

This map shows the community Warm Banks in each district who received funding. The total number of visits to the community warm banks at year end was 1,701.



7. Our year developing local organisations

“We’ve been working with Action Together for over four years now. They actually helped us set up as a Community Interest Company. Our Community Development Worker has helped us with our procedures, forms, Child Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding training. At the moment she’s helping us on our bid writing course and helping us on our volunteer project learning how to engage and work with more volunteers. It’s been really beneficial!”

Hattersley Projects

Across the year we provided 1,695 organisations with 1-2-1 support, advice and mentoring. This represents a 10% increase on organisations we worked with in the previous year.

Action Together’s membership organisations receive extensive developmental support, including guidance on policies and procedures, advice on structure, support on volunteer recruitment, bid writing, and connections with other projects and community activities.

Our experienced Community Development Workers are based in communities to support organisations in place, and get to know local organisations to support with their specific needs. From newly formed grassroots organisations to established charities, our team can help groups develop and achieve their goals.

“Our experience with Action Together has been excellent. They are always on hand to support or answer questions if needed, and can’t be more helpful to the organisations and individuals they support.

“They’re 100% professional, a friendly and very knowledgeable organisation and staff.”

Alison Pywell, Oldham Children’s Centres

Membership and health checks

As a result of the pandemic and then the Cost of Living Crisis we’ve seen more grassroots organisations emerge. To support these new organisations we’ve refined the process of our organisational Health Check.

The Health Check is a set of ‘deep dive’ questions to measure the health of an organisation and identify development needs they might have. It can introduce things

an organisation may not have considered, and give them a picture of the status of their organisation.

Our teams have been working with digital specialists to develop our back-office infrastructure to better support and develop our membership offer. This includes embedding the Health Check into our membership process, as a way to check in with our member organisations regularly, assess their current health and sustainability, and be proactive with our support. It also means we can gather up-to-date insight into the state of the local sector and create a fuller picture of the success, challenges and make up of organisations.

Place-Based Working

Our Community Teams in Oldham and Tameside continued to deliver a fully integrated Development and Volunteering offer in place through our place-based hubs.

Following the pandemic, we took Action Together's offer out into neighbourhoods. We invite members of the public to drop-in and see us to find out about local volunteering, funding for their ideas, making connections in the community, support for their community group, and community wellbeing.

Being rooted in communities means we can connect more effectively with people, groups, and our cross-sector partners. We promote our attendance online and in-place, with regular weekly bases meaning we can build up familiarity with the venues in which we're working and the communities they support.

Community bases cover a range of different venues including community libraries, wellbeing hubs, places of worship, and VCFSE owned and led spaces.

"It's been invaluable having Action Together here every week. It's been great because Action Together are here in the community, they're part of the team. People have come to ask them various questions and from those conversations we've been able to build relationships for POP as well. It's made our community more inclusive. Thank you Action Together for being here, it's been great!"

Jackie, POP Hyde CIC

Quality in Action Award

Quality in Action is our locally recognised seal of approval that publicly demonstrates voluntary and community organisations' commitment to safeguarding, quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Our Community Development Workers work alongside organisations to develop policies and processes around organisational governance, safeguarding, recruitment, health and safety,

equal opportunities, promotion, partnerships and finance. The QiAA is free and open to groups of any size, and our team cater the award to the needs of each organisation.

By achieving the award organisations are able to demonstrate to local commissioners, funders, beneficiaries and other stakeholders that they deliver quality activities and services.

"The amazing support that we received at Healthwatch Rochdale from Action Together was fantastic. They made the whole process so much easier and really helped us audit and update where needed. Thank you."

Healthwatch Rochdale

Training

We continued to deliver and develop our popular #WednesdaysWeekly strand of online training.

Introduced during the pandemic, at #WednesdaysWeekly we invite speakers to present bite-size information sessions relevant to the local sector. There's time for questions at the end of each session, and we record sessions and host on our YouTube channel for those that could not attend at the time.

Over the course of the year, 519 people attended the sessions, and our #WednesdaysWeekly videos were viewed 13,040 times.

As part of Oldham's co-ordinated Cost of Living Crisis response, we introduced a #WednesdaysWeekly Cost of Living Crisis series. Each week we invited different services and organisations who provide support and help to residents to share information on their services. Across 18 sessions we were joined by services including Oldham Council, Oldham Foodbank, Housing Options, Oldham Libraries, Action Together's Social Prescribing service, and a host of voluntary and community organisations.

These sessions were extremely effective in connecting communities, community organisations, frontline services and the public sector. The series had 5,061 views on our YouTube channel, ensuring support services and voluntary organisations across the borough were aware of where they could signpost people in need for further support.

We held 29 Meet The Funder events across the year, where we invite local and national funders to share information about the grants they have available. 297 people attended the events, with a further 2,575 viewers catching up later by watching the session on our YouTube channel.

We hosted our popular two-part Introduction to Bid Writing training seven times across the year. These sessions book up quickly, so we developed a short Key Tips video with some of the highlights from the training for those that couldn't attend. This has been viewed a combined 2,239 times across YouTube and Facebook.

We plan to build on this by producing an Introduction to Trustee Roles and Responsibilities video to go alongside our popular trustee training.

Case Study: Twilight Family Support Group

Ade is a parent of a child with autism who felt there wasn't enough support available for parents with autistic children in Hyde.

She wanted to set something up so more families and children with autism or SEND could benefit, particularly people from communities that experience racial inequalities, but she didn't know how to start and develop this idea.

Ade met our local Community Development Worker at Pop Cafe in Hyde, where we host our regular place-based community offer.

The Community Development Worker discussed Ade's idea with her, focusing on what she was trying to do, why she was doing it, and what she wanted to achieve.

Ade's Community Development Worker helped Ade write a constitution for the newly-formed Twilight Family Support Group. She explained what policies and procedures would be necessary, including a young people's safeguarding policy, health and safety policies, risk assessments and DBS checks, and assisted in their development. We also helped Ade and the group obtain £150 by assisting in writing a bid to buy sensory crafts and toys to kick start their first sessions, and with marketing to promote the new group and their sessions.

Our Community Team model brings together our Development and Volunteering teams in place, and this connection meant we were able to develop volunteer roles to support the new group's activities, and promote the roles through our Volunteer Centre service. We've continued to support Ade and the group's development after the initial set up with advice, guidance and connections.

From Ade's initial idea and meeting us in her area, the Twilight Family Support Group now host regular activities for families at the Grafton Centre in Hyde.

["My experience with Action Together has been fantastic. Thank you!"](#)

[Ade, Twilight Family Support Group](#)

Case Study: Yuvanis Foundation

In January 2023, Yuvanis Foundation became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This is the culmination of some hard work that has been carried out by the organisation and in particular Jakir Ahmad who is the Project Manager. Our Community Development team in Oldham have worked closely with Yuvanis Foundation for a couple of years and have supported them to access the necessary tools and funding to develop. With support the

organisation has grown from a micro group with an annual turnover of £10,000 to a CIO with over £90,000 turnover for financial year 22/23.

Yuvanis Foundation took part in our Development Learning Community programme, a six months organisational development programme taking groups through a variety of topics, including business planning, marketing and financial controls, governance, networking and partnerships.

Yuvanis Foundation also completed the Quality in Action Award, proving to funders, commissioners, and other stakeholders that the group have the systems and processes in place to carry out quality work in Oldham and the surrounding areas.

Case Study: Reach Church

Our Community Team are based at Reach Church in Millbrook every Wednesday from 9:30am - 11:30am. People in the area can drop in and speak to us about local volunteering, funding for their ideas, Social Prescribing, and what's going on in the area.

Being based in Reach Church also meant we worked more closely with the church. Reach Church spoke to us about their idea to develop their outdoor space. They wanted to increase the area with new decking and planting to create an interactive community space.

Our Community Team helped Reach Church secure funding to develop their outdoor space. By adding new decking and cultivating the area they plan to host outdoor activities like planting, food growing, drawing, teaching, and movie screenings, making use of the space all year round. Development of the space is now under way, with a planned rose memorial garden dedicated to people lost during the pandemic and a plant bed designed by students from nearby St Raphael's School. [Find out more.](#)

"It will be a space for the community to learn about plants if they want to, but also just to be. I think just twenty minutes in this space would be absolutely fantastic for anyone."

Jackie, Reach Church

We also supported Reach Church in applying for funding for their Tiger Tots project. They told us about the project and how the funding has helped:

"Tiger Tots is a baby and toddler group which is run on a term-time basis at Reach Church. Following the pandemic we have seen that many parents who attended now have children in primary school, and many new parents have been unable to attend classes due to them not running. Many parents who have attended have been so glad just to get out to socialise with their babies and toddlers and to watch their little ones interacting around other people.

"We wanted to attract more parents and carers by providing a service which caters well for babies and the early stages of development, to appeal to new mothers and to

encourage them to come and enjoy the service. Getting to know other parents and carers can help to reduce social isolation. Previously we simply had a couple of playmats and some small toys in our baby section, so we wanted to develop this further.

"We gratefully received funding from Action Together which allowed us to purchase several new items for our baby section, specifically aimed at encouraging development in babies.

"We have had lots of positive feedback from parents who have attended in recent weeks, specifically that the new toys have enhanced the baby corner and have provided an easier space for their babies to develop skills. One parent commented on how much their five month old was enjoying the sensory tent. We are hoping that the well-equipped baby area will continue to attract new parents who can enjoy socialising together whilst their babies enjoy use of the new toys."

Action Together's Tameside Social Prescribing team also visited Reach Church to find out more about their activities, including Tiger Tots and their Community Garden sessions. The team met with Andy and Jackie from the church to learn about the sessions, see the facility and hear about the impact the church is having in the community.

Social Prescribing connects people with local groups, activities and services to help improve their health and wellbeing. The Social Prescribing team signposts clients from the local area and across Tameside to Reach Church, as there are good transport links and a variety of support services available.

Case Study: Chadderton Football Club

As more grassroots organisations have emerged, our Development teams have used their knowledge and experience to guide groups in deciding on the best organisational structure to take.

Chadderton Football Club is based in the centre of Chadderton and a great resource for the local community. The club had invested and developed a clubhouse for supporters, and were looking to submit a funding bid to the Football Association for a 3G pitch and to update the grounds.

Chadderton FC's youth leader contacted their local Community Development Worker to ask if we could help the club decide what organisational structure they should take. The Community Development Worker presented the options to the committee, taking into account their structure, aims and purpose, and they decided that a Charitable Incorporated Organisation would be the most appropriate. Action Together's Community Development Worker then attended committee meetings to support the process of developing the new Charitable Incorporated Organisation structure.

The Community Development Worker used their existing connections in the area to help the Club develop relationships with the local community, including other community and voluntary organisations that are working with the most hard-to-reach members of the community.

Chadderton FC got involved in our Community Explorer forums. Community Explorers bring together local voluntary organisations, services, community anchors and people active in place to share updates, asks, offers, and work together to strengthen their community.

Chadderton FC joined to explain the plans they have for the use of the ground and to encourage others to think about how they could access the club and all the facilities available.

We supported the club in planning an open day for the local community, and provided a micro grant from our One Oldham Fund so they could hold the engagement event.

At the event Chadderton FC showcased their plans for the ground, and gathered information about how the community would like to use the facilities and if they had any ideas on how the Football Club could improve their services.

As a direct result of the work carried out by Action Together, Chadderton FC have engaged with community organisations that work with people with additional needs, people who provide services for children and young people from communities experiencing racial inequalities, as well as increasing the number of volunteers that the club has.

We continue to work with the club to develop their charitable status and the Community Development Worker has joined their steering group to continue to support their development.

8. Advancing our approach to social change

Advancing our approach to social change in Tameside

We represent the VCFSE sector at some of the key governance structures in Tameside, in order to develop the influence that the sector has in creating social change and social justice.

We facilitate a number of long-standing networks in the borough, bringing together sector and system partners to address the root causes of inequalities.

Our Asylum Seeker and Refugee Network meets quarterly, and sometimes forms subgroups to work on specific projects.

The network identified a need for a simple map or guide that can be used by Asylum Seekers and Refugees who are new to the area. The map or guide could also be used by workers to show Asylum Seekers and Refugees around Ashton.

Our Partnerships Officer for Early Help had already started to do 'walk-about' with Asylum Seekers, Refugees, and professionals and staff in the area of central Ashton. We knew that this worked well and the Network thought it would be useful to design a resource to replicate this.

We set up a subgroup including some key support services like West African Development, Infinity Initiatives, Holy Trinity Community Centre, New Life Church, and ourselves.

The group decided to pilot a map/guide that covers central Ashton and includes the main organisations that they know can support Asylum Seekers and Refugees, and make referrals where needed

The resource also included prompts and ideas that can be discussed with the Asylum Seeker/Refugee, such as the locations of local shops, places of worship, health services, and green spaces.

We work closely with New Life Church in a number of different spaces including through Social Prescribing and our Partnership Networks, and they trialled the resource with a small group of Asylum Seekers.

Based on their feedback, the map was finalised and used to facilitate ‘walkabouts’ to introduce Asylum Seekers and Refugees to the area, making local services and support more accessible. What once depended on one of our staff members can now be delivered by partner organisations across Tameside.

Advancing our approach to social change in Oldham

Our networks are central to our ambition to advance our approach to social change.

We were a partner in the establishment and facilitation of Oldham’ Poverty Truth Commission. Poverty Truth Commissions seek to discover the answer to the question, ‘what if people who struggled against poverty were involved in making decisions about tackling poverty?’ The Commission brought together Commissioners with lived experience of poverty with local leaders and system partners to understand the nature of poverty, the underlying issues that create it, and explore and develop ways to address poverty.

From our experience Poverty Truth Commission and its recommendations we developed Oldham’s Poverty Action Network (OPAN).

OPAN again brought together people with lived experience with key VCFSE, public and private sector organisations to build on the historical and existing poverty alleviation work of initiatives including the Poverty Action Group, Poverty Truth Commission, OCAN, MoVE, Food Solutions Network and the Cost of Living Crisis Summit, aligning these strands of work in Oldham into one place.

The Oldham Poverty Action Network aims to:

- Build relationships and trust between local people and civic leaders that increase understanding of poverty
- Prompt changes in policy and practice within organisations
- Provide a positive example of co-production that Oldham can reference
- Develop new skills for all participants which can be applied to other programmes
- Maximise on the Local Motion investment by putting forward actions using the devolved budget.

OPAN’s work was supported by investment from Local Motion. Local Motion brings together six national funders and was created in response to funding squeezes and the increasing demand on charities and local grassroots organisations to plug the gap; people and communities who traditionally have little power, minimal resources and are often working in silo from one another. It seeks to understand local strengths, challenging typical power structures and hierarchies that become barriers to a community’s progress.

Oldham was one of six designated places in England and Wales that Local Motion supported, with long-term investment behind the Oldham Poverty Action Network.

The Vision for Oldham Local Motion is to:

- Strengthening community spirit
- Aligning efforts to tackle poverty
- Creating good jobs and social enterprise

The Oldham Poverty Action Network space is one of action and intention, a space where there is equity between people with Lived Experience, VCFSE organisations and public sector partners. Where, by coming together they can form solutions that they would be unable to achieve on their own, a space where strength in numbers can influence system change. The Network meet regularly, share insight, inform decision making and work collectively.

We have hosted a visit from the Local Motion funders and participants from the other five national areas for an insight into the work of OPAN in Oldham, and developed the network further by working with Hull University to produce research from the Network's findings and recommendations - demonstrating the impact of the work inside and outside the Borough.

OPAN has been a key part of advancing our approach to social change. By connecting people with lived experience, system partners, national funders and researchers to tackle the root cause of poverty, we can address people's experiences and challenges at the root cause.

[Advancing our approach to social change in Rochdale](#)

We recruited a Green Neighbourhood Facilitator, funded by Rochdale Borough Council, to galvanise engagement and collaborative action around the climate emergency within communities. The post also focused on community development and action connected to the Rochdale Borough Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Across the 12-month project, we provided development support to 28 organisations in Rochdale on:

- Funding - working with groups to secure funding for green initiatives and launching, supporting and promoting the Rochdale Climate Change Fund
- Green Environment Statement - helping groups set environmental sustainability goals
- Setting up groups - supported residents to set up 'green' groups
- Green volunteering - registered and connected volunteers with green roles
- One-off/short term support - advising groups and connecting them with our wider Action Together services

Seven groups were funded through the Rochdale Climate Change Fund, and we supported the funded groups to plan their activities, promoted the funded activities and events, signposted them towards further funding, and connected them with other community organisations to increase collaboration on future projects.

“Thank you so much for this funding and thank you so much for mentioning another potential funding stream.”

Christine, St John the Baptist Church, who received funding from the Rochdale Climate Change Fund

The Green Neighbourhood Facilitator acted as a conduit, connecting VCFSE organisations with borough-wide initiatives and attending steering groups and meetings to share the updates and insight of the sector.

One example of this was Great Big Green Week. Organisations, residents, and colleagues took part in activities connected to the GBGW, getting involved in activities like litter picking, growing, gardening and recycling.

Action Together staff also got involved by upcycling furniture, planting, recycling, and walking or using public transport instead of driving to venues.

We also represented the VCFSE sector at various groups and forums, including:

- Active travel forum
- Climate change steering group

And various other meetings and groups to update, share information and network with groups and services within Rochdale Borough.

A key piece of learning is the value of having this partnerships role. A plan for a VCFSE climate forum was developed but not implemented as the groups would have only had short term facilitation before the end of the project.

‘Thanks for all your help. I actually gave up on this park and put all my files and work on this park away as nobody was listening and I’ve been trying for years, but when Action Together came on board I knew there was a chance, so I’m glad I gave it another chance’

Sohail, Friends of Stoneyfield Park, who were supported to become a constituted group by Action Together’s Green Neighbourhood Facilitator

Our Economic Support Network was set up in Rochdale in 2020 to support people in the borough with things related to money. It brings together partners providing support during difficult times, as well as activities which positively improve people’s economic wellbeing.

This year the Network launched a Cost of Living Toolkit to help people facing financial difficulty identify where they can go for key support needs. It built on an existing toolkit produced during the pandemic and can be used by residents in Rochdale borough, or by frontline workers supporting others.

Having launched the toolkit, the network raised the issue of the lack of community advice available in other languages. While the toolkit helped connect people to support in the borough, the lack of advice in other languages meant many people remained unaware of the support available.

Action Together secured investment for a number of projects to trial a multilingual advice service. Deeplish and Spotland Community Centre, KYP, Wardleworth Community Centre, and a partnership project between Rochdale AFC, Aspire 2 Inspire and HMR Circle were supported by the network to provide multilingual provision to residents in their communities.

By bringing these projects together through the network and supporting them to develop the offer, we were able to raise the issue of multilingual advice provision and secure ongoing investment into multilingual community advice as part of Rochdale Borough Council's new community advice model.

9. Our partnership and collaboration work

We continued to play an active role in the facilitation and development of thematic networks across Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside.

We develop our networks based on the focus and needs of each borough, bringing together voluntary and community organisations, system partners, public sector representatives and local expertise to collaborate and address barriers and challenges in communities of place, identity and experience. [Find out more.](#)

Cost of Living Crisis

Action Together was involved in the response to the Cost of Living Crisis across our three boroughs.

We knew from the Covid pandemic that local organisations were essential in supporting residents through crisis and emergency. The sector always responds when needed, and their resilience, determination and focus on helping people in need is a constant.

We used our learnings from the pandemic to quickly pull together information for the voluntary sector so they could respond and find the support they needed to support others.

We used our website to share key information around Cost of Living, including directing organisations to funding, funding support, support with energy and bills, and resources:

<https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/cost-of-living>

We also collated locally focused information for each of the three boroughs. This included:

- Support available from Local Authorities
- Money Advice Referral Tools and Cost of Living Toolkit to help people get all the money that they are entitled to, and to reduce the need for referrals to food banks by increasing referrals to other kinds of support
- Information on Warm Spaces
- Information on locally-focused funding, training and support

In Oldham, we were an active partner in the borough's crisis response. Oldham Council committed £3m investment into the borough to help people through the crisis. Included in this package was additional emergency support for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector to support communities with food, energy and other essentials.

Action Together worked with Oldham Council and the local sector to deliver this support through One Oldham Fund - Cost of Living Crisis Support Grants, Cost of Living Household Support funding, registration and development of Warm Banks, and training and support including online Cost of Living Crisis sessions bringing together support services, the public sector and voluntary organisations to connect and share information on a weekly basis.

We were involved in the development and roll out of the Cost of Living Insight Tracker, pulling together insights from various services to give a fuller picture of issues and challenges people were facing.

Through the 'In Our Nature' programme, Action Together was approached by HUBBUB and the Co-op to pilot a cluster of Community Fridges in Oldham Borough. This cluster pilot is a first and Hubbub, the Co-op, Action Together and GMCA worked collaboratively with Oldham's community organisations to identify suitable locations and host organisations to ensure there is equal coverage across the districts.

A Community Fridge is a space that brings people together to eat, connect, learn new skills and reduce food waste. It is a site where local people can share food, including surplus from supermarkets, local food businesses, producers, households and gardens. Fridges are run by community groups in shared spaces such as schools, community centres and shops. Their main purpose is saving fresh food from going to waste. Action Together co-ordinated the launch of the GM Hubbub Community Fridge Project at Greenacres Community Centre, attended by Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham.

“People are clearly struggling and that’s why projects such as Community Fridges are so vital in providing a safety net for those who need it.”

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester

In Rochdale, we worked alongside Rochdale Council and the local sector to deliver Cost of Living funding to support people and families through the crisis, funding to produce Winter Warmer packs for residents, registration and funding of Warm Spaces, Household Support funding, and the production of a Cost of Living toolkit and Food Support Signposting information through the Economic Support Network and Food Solutions Network.

In Tameside, we provided influence for the sector in the response to the crisis and responded to our members' needs and those of the people they support. In all three boroughs we were involved in advising and helping develop Warm Spaces.

Place-based Community Explorers and Grassroots Gatherings

Community Explorer forums are our place-based grassroots forums, facilitated monthly in neighbourhoods across Oldham and Tameside. Bringing together voluntary and community organisations with local services and partners, they continue to be the vehicle used for grassroots collaboration and gathering community insight on the issues that matter most to people in their area. Led by local Community Development Workers, they are another key part of our place-based working model.

In Rochdale, we operate the similarly themed Grassroots Gatherings as a space for voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups in Rochdale Borough to come together, network and share information, ideas and resources.

Community-led approaches to tackling violent crime

Working alongside 10GM colleagues and securing investment from the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit, we recruited staff members to fill the roles of Violence Reduction Unit Facilitators in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside. Through this work we secured £100,000 in each locality to invest in community-led approaches to tackling violent crime.

[The Greater Manchester Combined Authority hosts the Violence Reduction Unit](#), which seeks to address the underlying causes of violence and work together with communities to prevent it. The roles include building relationships with partner organisations that are working in communities to reduce violence in the boroughs.

Poverty Truth Commission

In the previous year, Action Together was part of the development and launch of the Oldham Poverty Truth Commission.

The Commission's work continued at pace into this year, with Commissioners outlining a number of ideas based on their experiences. The Commission hosted an event with a wider group of 44 partners, including the Oldham Council CEO, a number of Councillors/Cabinet Members, managers within Adult Social Care, Directors of key charity anchors, and representatives from the NHS, to share these themes and ideas. Commissioners also attended a Poverty Summit and Greater Manchester-wide meeting of Poverty Truth Commissions.

The Poverty Truth Commission then developed an action plan, linking together activity happening across the borough and maximising resource and impact to deliver on its themes and ideas.

Rochdale Community Warehouse

During December we met with the Community Warehouse board of Trustees and decided that from March 2023 the Community Warehouse will cease to operate. This has been an incredible journey for the Rochdale team, from an emergency storage space during the pandemic to supporting a flourishing volunteer community operating the warehouse. We learnt many lessons and supported many amazing organisations, and are now repurposing the funding to support members of the Food Solutions Network to grow and sustain their own offers around food security.

Responding to international crises

In June, Pakistan was hit with extreme monsoon rainfall - more than twice the monthly average. People in the country had no access to clean water, food or shelter, with vital infrastructure, and farmland destroyed.

We supported the [DEC Pakistan Floods Appeal](#), using our communications channels and networks to direct people in our boroughs to donate to the appeal to support the initial response to the floods.

In February, a series of devastating earthquakes hit Syria and Turkey. We pulled together [information on local and national appeals that people could support](#), as well as appeals in Syria and Turkey. In response to public queries of ways to help, we directed people to appeals for clothing and essential items in Greater Manchester, and ways people could support monetarily.

GM VCSE Accord

The Greater Manchester Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector Accord is a three-way collaboration agreement between the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, and the VCSE Sector, with Action Together a representative of the GM VCSE Leadership Group.

It provides a framework for collaboration involving VCSE leaders and organisations in the delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) and in the thematic strategies and delivery plans that will exist to deliver the GMS vision, including the development of the strategic plan of the new GM Integrated Care System. The Accord sets out eight commitments, which we have ensured reflect the work of the PACT and VCFSE Alliance locally.

As part of engagement across Greater Manchester, in March a GM partnership event took place in Tameside, attended by each Action Together Locality Director and chaired by Tameside Council Leader Cllr Cooney, GMCA Communities and Co-operatives portfolio lead. The event was an opportunity for the VCSE sector in Greater Manchester, the GM Integrated Care Partnership, GMCA, and local authorities and statutory partners from across the ten Greater Manchester boroughs to share solutions to common challenges and look at what is needed locally to make the Accord's commitments a reality. Attendees also

heard summaries of VCSE sector activity across Greater Manchester that demonstrated the wide range of work taking place in the sector. [Find out more about the Accord.](#)

Rochdale Celebration Event

In March we hosted #CelebrateRochdale, a celebration event for the sector at Middleton Arena.

Over 100 local organisations, services and partners joined us to showcase the incredible talent and achievements of the sector in Rochdale Borough.

There were over 30 stalls, displaying the work of many different organisations including statutory and voluntary organisations, six member-led workshops including circus skills and a wildflower seed workshop, and ten speakers and performances that ranged from a cooking demonstration from Speaking of Foods to a Circus Performance from Skylight Circus' inspiring group the Silver Circus.

"Thank you for organising such a superb event. It appeared so seamless but that's thanks to your professionalism. It was interesting and productive to meet and talk to so many people from different charities and organisations - fun, too. Well done, you deserve a pat on the back!"

Wendy Fell, Rochdale Food Bank

"Thank you Action Together for hosting this amazing event."

Home Instead

"We had a fantastic time and it was a brilliant opportunity to network with other organisations, see what great work is happening in the Rochdale Borough and advise other professionals on housing options for their clients. We even had a donation dropped in to one of our boxes!"

The Bond Board

10. Growing and transforming as a local funder

Growing and transforming as a local funder in Oldham

In Oldham, we invested £1.46million into the local sector, strengthening communities, growing social action, and putting money in the hands of communities to support them to develop resilience and solve their own problems.

We see how communities have the passion, skills and drive to strengthen the places they live, but there's still a significant cost to charities and the voluntary and community sector in order to do this. Communities need tools and resources to succeed, with targeted strategic grant investment in partnership with public sector partners.

One of our key strategic ambitions is to grow and transform as a local funder, and the One Oldham Fund is at the centre of this ambition for Oldham.

This year, we became a recognised open and trusting grantmaker with IVAR.

IVAR designed eight commitments to managing grants and relationships:

Be Open

1. Don't waste time
2. Ask relevant questions
3. Accept risk
4. Act with urgency
5. Be open

Be Trusting

6. Enable flexibility
7. Communicate with purpose
8. Be proportionate

“Our funding commitments reflect our confidence and respect for the organisations that we fund. Our grants processes will be more open and transparent, and this will enable us to build an open, supportive and trusting relationship with grant applicants who will feel confident in approaching us and discussing their ideas with us, honestly and constructively.”

Sharon McGladdery, Programmes Manager for Action Together

Our work with IVAR made us think about how we can make our funding more accessible.

We wanted to reduce inequalities to access grant funding, and make the funding application process as simple and easy as possible. We recognised that having many different funding sources could complicate applications, and offering one fund, with one

single application process, would help direct funding to local organisations. And we also wanted to link the funding we provide up with our wider support offer.

The Covid-19 pandemic was a huge challenge to the VCFSE sector's resilience, and it was essential our member organisations remained viable. We worked alongside Oldham Council and local partners on the delivery of Oldham's Covid Recovery Strategy, developing funding priorities around:

1. Driving Equality
 - Enabling those adversely impacted by COVID-19 to access the help they need
 - Reducing inequality and building resilience across Oldham's communities
 - Reducing poverty and helping people get back on their feet
2. Promoting Health and Wellbeing and Supporting the Most Vulnerable
 - Continuing to contain the spread of COVID-19 in Oldham
 - Working with residents and communities to improve health and wellbeing, preventing illness and premature death
 - Safeguarding and supporting our most vulnerable resident

What We Did

With that in mind, we designed the One Oldham Fund.

The One Oldham Fund is a strategic single investment fund that uses pooled resources for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector in Oldham Borough.

We built on our work with IVAR to apply the open and trusting principles to the fund, creating one single process for applications.

We worked with our members who apply for local funding and co-designed the processes, simplifying the journey and making funding more accessible. We changed the focus of the process away from the traditional management practice of collecting information and shifted towards building relationships with local organisations to help people achieve what they're trying to do.

We developed our funding support to connect funded organisations more closely with our capacity building offer delivered by our Community Development team. Our Community Development Workers help organisations grow from the very start of an idea through to established charities and voluntary groups, and each successful applicant is linked up with their local Community Development Worker who checks in after funding is awarded. Many of the groups who apply for funding have been supported by their Community Development Worker to make their initial application, however for those who are just starting out or who have not been connected before, this ensures that no group falls through the net. Their knowledge, experience and connections are vital in supporting funded organisations to realise their projects, and help us deepen our connections with groups we've funded.

We wanted to distribute grants in a way that reflects the realities facing organisations now and in the future, helping essential local organisations respond to the demands on their services. We recognised that projects can often change in the time between an application and its delivery, and made ourselves available to groups throughout the funding process to support with any changes.

We designed the One Oldham Fund to accommodate different funding streams, meaning we could quickly respond to changing local needs and priorities without creating new processes and funds. This helped us quickly set up grants focused on Covid-19 recovery, Children and Young People, and the Cost of Living Crisis.

One Oldham Fund Micro grants were made available for unconstituted mutual aid groups to apply for up to £200, and for constituted groups to apply for up to £1,000. Small grants up to £10,000 were also made available. These grants provided pathways for groups onto other larger funding pots - groups could test an idea through a Micro grant, learn to work with funders with our support, and lead on to bringing in larger external funding to further develop their projects.

The One Oldham Fund has also provided a more accessible way for local supporters to donate into the sector. By building a recognisable fund, we could point people, partners and businesses to a direct way to support local organisations.

What was the result?

We launched the fund to the sector and hosted Meet The Funder sessions to provide more information about the fund and its various streams.

Since launch, we've added funding streams in response to local priorities. We've had good feedback from the sector and partners, and are now working with an external evaluation partner to independently evaluate the fund and its impact in Oldham communities. This will help us develop One Oldham Fund further, and understand more deeply the impact that been made at a local level through the funding.

We are embedding the One Oldham Fund as a funding approach to how we grant funding locally, with the intention to deliver all local grant funding through the fund.

We are working with public sector colleagues and funders on the sustainability of the fund, and increase investment in it from a wide range of partners and stakeholders.

Our learnings in the first year of the One Oldham Fund helped us work alongside Oldham Council on other funds such as the Cost of Living Crisis Response Fund and Household Support Fund, helping direct public sector investment to people in the borough most in need.

The One Oldham Fund has also helped us develop our strategic investment funds in Rochdale and Tameside, meaning we could build on our learnings across Action Together and work towards our aim to grow and transform as a local funder across all three of our boroughs.

Growing and transforming as a local funder in Rochdale

We were delighted this year to be recommissioned as the infrastructure organisation for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector in Rochdale Borough.

In 2019 we made a long-term commitment to the borough. We wanted to support local voluntary organisations in recruiting, retaining and developing their volunteers. We wanted to help turn people's community ideas into action. We wanted to connect communities, voluntary groups, charities, public sector partners and sector leaders to

create social change. And we wanted to provide and help secure much-needed funding for groups across Rochdale.

The recommissioning of our contract means we can continue to offer these core services to every voluntary and community organisation in Rochdale. Our membership continues to grow and we've become a familiar face people and organisations go to for support and advice.

Recommissioning also means we can get to know the sector more closely, too. If the first four years of our work in Rochdale was about introducing Action Together and responding to the needs of our members and communities, the next stage is embedding ourselves deeper into the borough - helping the sector grow and tackle more complex challenges.

Since we began working in the borough in 2019, we've seen the sector develop and groups respond to the needs of their communities. Through the Covid pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis, voluntary sector groups have been essential in supporting people across Rochdale.

By continuing our work in Rochdale, ourselves and the sector have the security of knowing we'll continue to be there to support them to respond to emergencies and social issues. We have the security of being able to commit to long term projects, while also trying new ways of working.

Funding for long term projects isn't just relevant to Action Together - it's key for the whole sector.

The 2021 State of the Sector survey told us that organisations want more long-term funding so they can plan ahead and have the security of knowing they can continue to support the communities who need them. Short term funding often leads to short term solutions, and we want to help the sector create deep and lasting change.

Rochdale Communities Fund

We're launching the Rochdale Communities Fund to respond to this funding need for the local sector.

The Rochdale Communities Fund is a single fund with different funding streams. It means we can quickly respond to different priorities and themes. It also benefits our members, as they can go to one funding source and one process instead of searching across many different grants.

We built on our learnings in Covid when we launched the Respond, Repair, Recover Fund in Rochdale, which focused on different pandemic priorities under one funding pot and process, as well as the pioneering work our Action Together colleagues in Oldham have done with the One Oldham Fund.

The new fund benefits applicants as it means there's one consistent, transparent process to follow, reducing the barriers to accessing funding for local groups. It's locally focused, with themes that respond to local needs and priorities. And we can connect our funding more closely with the development support our team can offer - so we can check in and support groups to realise their ideas beyond their funding application.

We know that running an organisation is challenging, particularly as so often funding will only cover projects rather than the core costs of running an organisation. One thing we are testing out with the Rochdale Communities Fund is how we can meet our strategic aim to

invest in the core of what organisations do. For grants up to £5,000, we are trialling new ways of doing this by investing an additional 20% of the value of the grant into that organisation. We also provide information about Full Cost Recovery and support to include this in future grant applications. We hope this will strengthen the resilience of groups and give smaller organisations the support and resources they need to develop.

The Rochdale Communities Fund will help us deepen our relationships with the voluntary organisations and charities doing amazing work across Rochdale Borough. Our ambition is to grow and transform as a local funder, and the Rochdale Communities Fund is central to that ambition.

Growing and transforming as a local funder in Tameside

With the **2022 Household Support Fund**, we demonstrated how the VCFSE sector can distribute crisis support flexibly, equitably and efficiently. Our members know their local communities and are able to get resources to the people who need them most. With the opportunity to be flexible with their delivery, they could adapt this support as needs in communities changed.

One of the key pieces of learning is how the funding not only made a huge difference for individuals, but also had outcomes that reached all parts of the system.

Organisations and volunteers felt more resilient when they could make a practical difference for people, and the support for the 32 projects created new relationships between community groups and statutory services that have continued since.

As the local VCFSE infrastructure organisations, Action Together has a long track record of delivering funding in a way that works for groups. We were able to make decisions quickly, get investment to the right place, and build a team around the programme with expertise in poverty, food security and support for families.

Our Development team worked with all the funded groups to help them make the biggest impact possible, and as an IVAR accredited open and trusting grant-maker we were also able to make sure due diligence and monitoring was done in a way that worked for grassroots community groups - reducing barriers and helping local organisations act quickly and efficiently.

How we transformed our funding

Our work with IVAR to become an open and trusting grantmaker made us think about how we can make our funding more accessible to our members in Tameside.

In line with our objective to grow and transform as a local funder, we reviewed key parts of our funding process through the Household Support Fund:

- **Unrestricted and long-term funding** - Short-term funding can lead to short-term solutions, but long-term funding recognises that needs in communities change over time. Organisations can adapt what type of support they offer in response to what their communities need, with ongoing support and advice from our Community Development Officers

- **Reviewing our decision-making** - Our staff already work closely with organisations and are place-based in local communities. This helps us understand specific community needs and how groups are responding. Involving staff in panels and decision-making connects that insight with targeted funding
- **Reviewing our application process** - We simplified the application process while ensuring we still collected the information we need, and paid funds quickly so funded projects could begin as soon as possible
- **Offering wraparound support** - Our team carried out governance checks on funded organisations, and we connected our Development support to projects we'd funded. This meant our support didn't end when funding was delivered, deepening our relationships with local organisations and meaning we could support groups through delivery, potential changing circumstances, and the development of their projects

Groups reported that it made a big difference to get unrestricted funding that meant they could act quickly and use the funds when and where they were most needed.

“We have been able to be responsive to the need we see around us, such as providing a family with no kitchen with a slow cooker and microwave and providing washing machines for families with children with incontinence. Workers carry vouchers on them to enable immediate support, for example a family with no food on Friday night where the mother was desperate and suicidal. Household Support has allowed OKE to provide a solution, families have been overwhelmed that something can be solved so quickly.”

Our Kids Eyes (OKE)

What we learnt

Build relationships and trust with local people - Groups found that offering practical support alongside their regular offer helped build relationships and trust with people. Gradually people felt more comfortable to talk about what was going on for them, and groups could act on what they were hearing.

Community Cutz's project supported around 100 people with food parcels, food vouchers for local café, gloves, blankets and toiletries.

“We built up trust and relationships because we were helping people in a different way. People started to open up about issues and we could respond and support. For example, we were able to help someone to fix a broken washing machine, and someone else had been struggling to put up their pictures in their house and we were able to do this for them - if we didn't know, we wouldn't have been able to help.”

Community Cutz

More collaboration between groups and services - Offering crisis support and practical resources enabled groups to build ongoing relationships with other VCFSE organisations and with public sector services. Health visitors, social workers, schools and many others all referred into the support offer, often leading to ongoing collaboration.

The White Goods and Furniture Project was a partnership between Emmaus, Active Tameside and Action Together to address bed poverty and provide essentials. Referrals came from a range of statutory services working with children and families who were living in poverty.

“We were able to help 43 families, including 27 with children getting their own beds for the first time. This had a huge impact, helping families fleeing domestic abuse or who had been homeless to rebuild their lives. Working closely between organisations and with statutory services, we were able to reach families who needed us most and provide wider support to avoid escalation to children’s services.”

Emmaus, Action Together and Active Tameside

Reaching all parts of our communities - Funding groups that already had relationships in marginalised communities meant that support was more accessible to people who face barriers to accessing services.

“We were able to provide culturally appropriate food and train people regularly to batch cook, food hygiene etc. Referrals come from Social Prescribers and social workers so we were able to help those most vulnerable, for example Asylum Seekers and Refugees and those experiencing domestic violence.”

Syria Relief

11. How we invested in the sector

This year we secured and invested £2,526,834 into the sector, supporting 819 local organisations to get started, develop their ideas, try new projects, and respond to the needs of their communities.

In Oldham, we developed our One Oldham Fund, adding strands across the year to focus on different priorities. When we launched our One Oldham Fund - Medium Grants, where up to £25,000 was available for Community Anchor organisations, the response was overwhelming as we received four times as many applications as we were able to fund.

We launched a new strand of the One Oldham Fund for Children and Young People, with funding provided by Oldham Council to invest in the capacity of the VCFSE Sector to improve the lives of children, young people and their families.

We then added Developing Recovery Communities. This investment from Oldham Council is intended to improve outcomes for individuals in structured treatment plans recovering from substance and alcohol abuse. The funding supports VCFSE organisations to develop peer support networks for those in recovery.

We also added the One Oldham Fund - Cost-of-Living Crisis Response Fund. This funding was part of Oldham Council's £3m package of measures in response to the crisis, with £100,000 of funding available. Oldham VCFSE organisations could apply for up to £1,000 to deliver activities and services to support their communities through the Cost of Living Crisis. The work we'd done in creating the One Oldham Fund meant we could be agile and respond to get this funding out as soon as possible.

"I look forward to Thursdays, I get to go to the breakfast club and see all my friends. Best thing about it is that I get to enjoy a nice meal in a warm place. Things are so expensive now, just buying six eggs cost me £2.40 today. I'm really grateful that I'm able to come to WCWA, relax in a warm place, and share my concerns to other people who are struggling, too."

Service user at Westwood Coldhurst Women's Association. WCWA received One Oldham Fund - Cost of Living Crisis Response funding

In Rochdale, the Respond, Repair, Recover fund continued to support groups in the borough.

Case Study: Littleborough FOOD Club

Littleborough FOOD Club received Respond, Repair, Recover funding to support one of Family Action's FOOD (Food On Our Doorstep) Clubs.

Family Action's FOOD Club project was created with the aim of providing regular access to high quality food at a greatly reduced cost to families at risk of food insecurity.

"Your funding brought great benefits to our FOOD Club members, increasing their physical and mental health, reducing their sense of isolation, whilst relieving them from any financial pressure."

"It is such a big help to get this extra food at this time. All my bills have gone up and it's really hard to make ends meet."

Littleborough FOOD Club

When the fund was paused, we launched four new funds:

- Developing Recovery Communities, grants of up to £5,000
- Communities Effected by Racial Inequality, grants of up to £10,000
- Winter Food Fund, grants of up to £2,000
- Climate Emergency Grants, grants of up to £1,500

We then added new funds in response to the Cost of Living Crisis:

- Cost of Living Fund, grants of up to £2,500 for projects that support people through the crisis
- Winter Warmer Packs, grants of up to £500 to create Winter Warmer packs to distribute to people the organisations support

At the end of the year, we developed plans to launch a new single investment fund in Rochdale. The Rochdale Communities Fund is a mutual fund to invest in and strengthen Rochdale Borough's VCFSE sector. It funds groups and projects which directly benefit local people and communities, delivered by VCFSE organisations with roots in the borough.

The Rochdale Communities Fund can support groups to try out a new project or sustain one that already exists. Action Together will provide members with development support, training and other infrastructure alongside grant funding.

In Tameside, our Tameside Community Wellbeing fund supported VCFSE organisations to deliver services that will sustain or improve the wellbeing offer for communities in Tameside (this can include improving health and wellbeing, tackling poverty or reducing inequality) and tackle a genuine gap in provision, informed by local people. The funds are tiered to ensure that all sizes of organisations can apply.

We built on the success of Tameside's Use Your Energy fund by adding new tiers of grants: Use Your Energy 500 to get ideas off the ground, and Use Your Energy 2000 to develop and grow ideas.

"Use Your Energy is really important because it gives us the opportunity to access funding so that we can put such successful workshops on in our

community, it really means a lot to these young people to stay more active and be more involved in their community. It's really exciting for Denton. Thank you, it means so much to us."

Ensemble Theatre and Dance

Funding remains the number one focus for our membership, who were still recovering from loss of income during the Covid pandemic and were then hit by rising costs through the Cost of Living Crisis. We continued to deliver our fortnightly funding ebulletin, leading to increased engagement and applications both for our own and for external funding, while our Find Funding page remained the most popular on our website with 19,190 visits. Alongside this, our Development team continued to support groups with bid writing, advice on funds to apply for, and help in demonstrating the impact that funding had made.

"Without your help, support and guidance through the application process we probably wouldn't have even been shortlisted, never mind actually being granted the funds!"

Ambitions, Ashton

"I approached Action Together because I needed help with funding to establish a base for me to run my homeless outreach project. They helped me first with a microgrant to pay for rent at Infinity Initiatives Café. A few weeks later I was saying I could do with a bit more funding and Action Together put me in touch with the Tameside Community Recovery Fund and I was able to get funding from them as well."

Ryan, Operation Joy, Manchester City Mission

Case Study: Sally's Social Prescribing Story

Sally is 65 years old and lived alone. She was referred to Social Prescribing by her Housing Officer as she was feeling very lonely and isolated. She was suffering with low mood and suicidal thoughts, and had been put in touch with Social Prescribing for social activities in Oldham. Sally's only daughter lived in Rossendale, and she wanted to move closer to be nearer to her family. However, she had been told she didn't have a housing need and would be on the waiting list for approximately five years.

Social Prescribing Link Workers work with people to find out more about their challenges, interests and what they want to achieve. They offer practical, social and emotional support to people, listening to their needs before connecting them with local community and voluntary groups offering a range of activities and services.

A Social Prescribing Link Worker chatted with Sally to find out more about her. Sally said she was feeling really low and felt like there was no solution for her. Although she had been referred for social activities, through discussion with her Link Worker Sally shared that what really mattered to her was to be near her daughter. Sally also shared that her dog had passed away six weeks earlier, and she felt like she couldn't face day-to-day life anymore on her own.

Despite the circumstances being different to the original referral, her Link Worker adapted to what Sally needed and helped Sally address the root cause of her health challenges.

The Link Worker agreed a course of action with Sally, and spoke with her housing provider to find out if they had any vacant properties in the Rossendale area.

Sally and the provider found accommodation in Rossendale and the Link Worker supported Sally to apply for property. The application was successful, and the Link Worker then helped Sally find a removal company.

Within a few months Sally had moved into her new property near to her daughter. The new accommodation also has on-site social activities - the original prompt for the Social Prescribing referral - through which Sally made new friends.

"You saved my life! When I was told it would be five years on the waiting list to move near my daughter I had given up.

"I can't thank you enough, you don't know how much you have helped me. I've already met my new neighbour who is lovely!

"My new property is less than a mile from my daughter and it's changed my life and given me a reason to live.

"It's the best thing that has happened to me and I would never look back - thank you."

Sally, Social Prescribing client

Case Study: Quiser's Social Prescribing Story

Quiser found Action Together's Social Prescribing service through information provided at The Anthony Seddon Centre in Ashton.

Jyoti is the Social Prescribing Officer for Ashton and runs a drop-in session every week at The Anthony Seddon Centre. The drop-ins are a chance to ask questions about Social Prescribing, find out more about what activities are happening in the community, and make a referral into Social Prescribing.

Quiser met Jyoti at a drop-in session and was able to ask about the connections he could make, and how engaging with the service could help support his health and wellbeing.

Jyoti completed a referral with Quiser, with a follow-up face-to-face appointment scheduled for the following week and a texted reminder of the date.

Meeting Social Prescribing clients and people interested in the service in community venues means people can be in familiar and comfortable surroundings to discuss their health, and Jyoti spoke privately with Quiser about what he would like to get from Social Prescribing.

Quiser was looking for cooking groups in his area, and find out about ways to improve his health and wellbeing.

Following the discussion, Quiser and Jyoti set goals together. Firstly, for Quiser to contact his GP for medical advice on his health. Jyoti worked with Quiser to help him prepare for this telephone call, noting questions that he could ask that would help him get the information he needs.

"In the past I have not felt confident talking to my GP, but Jyoti helped me to prepare. I made a note of the questions to ask, and this really helped."

Secondly, Jyoti provided Quiser with the detail of local groups across Tameside that deliver cooking sessions. Quiser loved the sound of the cooking course at New Life Church in Ashton. Jyoti contacted New Life Church with Quiser's consent and found out more about the course, passing this on to Quiser who then signed up for the course.

"Jyoti gave me the details for local cooking sessions near where I live, and she gave me the confidence to sign up right away."

Action Together's Social Prescribing team centre their work on what matters to their clients. Jyoti introduced Quiser to activities not only in Ashton, but across the borough too, including Café Pop in Hyde.

"Since working with the Social Prescribing team, I have achieved both of the goals I set with Jyoti."

“I have been able to speak to my GP more confidently and I am looking forward to starting the cooking sessions at New Life Church.

“I am glad that I attended the drop-in and got to work with Jyoti, as it's helped me to open up my world.”

Jyoti is based at The Anthony Seddon Centre every Friday from 10am to 12pm.

“I have had positive feedback from our members who have said that Jyoti has provided them with really good support from the drop-ins and one to one casework.

“I am now actively promoting Jyoti’s drop-ins here.”

Ann, The Anthony Seddon Centre

Miles of Smiles

Miles of Smiles is a community transport scheme where volunteer drivers take people to and from health appointments in Tameside. Action Together administers the scheme, recruits volunteer drivers, and links the service with our Social Prescribing team and their clients.

After a decrease in journeys during COVID lockdowns, when the service adapted to take people to vaccination clinics and deliver food parcels, we saw a return to near pre-pandemic levels of demand. 67% of our passengers are aged over 76, and our volunteers act as both transport and a support for people who may be suffering from poor health and isolation.

In total this year, Miles of Smiles completed 4,354 journeys, across a total of 40,111 miles.

Big Local Oldham

We continued our work as the Local Trusted Organisation (funded by Big Local) with the Oldham Big Local Partnership Board. Q1 marked the start of year 2 of Big Local Oldham’s (BLO) final three-year plan. The focus for the partnership is on the legacy that BLO will leave behind. The Big Local area saw increased activities and resident participation, and the BLO Community Development worker was contracted for another year to engage with residents and organisations. We worked with organisations in the BLO area to look at longer term plans and supporting their sustainability, as well as developing a year-long training programme to increase the skills of both residents and volunteers who support the organisations and activities in the BLO area.

The BLO team worked in partnership with Oldham Council's Clean Streets Team to design and support two engagement sessions in Clarksfield. 288 households were spoken to and most of those households positively engaged. Activities that came from the work included removal of contaminated bins, bin repairs, delivery of new recycling bins and upgrading to larger bins.

Q2 saw the implementation of the year-long training plan which was designed by the Big Local resident Board members. Free training was available throughout the year for organisations in the Big Local Areas covering subjects such as Food Awareness and First Aid for Parents, with each session fully booked. Four residents also attended individual football coaching sessions to continue to run football groups Big Local have supported.

During Q3 we continued to support the Big Local Oldham Partnership who have continued to focus on their legacy for when their plan ends in 2024. A new alley way refurbishment has been completed in Clarksfield and an IT suite refurbished in Greenacres. Both projects are well used by their local communities. A number of new and existing projects were supported around the theme of health and wellbeing of the local residents, such as a bereavement café, family activities and sporting activities for both young people and adults.

The Big Local Oldham Board have been keen to complement the existing support for residents around the Cost of Living Crisis and provided winter hampers to 40 Big Local residents.

Finally the Big Local Oldham Board funded end of year celebrations to thank the volunteers whose hard work made their projects possible.

During Q4 the Big Local Partnership focussed on planning for the final year of their plan and the legacy that Big Local will leave behind. The Board has agreed to continue to fund a number of activities during 2023 - 2024 including a men's group, a knit and chat group, a bereavement café, weekly cooking sessions, over 30's football sessions and a weekly brunch. We will work with these groups to help them become sustainable after Big Local Oldham has ended.

Healthwatch Oldham

“2022/3 was a challenging year for some local residents. Healthwatch Oldham received feedback expressing concerns about the effects of the rising cost of living on health and also regarding difficulties with accessing local health and care services as our colleagues work hard to recover from the impact of the pandemic. Against this backdrop, our staff have been working to hear the voices of local people and to represent and act on this feedback.”

Jacquie Wood, Healthwatch Oldham Chair

Healthwatch Oldham's annual report highlights some of their key achievements and work over the last 12 months serving the people of Oldham.

This year's report is particularly pertinent as they have just marked their 10th anniversary since they were established to serve the local community back in 2013. Throughout these ten years, they have aimed to increase their community networks, strengthen their information and signposting work, and bring change to local health and social care systems through their work around patient voice and patient experience.

Healthwatch Oldham hope to build on last year's activity by working with local people as well as Health and Social Care system leaders, to improve services for the people of Oldham.

[Read Healthwatch Oldham's annual report.](#)

Healthwatch Tameside

“We are pleased to be sharing with you our Annual Report 2022/23. The report highlights our commitment and tireless efforts to ensure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better.”

Tracey McErlain-Burns, Chair, Healthwatch Tameside

Healthwatch Tameside's annual report highlights their accomplishments over the past year, which includes the impact they have achieved working with communities, the projects they have undertaken and a look forward to their future priorities.

This year too marks a special 10-year anniversary milestone for Healthwatch Tameside. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. In the past 12 months, 765 people have shared their experiences of health and social care services with Healthwatch Tameside, helping to raise awareness of issues and influence system leaders.

They have also developed research projects looking directly into issues around the cost of living crisis and people's experience of mental health services in Tameside. This in-depth insight led to the publication of reports focused on delays in non-urgent care and changes to the way people access health and care services.

[Read Healthwatch Tameside's annual report.](#)

13. Action Together in Greater Manchester

Action Together is one of the founding partners of 10GM, and Action Together's CEO is one of the four Directors. 10GM is a joint venture to support the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Greater Manchester (GM). We're a collection of local infrastructure organisations (LIOs) operating strategically and collaboratively as an integral part of the wider GM strategy.

The partner organisations that make up 10GM are Action Together <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk/>, Bolton CVS <https://www.boltoncvs.org.uk/>, Macc <https://www.macc.org.uk/> and Salford CVS <https://www.salfordcvs.co.uk/>. Find out more about the range of current work [here](#).

Alongside 10GM, we:

- Secured £345,000 for workforce initiatives to improve recruitment and retention of paid staff within the sector. We then recruited a Strategic Lead to drive the Workforce Project forward in partnership with all localities
- Worked to create more opportunities for the sector in relation to work and skills. We reached agreement that Greater Manchester Combined Authority will release grant investment to the VCFSE sector to broaden the routes to market and work and skills opportunities
- Secured £200,000 to further strengthen the relationships between the Primary Care Network and the VCFSE sector through four neighbourhood pilot sites in localities. We worked with an evaluation company to demonstrate the impact work, which Action Together's CEO presented at the GM ICS Health Inequalities Deep Dive event
- Secured resource and recruited a Population Health VCFSE Strategic Lead. The lead has been reporting from and demonstrating the impact of the above pilot sites, and engaging with the sector in Live Well Innovation Sites. Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside are all 'Live Well' Innovation sites, and each locality has been asked to submit ideas about areas for development and learning. Action Together's CEO is the co-chair of the GM Population Health Sub-Group and has contributed to the Live Well Steering Group and the GM Build Back Fairer framework to tackle health inequality
- Represented the sector in the new Shared Prosperity Partnership Board and GM Reform Executive, on which Action Together's CEO was nominated to chair. 10GM worked with Greater Manchester Combined Authority to initiate and manage the Shared Prosperity Fund
- Secured investment for the second stage of the GM Integrated Care Partnership Big Conversation. Action Together's team held ICP focus groups with a diverse range of community groups in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside
- Hosted an assembly showcasing learning from the VCFSE sector's Afghanistan and Ukraine refugee response
- Contributed to the GM Moving Conference, where Action Together's CEO was part of the Leaders' Panel and Round Table session. 10GM is launching investment to support two community-led partnerships to achieve Sports England's strategic ambitions for 'Connected Communities'

14. Our future plans

Our focus across the next year will be to:

- Embed and deliver against year one of our strategic plan. Each of our three locality teams has reviewed its priorities and will deliver this within our Operational Delivery Framework
- Continue to work as a partner within our co-owned social enterprise 10GM to ensure we are able to work collaboratively across Greater Manchester to achieve our shared ambitions and secure opportunities that benefit Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside
- Scale up and coordinate the sector's offer in each locality and across Greater Manchester to help people most affected by the Cost-of-Living Crisis
- Appraise and develop our support offer to VCSFE organisations who reach a crisis point and are at risk of closure. Inflation costs are continuing to rise, and ongoing cuts to the public sector pass on to the VCFSE sector. With the demand for the work of our sector intensifying we will increase our work in each locality and in Greater Manchester to increase the resilience of the sector and raise awareness of its fragility
- Secure resources to develop our capabilities to provide a stronger offer to VCFSE groups and organisations by employing a VCFSE Workforce Lead and providing funding for bursaries and engagement from the VCFSE sector to support their workforce needs
- Invest internally to provide the capacity to support our own workforce, both in terms of learning and development opportunities and in their wellbeing
- Dedicate capacity to drive forward our internal inclusion and diversity commitments, with a focus in this next year to deliver the second phase of our anti-racism action plan
- Further develop our internal commitment to tackling the climate emergency and commit to a net-zero action plan by the end of 2024

15. Our purpose and values

Our purpose and charitable objects

'To strengthen the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector, maximising opportunities to create positive social change, promote social justice and harness social benefit.'

Our charitable objects are to:

- promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the public, principally but not exclusively in the local government areas of Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside and the surrounding area and, in particular, to build the capacity of third sector organisations and provide them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose.
- promote, organise and facilitate co-operation and partnership working between third sector, statutory and other relevant bodies in the achievement of the above purposes within the area of benefit.

Our mission is to strengthen the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector, increase individual social action, and work across organisational and sector boundaries to maximise every opportunity to harness social good and create social change. There are an estimated 3,788 voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside according to our State of the Sector research.

Public Benefit - how we decide who to help

We make decisions in line with the Public Benefit guidance (2014) and ensure:

- Decisions are taken in line with our charitable objects
- That we adhere to our values in the decision we take
- We prioritise our services to help those that would be unable to pay for the support and / or who are tackling a significant social injustice
- We identify and minimise risks
- There is no personal benefit (or advantage) given to trustees or staff

Our values

Action Together's values underpin all our activities including our strategy, operational plan, workforce development and recruitment. We want to be held to account on our values, as ways of working that we will always strive for.

Believe it's possible - vision and ideas matter. We have confidence in the power of people and communities and strive to release their potential to create the widest possible benefits whilst promoting social justice.

Strengthen others - we work in ways that strengthen people, places, and partnerships. We achieve this by working collaboratively, sharing skills, and developing relationships between people, groups and agencies.

Be true - we are brave enough to share constructive insight to make progress. Our unique insight comes from our connections with, and amplification of, the diverse range of voices of people and groups that we work with.

16. Structure, Governance and Management

Governance

The Board of Trustees is the governing body of Action Together and is ultimately responsible for everything the incorporated charity does. Action Together's board can have a maximum of 14 Board members, 12 of which are elected from its membership, with the ability to co-opt a further two people.

Action Together's Honorary Officers are:

- Chair - Camilla Guereca
- Vice Chair - Adrian Ball
- Treasurer - Anne Parkes

A full list of the trustees can be found at <http://www.actiontogether.org.uk/our-trustees>

Board members are supported in their role by receiving an induction and support from the CEO and other trustees. Trustees are encouraged to take up our training and development opportunities, as well as external training that is of interest.

Action Together has two standing committees that steer the work of Healthwatch Oldham and Healthwatch Tameside. These have their own terms of reference but ultimate accountability of the contracts and employment is with Action Together.

Structure and management

The day to day running of the charity is handled through a scheme of delegation to the Chief Executive, Liz Windsor-Welsh. The Chief Executive leads the Senior Leadership Team, which consists of the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Operations, and the three Directors responsible for the management of our locality teams in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside. We have a team which averaged a headcount of 80.75, and FTE was 69.7.

Our systems

Our operating systems and processes continue to evolve to ensure that we are compliant with legislation, improve our efficiency and productivity, and offer an easily accessible service to all members of the community.

Our hybrid working model continued this year, with most staff mixing home, office and community-based working. We stayed connected through Microsoft Teams, our 3CX phone system, and Sharepoint server.

We continued to develop our CiviCRM database. We introduced a Casework monitoring module to better track and understand insight coming from our members to our staff teams, and we supported the roll out with further staff training. The Membership module and Healthcheck were rolled out for teams working with our organization/group members. Work on our Grants module progressed so that all grants that go live in the new financial year can be added to the database.

Our website

We have continued to develop <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk> to meet the needs of our members.

Our website saw another year-on-year increase in visits, with a total of 748,812 hits. This is an increase of 90,000 (+14%) on the previous year, and an increase of 179,000 (+31%) on two years ago.

Our most popular pages were Find Funding, Volunteering, and Jobs listings.

Our internal development

A key part of making our new strategic objectives possible is to support our workforce. We want to improve our processes and practices to make them easier and more accessible for staff. With that in mind we started a major project to align our planning and management information systems. This will be implemented and developed through an iterative process in the next financial year.

Ultimately we will have a system where the organisation's strategic objectives, locality operational plans, individual staff workplans, and monitoring data are connected digitally. This will assist in business planning, quality and performance assurance and risk management information. All our teams play a key role in making sure we deliver our strategy, and this will help connect our staff across Action Together with our overall aims and objectives.

We have a number of staff groups to address internal and external processes and systems. These thematic groups are cross-locality and membership is open to all staff members on a voluntary basis.

Our internal Anti-Racism Working Group continued, with 17 staff members joined by one of our board members. We held an all-staff survey, and based on staff feedback we:

- Delivered inclusive anti-racism training. We commissioned two training sessions for our staff and board on recognising structural racism, and white supremacy, privilege and intersectionality
- Introduced Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training as part of our mandatory induction and annual training

- Trialled adding bank holidays to staff annual leave allowance, so staff could choose to work bank holidays or book those days off (trial to take place for 22/23 year)
- Added new questions into our supervision form and developed guidance for managers to ensure that all staff will have regular, protected 1:1 time where they can discuss any equalities issues they have experienced, witnessed or addressed in the course of their work.
- Reviewed our database and processes to ensure we better track equalities data to understand our reach and any unintentional barriers or inequalities of access

Mandatory safeguarding training was rolled out and we reached our targets of 95% compliance for Adult safeguarding Level 1, 100% compliance for Adult Safeguarding Level 3 and we have hit over the 85% compliance rate needed for Adult safeguarding level 2 (93%) and Childrens safeguarding levels 1 and 2 (88%).

We successfully introduced and moved our HR processes onto the online HR management tool Breathe.

We continue to ensure we are compliant with GDPR data protection, through our Data Protection Officer, and the latest employment legislation. Our first quarterly data protection audit was undertaken (with the Healthwatch Tameside team) and no concerns were identified. We also successfully republished our annual NHS Data Security and Protection Toolkit assessment. Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) was successfully implemented for all our staff Microsoft 365 accounts, to improve cyber security. Four statutory data subject requests were successfully addressed, all within the one month legal timeframe.

We recruited an Operations Manager, in order to support us to develop our internal systems, support staff adaptation to changes, and ensure we have a point of contact for systems and processes.

Risk management

All risks are identified and logged in a central file. All risks are escalated to the CEO and action taken according to the individual risk. Any risks that need to be escalated to the Board is done through email/phone if an immediate decision is required or through the quarterly board papers. All complex projects have a risk plan as part of the project initiation process. All risks, safeguarding and operations are logged. We have a named Designated Safeguarding Officer and a Data Protection Officer.

17. Financial review

Funds at 31 March 2023 amounted to £4,890,976 of which £3,574,207 were restricted. Expenditure in the year met the objectives that were required by the principal funding sources, as described in their funding agreements.

Restricted funds held at the end of the year have been carried forward for the future support of specific projects. Action Together recognises that it is responsible and

accountable for public funds. It further recognises that it needs clarity and transparency in demonstrating how these funds are managed and, in particular, the level of funds that it judges appropriate to hold in reserve.

The Trustees have established a reserves policy which requires:

- Reserves are maintained at a level which ensures that Action Together has the ability to meet its ongoing commitments with sufficient reserves to cover a minimum of six month's running costs, redundancy costs and core committed costs
- A proportion of reserves are maintained in a readily realisable form
- The calculation of the reserves is an integral part of the organisation's planning, budget and forecast cycle and will take into account:
 - o Risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure being different from that budgeted
 - o Planned activity level
 - o Organisation's commitments
- The reserves fund is managed and monitored at each Finance Sub-Group meeting and reported back to the full Board of Trustees within the financial reporting procedures.

The calculated reserves fund will be reviewed quarterly to ensure it takes account of changing circumstances.

The reserves position as at 31 March 2023 is as follows:

Total requirement of six months running costs, redundancy and committed core costs:
£595,599

Total unrestricted reserves, cash and investments (net of tangible fixed assets):
£1,294,639

Investment funds are held in medium risk portfolios with the aim of growing the funds over a medium to long term (depending on the withdrawals made during the year) but the volatility of the markets over the last three to four years in particular has seen some variation in gains/losses at the year end in this respect. Despite this volatility the investments have seen average growth over the last seven years of between 3.25% and 4.9% per annum. The Board of Trustees through the Finance Sub Group review the performance of those funds and are satisfied that they are still meeting the original aims of the investments made.

Remuneration rates of key management personnel is set by the Board of Trustees via the Finance Sub Group who use a number of benchmarks and parameters to set these rates. This involves reference to local authority spine rates published in Oldham, Rochdale and Tameside, relevant job descriptions and levels of responsibility. In addition further benchmarking against other charities of similar size are taken into account. Action Together is a supporter of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.

The trustees have assessed the current financial standing of the organisation with reference to current activity, projections, cash flows and reserves and have concluded that the charity is a going concern.

18. Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name: Action Together CIO

Charity registration number: 1165512

Principal office:

80 Union Street
Oldham
OL1 1DJ

Trustees:

- N. Akhter
- A. Ball
- A Begum
- C. Guereca
- N. Hussain
- J. Mellor
- A. Parkes
- J. Rehman
- M. Sarwar
- A. Wiggans
- R. Yaseen
- J. Yates

Auditor:

Feltons Chartered Accountants
1 The Green
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 1PL

Bankers:

Unity Trust Bank PLC
9 Brindley Place
Birmingham
B1 2HP

Investments:

CCLA Investment
Management
Senator House
85 Queen Victoria Street
London
EC4V 4ET

Blackrock Investment
Management (UK) Ltd
12 Throgmorton Avenue
London
EC2N 2DL

Castlefield
9th Floor
111 Piccadilly
Manchester
M1 2HY

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity, and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP
- Make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations, and the provisions of the Trust Deed. They are also 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 trustees' annual report was approved on [25 September 2023](#) on behalf of the board of trustees by: [Camilla Guereca, Chair, Action Together](#)



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTION TOGETHER CIO

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Action Together CIO (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

In our opinion the financial statements:

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

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTION TOGETHER CIO (CONTINUED)

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements which give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTION TOGETHER CIO (CONTINUED)

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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

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

- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements through discussion with management and those charged with governance, including financial reporting and taxation legislation. We considered that extent of compliance with those laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement items.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations. We remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit
- We addressed the risk of fraud through management override by reviewing the appropriateness of a sample of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making key accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business that we come across throughout the audit.

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

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACTION TOGETHER CIO (CONTINUED)



Feltons Chartered Accountants

Chartered Accountants
& Statutory Auditors

1 The Green

London

TW9 1PL

Date: 4/10/23

Feltons Chartered Accountants are eligible to act as auditors in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Income from:					
Charitable activities	4	-	6,410,244	6,410,244	6,828,303
Other trading activities	5	69,522	-	69,522	77,506
Investments	6	34,473	6,901	41,374	5,603
Total income		103,995	6,417,145	6,521,140	6,911,412
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7,8	25,594	1,075	26,669	(56,849)
Charitable activities	10	23,676	6,355,536	6,379,212	6,075,891
Total expenditure		49,270	6,356,611	6,405,881	6,019,042
Net income before net gains/(losses) on investments		54,725	60,534	115,259	892,370
Net gains/(losses) on investments		90,283	(58,604)	31,679	25,177
Net movement in funds		145,008	1,930	146,938	917,547
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		1,171,761	3,572,277	4,744,038	3,826,491
Net movement in funds		145,008	1,930	146,938	917,547
Total funds carried forward		1,316,769	3,574,207	4,890,976	4,744,038

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 63 to 84 form part of these financial statements.

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2023**

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	15	22,130	21,176
Investments	17	1,206,253	1,368,754
Investment property	16	-	150,000
		<u>1,228,383</u>	<u>1,539,930</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	18	200,481	289,944
Cash at bank and in hand		3,648,327	3,067,363
		<u>3,848,808</u>	<u>3,357,307</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	(186,215)	(153,199)
		<u>3,662,593</u>	<u>3,204,108</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>4,890,976</u>	<u>4,744,038</u>
Net assets excluding pension asset		<u>4,890,976</u>	<u>4,744,038</u>
Total net assets		<u><u>4,890,976</u></u>	<u><u>4,744,038</u></u>
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	20	3,574,207	3,572,277
Unrestricted funds	20	1,316,769	1,171,761
Total funds		<u><u>4,890,976</u></u>	<u><u>4,744,038</u></u>

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 25th September 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



C. Guereca



A. Parkes

The notes on pages 63 to 84 form part of these financial statements.

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash used in operating activities	209,707	403,719
Cash flows from investing activities		
Dividends, interests and rents from investments	41,374	5,603
Proceeds from the sale of tangible fixed assets	265,000	-
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(14,297)	(12,935)
Proceeds from sale of investments	84,402	1,939
Purchase of investments	(5,222)	(24,563)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	371,257	(29,956)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Net cash provided by financing activities	-	-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	580,964	373,763
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	3,067,363	2,693,600
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	3,648,327	3,067,363

The notes on pages 63 to 84 form part of these financial statements

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a registered charity in England and Wales and is unincorporated. The address of the principal office is 80 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DJ.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair' view. This departure has involved following the Charities SORP (FRS 102) published in October 2019 rather than the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005 which has since been withdrawn.

Action Together CIO meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

2.2 Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

2.3 Income

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Grants are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet. Where income is received in advance of entitlement of receipt, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

Income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it will be regarded as restricted.

Receipts received during the year which are not to be expended until after the balance sheet date are not recognised as income for the year and are included in income deferred.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided or on completion of the service.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the Charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the Charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

Grants payable are charged in the year when the offer is made except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attaching are fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end are noted as a commitment, but not accrued as expenditure.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

2.5 Government grants

Government grants relating to tangible fixed assets are treated as deferred income and released to the Statement of Financial Activities over the expected useful lives of the assets concerned. Other grants are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities as the related expenditure is incurred.

2.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

2. Accounting policies (continued)**2.7 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the revaluation model, tangible fixed assets whose fair value can be measured reliably shall be carried at a revalued amount, being their fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Revaluations are made with sufficient regularity to ensure that the carrying amount does not differ materially from that which would be determined using fair value at the end of the reporting date.

Fair values are determined from market-based evidence by appraisal that is normally undertaken by professionally qualified valuers. If there is no market-based evidence of fair value because of the specialised nature of the tangible fixed asset and it is rarely sold, except as part of a contributing business, a Charity may need to estimate fair value using an income or depreciated replacement cost approach.

Gains and losses on revaluation are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities, with a separate revaluation reserve being shown in the Statement of funds note.

An increase in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of a revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, unless it reverses a charge for impairment that has previously been recognised as expenditure within the statement of financial activities. A decrease in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of revaluation, is recognised in other recognised gains and losses, except to which it offsets any previous revaluation gain, in which case the loss is shown within other recognised gains and losses on the statement of financial activities.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Motor vehicles	-	25% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	-	25% straight line
Office equipment	-	25% straight line

2.8 Investments

Fixed asset investments are a form of financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction cost and subsequently measured at fair value at the Balance Sheet date, unless the value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and presented as 'Gains/(Losses) on investments' in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Investment property is carried at fair value determined annually and derived from the current market rents and investment property yields for comparable real estate, adjusted if necessary for any difference in the nature, location or condition of the specific asset. No depreciation is provided. Changes in fair value are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities..

2.9 Debtors

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.10 Cash at bank and in hand

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

2.11 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as a finance cost.

2.12 Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Where investments in shares or preference shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably, the investment is subsequently measured at fair value with changes in fair value recognised in income and expenditure. All other such investments are subsequently measured at cost less impairment.

Financial assets that are measured at cost or amortised cost are reviewed for objective evidence of impairment at the end of each reporting date. If there is objective evidence of impairment, an impairment loss is recognised under the appropriate heading in the statement of financial activities in which the initial gain was recognised.

For all equity instruments regardless of significance, and other financial assets that are individually significant, these are assessed individually for impairment.

Any reversals of impairment are recognised immediately, to the extent that the reversal does not result in a carrying amount of the financial asset that exceeds what the carrying amount would have been had the impairment not previously been recognised.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.13 Pensions

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the pension charge represents the amounts payable by the Charity to the fund in respect of the year.

2.14 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

Estimates and judgments are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

The Charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below.

(i) Recoverability of receivables

If necessary, the Charity establishes a provision for receivables that are estimated not to be recoverable. When assessing the recoverability the trustees consider factors such as aging of receivables, past experience of recoverability, and the credit profile of an individual or groups of customers.

(iii) Revaluation of investment property (in prior year)

The Charity carries its investment property at fair value, with changes in fair value being recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Critical areas of judgment:

(i) Assessing indicators of impairment

In assessing whether there have been any indicators of impairment of assets, the trustees have considered both external and internal sources of information such as market conditions, counterparty credit ratings and experience of recoverability. There have been no indicators of impairment identified during the current financial year.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Core Infrastructure	1,141,251	1,141,251	990,098
Healthwatch	295,276	295,276	301,806
Grants & investments in the VCFSE	2,890,912	2,890,912	3,811,979
Social Prescribing/Community wellbeing LTO	1,412,084	1,412,084	1,591,738
	253,457	253,457	566
Other projects & consultancy	417,264	417,264	132,116
	<u>6,410,244</u>	<u>6,410,244</u>	<u>6,828,303</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u><u>6,828,303</u></u>	<u><u>6,828,303</u></u>	

5. Income from other trading activities

Income from fundraising events

	Unrestrict ed funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Activities for generating funds	69,522	69,522	77,506
	<u>77,506</u>	<u>77,506</u>	
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u><u>77,506</u></u>	<u><u>77,506</u></u>	

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

6. Investment income and bank interest

	Unrestrict ed funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Income from listed investments	4,419	6,901	11,320	4,911
Investment income - bank interest	30,054	-	30,054	692
	<u>34,473</u>	<u>6,901</u>	<u>41,374</u>	<u>5,603</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u>5,603</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,603</u>	

In addition income on investments held within the Action Oldham Fund and the Tameside 4 Good Fund have been included in the income of those funds. The amount of bank interest and dividends is £27,305 (2022: £26,010).

7. Expenditure on raising funds

Support costs - fundraising expenses

	Unrestrict ed funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Centrally incurred support costs less those recovered from restricted funds	25,594	25,594	(56,849)
	<u>25,594</u>	<u>25,594</u>	<u>(56,849)</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u>(56,849)</u>	<u>(56,849)</u>	

The centrally incurred support costs amounted to £637,247 (2022: £516,043) of which £611,653 (2022:£572,892) were recovered from the administration and management of restricted costs.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

8. Investment management costs

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Investment management fees	1,075	1,075	-

9. Analysis of grants

	Grants to Institutions 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Grants, Grants & investments in the VCFSE	1,798,710	1,798,710	1,488,862
Grants, Social Prescribing/Community wellbeing	242,422	242,422	119,365
	2,041,132	2,041,132	1,608,227
<i>Total 2022</i>	<i>1,608,227</i>	<i>1,608,227</i>	

Information relating to grants made to institutions by the Charity can be accessed at <https://www.actiontogether.org.uk>.

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

10. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Core Infrastructure	-	800,490	800,490	918,006
Healthwatch	-	299,406	299,406	322,032
Grants & investments in the VCFSE	-	3,242,051	3,242,051	2,892,976
Social Prescribing/Community wellbeing	-	1,520,975	1,520,975	1,630,470
LTO	-	226,063	226,063	94,392
Other projects & consultancy	16,009	266,551	282,560	210,265
Governance costs	7,667	-	7,667	7,750
	<u>23,676</u>	<u>6,355,536</u>	<u>6,379,212</u>	<u>6,075,891</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u>7,750</u>	<u>6,068,141</u>	<u>6,075,891</u>	

11. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2023 £	Grant funding of activities 2023 £	Support costs 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Core Infrastructure	629,291	-	171,199	800,490	918,006
Healthwatch	232,126	-	67,280	299,406	322,032
Grants & investments in the VCFSE	1,229,639	1,798,710	213,702	3,242,051	2,892,976
Social Prescribing/Community wellbeing	1,153,404	242,422	125,149	1,520,975	1,630,470
LTO	219,163	-	6,900	226,063	94,392
Other projects & consultancy	255,137	-	27,423	282,560	210,265
Governance costs	-	-	7,667	7,667	7,750
	<u>3,718,760</u>	<u>2,041,132</u>	<u>619,320</u>	<u>6,379,212</u>	<u>6,075,891</u>
<i>Total 2022</i>	<u>3,887,022</u>	<u>1,608,227</u>	<u>580,642</u>	<u>6,075,891</u>	

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

11. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

12. Auditors' remuneration

	2023	2022
	£	£
Fees payable to the Charity's auditor for the audit of the Charity's annual accounts	7,667	7,750

13. Staff costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	2,281,490	1,807,798
Social security costs	218,084	180,841
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	128,030	112,696
	2,627,604	2,101,335

The average number of persons employed by the Charity during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Total employees	81	79

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	-	1
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	1	-

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity including employer's national insurance was £152,530 (2022:£136,333).

14. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2022 - £NIL).

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

14. Trustees' remuneration and expenses (continued)

During the year ended 31 March 2023, expenses totalling £6 were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 Trustee (2022 - £NIL to Trustee) for meeting expenses.

15. Tangible fixed assets

	Motor vehicles £	Fixtures and fittings £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2022	24,299	9,000	37,639	70,938
Additions	-	-	14,297	14,297
At 31 March 2023	24,299	9,000	51,936	85,235
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2022	24,299	5,247	20,216	49,762
Charge for the year	-	2,250	11,093	13,343
At 31 March 2023	24,299	7,497	31,309	63,105
Net book value				
At 31 March 2023	-	1,503	20,627	22,130
At 31 March 2022	-	3,753	17,423	21,176

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

16. Investment property

	Freehold investment property £
At 1 April 2022	150,000
Disposals	(150,000)
At 31 March 2023	-

The charity acquired the freehold property at a value of £150,000 (based on a professional valuation in 2017) when the charity was formed from the merger of Voluntary Action Oldham and Community Voluntary Action Tameside.

17. Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments £	Unlisted investments £	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2022	1,347,880	20,874	1,368,754
Additions	5,222	-	5,222
Disposals	(82,314)	(2,088)	(84,402)
Revaluations	(83,321)	-	(83,321)
At 31 March 2023	1,187,467	18,786	1,206,253
Net book value			
At 31 March 2023	1,187,467	18,786	1,206,253
At 31 March 2022	1,347,880	20,874	1,368,754

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

18. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	175,606	270,975
Other debtors	3,267	1,565
Prepayments and accrued income	21,608	17,404
	200,481	289,944
	200,481	289,944

19. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	19,631	4,147
Other taxation and social security	89,036	58,288
Other creditors	1,114	-
Accruals and deferred income	62,562	90,764
Grants accrued - institutional	13,872	-
	186,215	153,199
	186,215	153,199

	2023 £	2022 £
Deferred income at 1 April 2022	35,000	315,200
Resources deferred during the year	-	20,000
Amounts released from previous periods	(35,000)	(300,200)
	-	35,000
	-	35,000

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

20. Statement of funds

The separate analysis of restricted funds overleaf shows the movements on the material restricted funds, with the balance of the funds shown as other restricted funds.

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
Designated Funds - all funds	90,487	-	(22,469)	-	68,018
General funds					
General Funds - all funds	1,081,274	103,995	(26,801)	90,283	1,248,751
Total Unrestricted funds	1,171,761	103,995	(49,270)	90,283	1,316,769

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds					
Action Oldham Fund	605,716	20,616	(54,797)	(36,306)	535,229
Community Wellbeing	313,507	875,697	(791,618)	-	397,586
Tameside 4 Good	305,201	10,235	(3,799)	(22,298)	289,339
Oldham Local Motion	350,000	1,199	(74,525)	-	276,674
Tameside Robin Estill Fund	157,113	-	(4,833)	-	152,280
Thriving Communities Social Prescribing	137,174	413,423	(408,724)	-	141,873
Rochdale RRR Fund	274,986	-	(256,758)	-	18,228
Restricted Funds - other	1,428,580	5,095,975	(4,761,557)	-	1,762,998
	<u>3,572,277</u>	<u>6,417,145</u>	<u>(6,356,611)</u>	<u>(58,604)</u>	<u>3,574,207</u>
Total of funds	<u><u>4,744,038</u></u>	<u><u>6,521,140</u></u>	<u><u>(6,405,881)</u></u>	<u><u>31,679</u></u>	<u><u>4,890,976</u></u>

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

20. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	<i>Balance at 1 April 2021</i> £	<i>Income</i> £	<i>Expenditure</i> £	<i>Transfers in/out</i> £	<i>Gains/ (Losses)</i> £	<i>Balance at 31 March 2022</i> £
Unrestricted funds						
Designated funds						
Designated Funds - all funds	77,000	-	-	13,487	-	90,487
General funds						
General Funds - all funds	952,701	83,109	49,099	(13,487)	9,852	1,081,274
Total Unrestricted funds	1,029,701	83,109	49,099	-	9,852	1,171,761

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

20. Statement of funds (continued)

	<i>Balance at 1 April 2021 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Gains/ (Losses) £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 March 2022 £</i>
Restricted funds						
Action Oldham Fund	577,533	19,271	(1,292)	-	10,204	605,716
Community Wellbeing	364,917	909,588	(960,998)	-	-	313,507
Tameside 4 Good	291,676	12,745	(4,341)	-	5,121	305,201
Oldham Local Motion	-	350,000	-	-	-	350,000
Tameside Robin Estill Fund	-	290,000	(132,887)	-	-	157,113
Thriving Communities Social Prescribing	138,292	325,875	(326,993)	-	-	137,174
Rochdale RRR fund	-	-	274,986	-	-	274,986
Restricted Funds - other	1,424,372	4,920,824	(4,916,616)	-	-	1,428,580
	<u>2,796,790</u>	<u>6,828,303</u>	<u>(6,068,141)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,325</u>	<u>3,572,277</u>
Total of funds	<u><u>3,826,491</u></u>	<u><u>6,911,412</u></u>	<u><u>(6,019,042)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>25,177</u></u>	<u><u>4,744,038</u></u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

21. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Designated funds	90,487	-	(22,469)	-	68,018
General funds	1,081,274	103,995	(26,801)	90,283	1,248,751
Restricted funds	3,572,277	6,417,145	(6,356,611)	(58,604)	3,574,207
	<u>4,744,038</u>	<u>6,521,140</u>	<u>(6,405,881)</u>	<u>31,679</u>	<u>4,890,976</u>

Restricted funds held at the end of the year have been carried forward for the future support of specific projects. Action Together recognises that it is responsible and accountable for public funds. It further recognises that it needs clarity and transparency in demonstrating how these funds are managed and, in particular, the level of funds that it judges appropriate to hold in reserve.

The designated fund is a separate fund for the development of the database.

ACTION TOGETHER CIO

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

21. Summary of funds (continued)

Summary of funds - prior year

	<i>Balance at 1 April 2021</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Transfers in/out</i>	<i>Gains/ (Losses)</i>	<i>Balance at 31 March 2022</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Designated funds	77,000	-	-	13,487	-	90,487
General funds	952,701	83,109	49,099	(13,487)	9,852	1,081,274
Restricted funds	2,796,790	6,828,303	(6,068,141)	-	15,325	3,572,277
	<u>3,826,491</u>	<u>6,911,412</u>	<u>(6,019,042)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,177</u>	<u>4,744,038</u>

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestrict ed funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023
	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	22,130	-	22,130
Fixed asset investments	329,537	876,716	1,206,253
Current assets	1,151,317	2,697,491	3,848,808
Creditors due within one year	(186,215)	-	(186,215)
Total	<u>1,316,769</u>	<u>3,574,207</u>	<u>4,890,976</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

22. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2022 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2022 £</i>
Tangible fixed assets	21,176	-	21,176
Fixed asset investments	354,857	1,013,897	1,368,754
Investment property	150,000	-	150,000
Current assets	763,927	2,593,380	3,357,307
Creditors due within one year	(118,199)	(35,000)	(153,199)
Total	<u><u>1,171,761</u></u>	<u><u>3,572,277</u></u>	<u><u>4,744,038</u></u>

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

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	146,938	917,547
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	13,343	12,766
Gains/(losses) on investments	83,321	(25,177)
Loss/(profit) on the sale of fixed assets	(115,000)	-
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	89,463	(115,778)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	33,016	(314,309)
Other interest receivable	(41,374)	(5,603)
Accrued income/ expenses	-	(65,727)
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u><u>209,707</u></u>	<u><u>403,719</u></u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash in hand	3,648,327	3,067,363
Total cash and cash equivalents	3,648,327	3,067,363

25. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2022 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	3,067,363	580,964	3,648,327
	3,067,363	580,964	3,648,327

26. Pension commitments

The group operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the group in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the group to the fund and amounted to £128,030 (2022 - £112,696). contributions totalling £Nil (2022: £Nil) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date and are included in creditors.

27. Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions.