

Make It
Happen.

Annual Report

2022/23



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CHAIR REPORT

1

A word from our Chair, Phil Dickson



It's true that I've attended many committees, trustees meetings and board meetings through the years, but I can honestly say that I count working alongside the Make It Happen Board of Directors amongst the most rewarding.

It has been a genuine joy as a founding director, and then more recently as chair of directors, to witness a bold vision for a community shop in Market Street grow - beyond all expectation.

It has been an honour far too hard to describe to then work alongside a board of such high calibre, skill and ongoing hard work and commitment.

But I dare not, nor could not, just stop there.

I have witnessed first-hand:

- a true and deep passion for community wellbeing and for investing in individual lives.
- a dedication for working collaboratively to facilitate and support many other organisations and partners.
- a wealth of creative initiatives being delivered in the highest professional context by a resolute and enthusiastic team of staff and volunteers.

To say that I have been proud to see those dedicated and enthusiastic teams operating, thriving and even excelling having lived through the ravages and challenges of the pandemic and now facing the current cost of living crisis just doesn't cover it.

Make It Happen's caring, enthusiastic and proactive teams have excelled themselves yet again with a diverse and inclusive programme of creative initiatives, activities, events and worthwhile offers to the community. It's a joy to hear people speaking of the positive, respectful, and dignified shopping experiences they enjoy in our Community Shop, and it's also clear that our Place of Contribution Community Hub has also grown from strength to strength. The energy, enjoyment and social connections we have seen growing there has been truly humbling especially when seeing the community working with itself to grow, heal, learn and, dare I say it, make things happen!

I do trust that you won't simply take my word for all of this – indeed please don't.

The evidence is here, the testimonies are here, the aspirations are here, the life changing initiatives are here for you to hopefully see for yourself in this annual report which I am proud to commend to you.

Phil Dickson

Phil Dickson

Chair, Make It Happen



OUR CEO SAYS

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A word from our CEO, Amy Butterworth



I felt I wanted to summarise this year into three keywords as we have overcome such testing times.

This last year has been about 'commitment',

This has been a humbling experience as we have retained some of our volunteers in the Make It Happen family and have supported others on to pastures new, including employment, personal ventures and incredible achievements.

Over the last 12 months we committed to provide two kickstart placements as part of the National Employability Programme, which we felt gave those individuals a platform to learn skills within the VCFSE sector. We provided another two Chester University placements to second year students which gave insight of community organisations on health inequalities. Further to this, we worked with Wirral Metropolitan College to host six work experience placements for Social Care students. We widened our offer to the health students from University of Chester and also took on a further five students for a shorter period of time.

We captured our organisational learning in addition to the progress of the volunteers and students we received through our CARE project which you can read more about later in this report.

Alongside this, we have provided a number of employment opportunities to local people who wanted a new challenge in a new world following COVID. There has been an extra commitment given through this for all team members who have needed extra assistance with that transition - this has included flexibility and care. We are hugely grateful to partnering agencies who are also committed to a wide section of people employed and not employed across Wirral to make this to happen with free training, counselling, adapted and accessible support models and many other support offers.

We have been committed to the community since the day we opened our doors, and this year has been no exception, with footfall to the shop remaining high and the common feedback is 'it has a friendly atmosphere and caring staff'. We are also very pleased to say that, despite some changes in personnel, we have been fully committed to our versatile offer at Place of Contribution with the team listening to the community the 'make it happen living room' remains a welcome hit with local people.

The second word would be 'Determination'

As an organisation, we have a desire to do what is good and right in Birkenhead and for the people of Birkenhead.

We were exceptionally proud to have successfully secured National Lottery Community Funding for Place of Contribution, and with the community at the helm this progressed quite rapidly from idea into action. Taking an opportunity within the last year we decided to undertake a 'Journey of Change' analysis on the whole project, this was a true success with the external provider saying "there was a golden thread of language and culture throughout all layers of the organisation" reflecting how important it is to have a safe space to spend time and enjoy activities with conversation. →

This gave us the determination and spurred us on to launch our second successful grant funded project 'Nourish to Flourish'. A project designed to bring people together, with a shared value of environment and aspiration to bring community and local businesses closer for a wider benefit. This has started to take shape in the forms of regular meetings, both in Place of Contribution as well as externally, as relationships have grown with the local authority and in particular the Regeneration Team who have been tasked with the development of the Dock Branch. Our Senior Encouragement Officer was voted to sit on the community panel assisting the master planners to be fully accessible to the local community and his role is to enable as many voices to be heard as possible.

The last word that resonates with us is 'Passionate'

We have learned over the last 12 months that working within a collaborative and close knit sector is very important to us to continue to be a caring and compassionate organisation that we need to keep linked in. This has been a Wirral-wide development throughout COVID, bringing about Wirral CVS, Make It Happen have contributed at different levels with involvement in different forums, meetings and groups with some experience and expertise. This has included supporting voluntary sector leads in conversations that post-COVID may have been difficult, but now feel like a natural progression - not going back to the old ways of working - in particular with the cohesive approach with public and VCFSE sector, and what has been achieved collectively has been a real milestone. We as an organisation have a real stake in people, and due to being heavily invested in the volunteering of Wirral, we are now chairing the Volunteer Coordinator Forum. Some of the achievements to date are three meetings in the last 12 months, a new induction offer for Wirral residents, a forum open to all and a central system for all organisations to use and for community members to explore opportunities.

This year has been a real journey of opportunities recognising the skills and attributes of everyone, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the commitment of the Directors and team whose individual contributions have been incredibly valuable, the determination of all the stakeholders and partners who have kept on going with real excitement and passion for everyone who has had an opportunity to enjoy the wealth of the offers we provide at Make It Happen.

A. Butterworth
Amy Butterworth

CEO & Co Founder, Make It Happen



VISION & VALUES

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Our reason for being, our purpose, the central statement to describe why we do what we do

VISION

“ We engage and empower people to use what they have to make change happen and become restorers of their own lives, their streets and the lives of others

Our vision above has been with us since the very beginning of Make It Happen, and after four years we felt that a little update was in order. Although the core principles and values of Make It Happen remain the same, this year we have slightly realigned our vision with the way in which our community is evolving:

“ A sustainable model for community regeneration built on Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) principles; building confidence, recognising, encouraging and mobilising community assets

VALUES

Our core values are at the centre of Make It Happen and we strive to stay true to them in everything we do, every day and in every way.

Real

We celebrate possibilities and opportunities, rather than focusing on issues and problems.
We are original, emboldening and supporting our community to build resilience and confidence, promoting real influence and change.

Engaging

We use inspiring language to encourage our community to engage and feel empowered.
We challenge stereotypes, recognise individual assets and capture stories of community impact.

Respectful

We treat people with care, consideration and respect at all times.
We are people with vision, believing in new ideas and being a catalyst for community achievement.
This doesn't just apply to the 'big stuff' - we value the little details of everyday life.

HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Food Interception Partners

Food interception supports a circular economy. Circularity transforms our throwaway economy into one where we eliminate waste, circulate resources, and adopt nature-positive, low carbon, resource-efficient systems and actions. In the circular economy, instead of taking resources from the earth, using them once, and disposing of them in landfill, we keep them in use for as long as possible. We make sure that we gain the maximum benefit from them while reducing negative environmental impacts.



HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS



ART EXHIBITION

Exhibition held at Place of Contribution, fabulous art from our wonderful community!



STUDENT CHATS

A celebration of the personal progress made by our brilliant Extending Experiences participants, they worked so hard!



CONGRATS!

We met students studying Health & Social Care and talked about the good work that can be achieved in the community, their future plans and how they can approach us for volunteering & placements



5 STARS!

Proud that Place of Contribution was awarded a 5 star rating for food hygiene!



ECO BRICKS

Amy visits Wirral Job Fair with two exciting new employment opportunities!



OPPORTUNITY

Our Chairperson Phil presented us with a very thoughtful gift, an adapted tool to help pressure plastic into bottles, following an eco brick visit



HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS



As a Disability Confident Employer we:

- have undertaken and successfully completed the Disability Confident self assessment
- are taking all of the core actions to be a Disability Confident employer
- are offering at least one activity to get the right people for our business
- are offering at least one activity to keep and develop our people



INCLUSIVE

Make It Happen are proud once again to be a Disability Confident Employer!



TEAM DAY

We take the opportunity to thank all our volunteers for the time, talent & treasure that they give to our community every day!

Volunteer Week!



Today we celebrate two of our Tuesday Gang, Diane and John!

They are always on time, love to have a giggle, nothing is too much trouble and they help distribute the pies to the community every Thursday (including today!)



Thank you!



VOLUNTEERS

What a beautiful day! A lovely picnic in the sun with the Make It Happen team



FUN DAY

We had an absolutely brilliant turn out, over 300 people, to our community event on Saturday 4th June for the Platinum Jubilee!



TEA PARTY

CEO Amy is nominated for Cheshire Woman of the Year for her amazing contribution to our community - well deserved recognition!



AWARDS

We held a post Jubilee Tea Party at Place of Contribution which saw lots of community members popping in throughout the day!

HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS



THANK YOU

Birkenhead Rotary Club kindly gave Make It Happen a £200 cheque to keep up the work we are doing. Thank you to all our friends at BRC!



PLANTING

We held our first open AGM and talked about what has happened over the last year at Make It Happen, and wow that's a lot! So many positive outcomes and so much more to come!



OPEN AGM

Nourish to Flourish took part in community doorstep planting with Wirral Environmental Network who do such an important job of creating a more environmentally conscious community



KNIFE ANGEL

Make It Happen attended along with other organisations, lots of fun activities going on and a powerful message behind the sculpture



GARDENING

We were invited to be part of this year's Public Health Annual Report alongside other organisations to say a few words on how we adapted throughout COVID as a sector



HEALTH REPORT

Clifford Grange invited us to contribute our time engaging with residents to create a garden we can all be proud of, while learning more about gardening!



HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS



MACMILLAN

Our annual Macmillan coffee morning rased over £100, with loads of people popping by, all joining us to share their stories



TRAINING

Energy Projects Plus came in and treated us to free energy saving lightbulbs that could save £15 a year per bulb and we also shared various facts and money saving tips!

Top Energy Tips

Read your bill and learn your usage
Average annual usage is around 24,000kWh for gas, and 3,000kWh for electricity. If your bills are estimated, take regular meter readings, so your supplier can bill you accurately for the energy you have used. If you cannot read your meters, ask your supplier about their Priority Service for vulnerable customers.

Make changes now to reduce your usage
80% of our gas bills are from heating our homes, so that is where the biggest savings can be made. Room thermostats should be no higher than 21°C for those vulnerable to cold. Boiler thermostats should be set to 60°C, and radiator valves set lower in rooms rarely used. A timer helps to save money by reducing usage.

Smart meters
It is increasingly difficult to monitor your ongoing energy usage without having a smart meter to show what you're using. Once installed, you can view your smart meter display and make adjustments (such as turning down thermostat or replacing filament bulbs with LEDs) and then see the difference. **Please be aware that energy suppliers do have a backlog of smart meter requests, so it is likely that you will be placed on a waiting list for a smart meter to be installed.**

ENERGY SAVING

Big congratulations to our team members who completed their Food Hygiene Course through Wirral Lifelong Learning Service and First Aid at Work.



SHOWCASE

Our very first Showcase! Our community worked so hard throughout 2022 to bring a wide array of fantastic displays from their favourite projects



THANK YOU

Out and about meeting the Regen Team to help ensure that community voices are at the centre of helping shape decision making



REGENERATION

Paul and Sue, from the Halfway House in Prenton, kindly donated 8 boxes of food to Make It Happen! Big, big thank you!



HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

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PHOTOSHOOT

The first phase of our Digital Inclusion project concluded with a photoshoot, hair, make up and more!



NEW LOOK

Huge thank you to Bootle Comrades who very kindly donated a box of brand new sportswear, with a few Everton shirts for kids thrown in!




THANK YOU

Everyone chipped in to redecorate the shop at 72 Market Street and the community feedback has been brilliant!

Q: Is there anything you would want to change or improve at Make It Happen to enhance your overall experience?

A: Get in touch and let us know, we want you to help shape the future of Make It Happen!

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scan me to



join the
mailing list

CARE Project

CARE stands for...

Confidence, Assets, Resilience and Engagement

...and that is what the project is all about! We engage and empower people to use the assets they have to "make it happen" and become restorers of their own lives and the lives of others, using our own bespoke six stage programme that draws from the many years of experience we have in the voluntary sector.

Confidence: With a lack of connectivity, social engagement and the support networks that come through this, confidence was identified as a key factor negatively impacting the resilience and wellbeing of our community. The confidence foundation concentrated on addressing issues around social anxiety, loss of support networks and resultant resilience, lack of meaning and purpose and the lack of motivation and confidence that comes as a result.

Assets: We focused on what's strong, not what's wrong. Sometimes something really is just wrong, but in those instances we collaborated with external organisations and empowered volunteers, through signposting and support, to show them the strength of the CVF family, both in Birkenhead and on the Wirral. We helped people use their assets to create a positive pathway forwards in their lives, as some of the testimonials will later illustrate, and connected volunteers with similar interests.

Resilience: At the core of any sustainable thriving community lies resilience, which comes from many factors. As part of our training resources we looked at adaptive communication, careful listening, cognitive empathy and de-escalation techniques, all designed to improve an individual's social resilience, but also with the intent to filter into our community through the culture presented by our volunteers in our community shop and hub. By showing volunteers the power of self awareness their confidence and self esteem often increased, and for some individuals led to new contact with estranged family and friends.

Engagement: Volunteering in itself is an incredible form of community engagement, and engagement is something people were particularly struggling with post lockdowns across society. We focused on building routines of engagement for volunteers, empowering them to signpost community members and have constructive, supportive dialogue with some of their most vulnerable neighbours.



PROJECTS

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Nourish to Flourish

Our People's Health Trust Project, Nourish to Flourish, has been thriving this year with weekly sessions held in our Place of Contribution, and lots of productive meetings with local organisations and businesses regarding environmental aspirations, and the regeneration of Birkenhead laid out in the Wirral Council's 2040 Framework. In the first 6 months we were delighted to have over 100 people coming in to our sessions, and this has



continued to grow as we have now passed the milestone of 200 people! Our ABCD (asset based community development) approach has definitely helped us to achieve this as our community are consulted every step of the way. They frequently take the lead coming up with session ideas for craft and ecological sessions in our community hub. They have also taken the lead since January on some of the textile upcycling we've been doing, with tie dying sessions led by a community member who became a volunteer, window decorating by another person who decided to volunteer, and community members often share tip and tricks that they knew before or are learning in a session with each other.

Dock Branch

The community have provided incredible feedback for the Dock Branch Regeneration project which has enabled us to bring their collective voice to the local authority and influence the direction some environmental regeneration projects will be taking. They have provided ideas for some of the Bio Revolution concepts being developed for the regeneration project and are very keen to take the lead on planting and maintaining our upcoming street planters.



funded through



Nourish to Flourish

Many ideas come from the community while working on creative activities such as the seed bombs we made last month, and they are regularly coming up with solutions for challenges other community members face. A good example of this was the push to create draft excluders for our community hub to help save energy and stay warm, as well as making them for each other. It was wonderful during our showcase week last December when community participants came in and were telling visitors all about the displays we put up on the walls; taking pride in what they are achieving shows that they in many cases are taking more of a lead in their own lives, and we are finding that it is encouraging progress in other aspects of individuals lives. There have been some wonderful personal outcomes and it has been lovely to see people building new social connections.



The numbers of people coming into Place of Contribution for the weekly sessions indicate that, following the winter, engagement has risen to a new high for the project, and they do not even begin to describe the enthusiasm in the community for the project's various activities. Numbers continue to grow and as we get out and about more regularly we expect to continue attracting new community members. We are looking forward to the year ahead and what it will bring!



people's
health
trust



How we involve people:

- Between March 2022 & February 2023, 2,296 people attended sessions.
- We have partnered with local organisations including Wirral Environmental Network and Involve Northwest to extend our reach throughout the community and enable people to have their say on shaping the services we provide.
- We have involved our community members in consultations for activity sessions, curating a sense of belonging and pride in both Place of Contribution and themselves.
- We have invited Wirral Metropolitan College students to work placements and to participate in activity sessions.
- We hosted students from Chester University, enabling them to experience a community setting and learn how these spaces positively impact people's health, wellbeing and happiness.
- We have provided our volunteers a degree of autonomy within Make It Happen, they prepared for the redecoration of the community shop and social supermarket.
- Several community members attending Place of Contribution have developed to become volunteers, building their resilience and confidence to the point where they have facilitated creative sessions and enjoyed giving back to their community.
- Our community have taken a degree of ownership in relation to developing sessions tailored to their needs and enabling them to break down social barriers.



COMMUNITY THANKS

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What our community members say...

“

If I wasn't moving away, I would have been with you guys at Make It Happen in the long term! In the short time I've been here volunteering, after losing my partner, you have done so much for my family including my new grandbaby.

“

I didn't think that my time at Make It Happen could get any better being with you all, until I got to celebrate my 60th birthday with my family and Make It Happen family. A place where you are encouraged because they don't give up on you.

“

Losing my dad was hard and have found that Place of Contribution is a real life line and I am smiling and laughing. That's so important to me right now.

“

What you guys do here is quite inspiring, you turn what could be a difficult experience into a fun and positive thing. I feel like you're all my friends and hope you feel the same.

“

Moved in from out of area recently wondering what Birkenhead would have for me, came to Make It Happen and find I'm here most days for the atmosphere, came in to the customers and staff singing the other day and even joined in!

“

Having friends in places like Make It Happen makes life more cheerful even when the weather ain't doing much!

“

I have now lived in Market Street for over 10 years. I suffer with mental health problems, Amy has made my life so much better with her happy and helpful attitude, nothing is too much trouble for her. She has created an oasis of peace and helpfulness. This place has helped me so much and I hope that it may long continue.

“

Nothing is ever too much trouble for the team at Make It Happen, everyone is so kind and you can tell they enjoy being there.! The 'give and gain' and 'pay as you feel' models are so helpful.



INSIGHTS & IMPACT

16



3,358 bags of donations received which totalled 26.9 tonnes

14,830 customers came through our doors - an increase of almost 2,000 from the previous year



**Make It Happen was open for a total of 2,208 hours
Place of Contribution was open for a total of 1,590 hours**

2,370 individuals, families and pensioners supported with food through the Household Support Fund grant provided by WBC



Environmental Footprint



55 tonnes of food intercepted

Food redistributed to supported accommodation and other local providers - **9% (4.95 tonnes)**

Food back into the environment such as farms and allotments - **5% (2.75 tonnes)**

Food reused through Social Supermarket, hampers and community activities - **86% (47.3 tonnes)**

26.9 tonnes of textiles donated

Repair and reuse sessions as well as being donated to other groups running similar activities and shared with local organisations such as Heart for Refugees.

We also facilitated a number of cost of living activities (draught excluders & hand warmers) - **15% (4.04 tonnes)**

Clothing sold through our community shop via our unique 'pay as you feel' model - **85% (22.87 tonnes)**



1 tonne of plastic & cardboard recycled

We don't just want to reduce food and textiles going to landfill, we recycle all our plastic and cardboard:

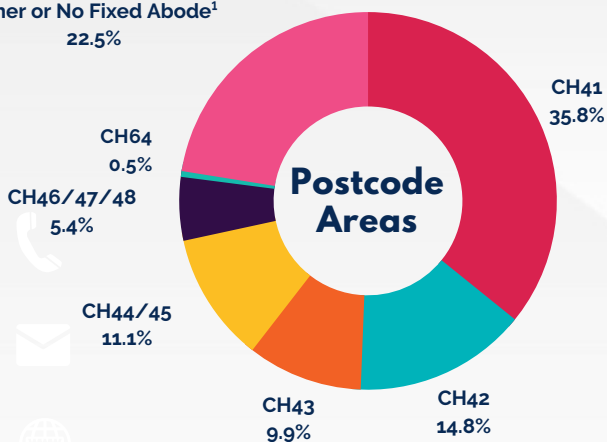
Cardboard - **95% (0.95 tonnes)**

Plastics - **5% (0.05 tonnes)**

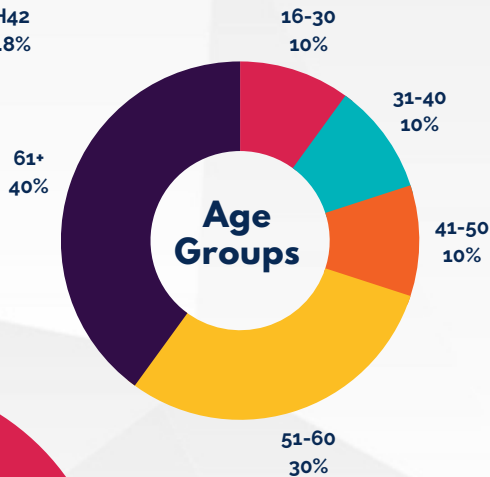


OUR CUSTOMERS

Other or No Fixed Abode¹
22.5%



¹The number here accounts for other postcodes, those with no fixed abode and those who do not wish to divulge their postcode



Employed
33%



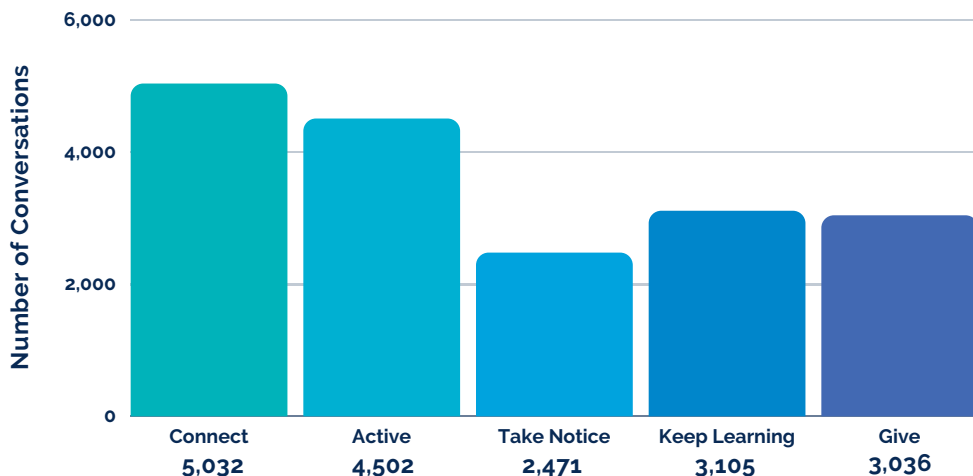
Unemployed
67%



5 Ways to Wellbeing Conversations



The 'connect' conversations have once again taken the lead in our 5 Ways to Wellbeing journey, as our community members continue to overcome social anxiety and utilise both our Social Supermarket and Community Hub.



FINANCE REPORT

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A word from our Treasurer, Chris Allen



I am delighted to be presenting another very successful financial year for Make It Happen. Grant funders continue to invest in the work we do and the outcomes of this investment can be seen in the rest of this report. The revenue from the shop at 72 Market Street increased by nearly 10K from last year. This was due to purchases from our committed customer base and also seeing an increase in new customers.

Prices in the Social Supermarket did increase slightly as prices from wholesale suppliers (including those national organisations intercepting goods for onward transmission) increased for us.

Investment in equipment and on premises refurbishments during the year meant spend in this area almost doubled. These were wise investments and the aesthetics of both venues are improved.

Staff and Volunteers continue to be our most valued resource and the expenditure identifies our commitment to this.

The attached graphs identify our income and expenditure headings.

During the year we saw the cost-of-living impacts upon us as an organisation and upon our customers and we expect this year to be no different. Fortunately, over the last 4 years we have build up small reserves and we might need to draw on these during the next year. With the help of our accountants, we introduced an excellent financial software system at the start of the year and we have found it extremely helpful, easy to use and time liberating! The directors can receive real-time financial information for their meetings. The directors approved the annual accounts on 10th May 2023.

The directors of Make It Happen who meet 4 times a year and set the strategic direction and approve business development and expansion are very cognisant of best use of financial resources for the organisation and will allocate them accordingly. I am particularly appreciative of them.

There are so many individuals, organisations and agencies that have helped during the year to make it happen for Make It Happen and we are extremely grateful for all. Working with people who are as excited as we are about making a difference in Birkenhead is energising. The finances of any organisation are there to ensure the organisation can fulfil its mission and I am especially pleased that our grant funders, contributors, community and customers enable this work to continue. Working with professionals who are bought into our vision is also encouraging.

I am grateful for all the help and support I have had during this year from the small team who work as volunteers with me, they are very valuable and they know who they are!

Chris Allen

Chris Allen

Treasurer, Make It Happen



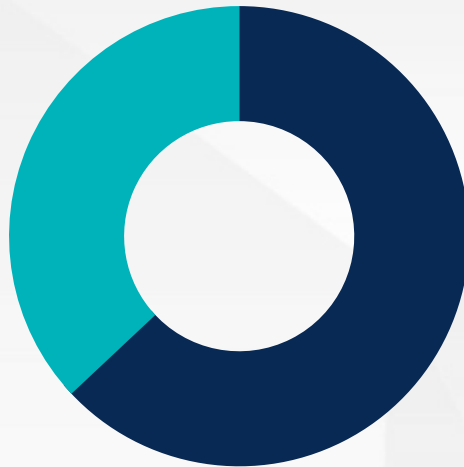
FINANCE SUMMARY

21

INCOME

£160,553

Sale of goods
37%
£58,693

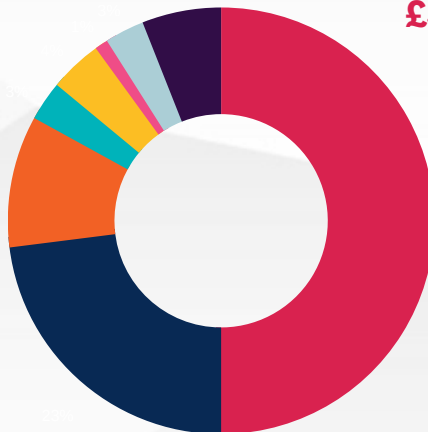


Grants & Gifts
63%
£101,860

EXPENDITURE

£155,785

10%



Surplus Before Tax
£4,759

Full expenditure:

- 50% Salaries & Volunteer Expenses (£78,388)
- 23% Goods/Consumables (£36,113)
- 10% Repairs, Equipment & Renewals (£15,397)
- 3% Professional Fees (£5,416)
- 4% Utilities (£6,998)
- 1% Insurance (£1,721)
- 3% Telephone, IT & Systems (£4,046)
- 6% General Office & Admin Costs (£7,706)

CONTRIBUTORS

22

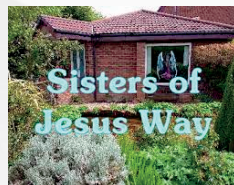
We give special thanks to all of our generous contributors & supporting organisations



The Northern Building Maintenance Company



Hamilton Medical Centre



FUTURE YARD

