

**Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 September 2024
for
The Widows Empowerment Trust**

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The Widows Empowerment Trust

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for the Year Ended 30 September 2024**

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The Widows Empowerment Trust

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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).



www.widowsempowerment.com

Registered Charity 1171317

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 – 2024

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Annual Report End of October 2023 - September 2024

The Widows Empowerment Trust Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30 September 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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 2015).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Widows Empowerment Trust was born out of compassion and empathy for widows. It was officially adopted as a Registered Charity on the 25th of January 2017. Trust was founded by Mrs Oyovwe Agatha Kigho BEM and five board members of the trustees and Chief Executive Officer.

OUR STRATEGY

Linking our vision to our plan

OUR VISION:

Helping widows to restore hope in their lives.

OUR MISSION:

"To support and uplift bereaved spouses by reducing isolation and loneliness through compassion, empathy, and connection. We offer peer-to-peer support, befriending, social outings, wellbeing activities, and celebrations of key moments. Our mission is to empower widows and widowers to regain confidence, build meaningful relationships, and find strength in shared experiences. Together, we create a warm, supportive community where no one has to navigate grief alone and where smiles, happiness, and intrinsic value are restored."

OUR AIM:

Our aim is to offer practical resources and a compassionate community that empowers widows and widowers to navigate their grief and rediscover joy and purpose in their lives.

1. To provide holistic support and relief for widows, widowers, and others affected by bereavement.
2. To reduce social isolation and loneliness faced by bereaved spouses through meaningful connections and services.
3. To collaborate with other organizations to better meet the needs of widows and widowers.
4. To continually develop the skills of our volunteers and strengthen our community.
5. To alleviate mental health challenges faced by widows and widowers through emotional and practical support.
6. To improve overall health and well-being through targeted wellbeing activities and support.

7. To challenge societal stigma and raise awareness surrounding the experiences of widows and widowers.
8. To restore hope and a sense of purpose for those grieving.

OUR CORE VALUES:

- **Empathy:** We strive to understand and connect with the experiences of others, listening with an open heart to ensure that every voice is heard, and every need is recognised.
- **Compassion:** We offer kindness and understanding in all our actions, recognising the challenges faced by those we serve and providing the support they need with care and dedication.
- **Value:** We believe that every individual has inherent worth and should be treated with dignity. Our services aim to honour and uplift the value of each person, regardless of their background or circumstances.
- **Integrity:** We act with honesty and transparency in everything we do. Our commitment to doing what is right ensures that those we serve can trust our actions and know that we are always working in their best interest.
- **Equality:** We are devoted to ensuring that everyone we support has equal access to opportunities, resources, and respect. We challenge barriers and stand against injustice to create a society where fairness prevails.
- **Empowerment:** We work to enable those we support to gain control over their lives and decisions, equipping them with the tools and confidence to shape their own futures.
- **Collaboration:** We believe in the strength of working together—whether it's with our partners, donors, volunteers, or the individuals we support. Together, we can create lasting change and achieve shared goals.
- **Sustainability:** We are committed to long-term solutions that foster lasting well-being for the communities we serve. Our efforts are centered around sustainable practices that ensure we build a better future for all.
- **Respect:** We approach every person with respect, honouring their individuality and unique needs. Every interaction is guided by our belief in treating others with fairness and dignity.
- **Accountability:** We hold ourselves responsible for the outcomes of our work. By remaining accountable to those we support, our team, and our donors, we ensure that every action we take reflects our dedication to making a positive impact.

Aligning with Those We Support:

These values directly reflect our dedication to the individual we serve. By embodying empathy, compassion, and respect, we nurture a safe and supportive environment where individuals are heard and valued. Our commitment to equality and empowerment ensures that we actively work to provide equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background or circumstances. Collaboration and sustainability speak to our collective approach to building solutions that endure. Through integrity and accountability, we demonstrate that we hold ourselves to the highest standards, always striving to do what is right and effective for the communities we serve.

Each value supports the foundation of our mission, helping us create meaningful change and provide services that genuinely uplift and transform lives.

OBJECTIVES:

The Widows Empowerment Trust seeks to create a holistic support system that addresses both immediate needs and long-term personal growth, ensuring that bereaved are equipped with the resources, knowledge, and support to thrive.

Dedicated to supporting widows in their journey towards self-reliance and empowerment.

1. Supportive environment for open discussion (Education and Training):
2. Social environment with events (Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Christmas Party)
3. Befriending/Home Visits:
4. Meals Out/Day Trips:
5. Pampering Sessions (Spa)
6. Practical Workshops (Art and Craft):
7. Signposting to Relevant Agencies:
8. Food Parcels:
9. Engaging Volunteers:

OUR SERVICES:

Our services are delivered through both online and face-to-face channels. These services include:

- Face-to-Face befriending
- Digital befriending
- Face-to-Face workshop weekly
- Meal out
- Cooking and Baking.
- Celebrating events

THANK YOU NOTES

THANK YOU NOTE FROM TRUSTEE BOARD MEMBER MRS STEPHANIE ROBERTS

I would like to take this opportunity to express my profound appreciation for the extraordinary contributions of our volunteers. Your unwavering dedication has made a real and lasting difference in the lives of so many. Whether through offering companionship to those in need, organizing fundraising events, or providing essential administrative support behind the scenes, your efforts have been integral to our success.

This year, thanks to your selfless commitment, we have been able to touch the lives of **641** service users. Your compassion, enthusiasm, and hard work are the heartbeat of our mission, and it is through your time, energy, and spirit that we continue to empower widows and strengthen communities.

The impact you've made this year is nothing short of inspiring. On behalf of the entire team at the Widows Empowerment Trust, I want to extend my deepest gratitude. Thank you for helping us create a positive change and for being such a vital part of this incredible journey.

THANK YOU NOTE FROM FOUNDER/CEO MRS OYOVWE KIGHO BEM POL BCAA

As we reflect on another year of growth and service at the Widows Empowerment Trust, I am filled with gratitude for the unwavering support of our volunteers, partners, donors, and most importantly, the remarkable bereaved spouses who inspire everything we do. Every day, we witness the resilience, strength, and courage of widows as they navigate some of life's toughest challenges.

This year has been one of transformation, as we have continued to build a safe space where these individuals are not only supported but empowered to rediscover their purpose, heal, and thrive. From educational workshops to social gatherings, and from emotional support to practical resources, our work is a direct reflection of the trust and commitment our community has in our mission.

I want to personally thank each of you—whether you've given your time, resources, or heartfelt encouragement. Your support is instrumental in our ability to create lasting change. The impact we have made together is beyond words, and as we look ahead, we are more determined than ever to expand our reach, deepen our services, and continue empowering widows to lead independent and fulfilling lives.

Looking ahead, I am excited for the future and all the possibilities it holds. We are just getting started, and with your continued support, we will reach even more widows, provide more opportunities, and help create lasting change in their lives. I am deeply grateful for your partnership in this journey and for the trust you've placed in us.

With your continued support, we will not only meet the challenges of the coming year but rise to them with even greater purpose. Thank you for being a part of this incredible journey with us.

Supporting a Healing Environment for Grieving Individuals

We deeply understand the immense pain that widows and widowers face after losing a loved one. The sense of loss is often so overwhelming that it leads individuals to withdraw from their social circles, resulting in long periods of isolation. This isolation can have a lasting negative impact on their mental wellbeing.

Our service users typically come to us through external agency referrals or reach out directly, seeking guidance and support through their grieving journey. At times, some of our service users are not even able to meet their basic needs, which further compounds their grief.

We are immensely proud of our dedicated staff and volunteers, who are committed to creating a supportive environment for those experiencing loss. Our team works tirelessly to ensure that no one has to navigate grief alone.

In the past year, we have reached out to **971** individuals and supported **641** service users. Through the tireless efforts of our staff and volunteers, we have established both online and face-to-face weekly workshops that offer a space for service users to connect with others going through similar experiences. These workshops allow participants to interact socially, share their experiences, and learn valuable new skills such as sewing, knitting, and preparing hot meals. This initiative fosters inclusivity and helps combat the loneliness often felt by those who have lost a loved one, allowing them to build new connections and regain a sense of community.

BEFRIENDING SERVICES

- Our volunteers visited **277** service users in their homes to offer a befriending service.
- Our volunteers and staff team has supported **179** users digitally across the UK
- Our volunteers provided support by listening to our service users with empathy.
- Our volunteers assist clients at their home by engaging in various activities, including playing cards and scramble. They also promote well-being through exercises such as walking, dancing, and swimming. Additionally, volunteers enjoy accompanying clients to local cafes for soft drinks or a warm beverage.
- By offering our befriending service and other services provided by us, we encourage our service users to be socially active in their community.
- Our befriending visits are something that they look forward to and very much enjoy as it prevents them from being alone and isolated.
- These calls are designed so that our service users can talk about their grief and reflect on how they have done that week.
- Sometimes just allowing our service users to talk about their grief helps them to alleviate the burden of sadness and just allows them to then go on and focus with positivity for the rest of the week.
- They need space to be able to speak about their grief and are often let down by the mental health services as they are already quite stretched. Our organisation gives them that chance to talk which promotes their own mental wellbeing.

MEALS OUT

- When someone loses a life partner, they also lose their social circle, they often withdraw from social activities. We recognise their loss and the fact that they feel alone in what they are going through.
- We have provided **18** meals out for **43** service users with a focus on fostering social connections and reducing isolation.
- We provide this day out to promote their mental wellbeing and bring about a sense of positivity in their lives. Meal out helps to encourage those who struggle to eat alone to enjoy eating with others, enhancing their overall well-being and sense of community.
- In doing so our service users feel uplifted and are given renewed strength in navigating their grieving journey.

COMMUNITY SHOPPING

- Our volunteers have continued to work tirelessly throughout the year to provide for our widows and widowers. They offer to take them shopping especially those who find it difficult to get out on their own.
- We have assisted **42** of our service users throughout the year for shopping.
- Many of our widows and widowers are too unwell to collect their own shopping; by offering this service we are filling a necessary role in the community.
- By helping widows and widowers, we are relieving the need for other organisations and charities to provide this service, as many are stretched thin as it is, hence why providing this support is crucial.

WELLBEING WORKSHOP EVERY FRIDAY

- We provide a weekly workshop for our service users. This has allowed our beneficiaries to meet and socialise face-to-face. The workshops help with socialising skills and for the beneficiaries to relate to others and have something to look forward to every week. The workshop helps the beneficiaries to come out of their homes and encourages gentle exercise.
- We supported **35 beneficiaries** in face-to-face workshops
- This promotes mental wellbeing by providing a consistent activity for our community and boosting their interest in new hobbies.
- Completing arts and crafts projects also reinforce our widows and widowers with a sense of accomplishment and brings a sense of positivity in their life and bereavement journey

HOT MEAL

Every Friday, our volunteers and clients come together to prepare and share hot meals at our workshops, where they set the table and enjoy the food together. This creates a sense of togetherness, community, connection, and joy amongst our beneficiaries. We served **38** service users and accumulated £565 through various donations to support our initiatives. This amount includes £2 in voluntary donations specifically dedicated to sustaining our hot meal program.

The hot meal initiative sparks our users face with laughter, joy, and togetherness. Not everyone is able to eat alone after the loss of a loved one, and this initiative helps foster resilience, empowerment, and promotes healthy eating.

BINGO SESSION

Every Friday, our beneficiaries organise and contribute to a lively bingo session at our workshops. This enjoyable activity fosters a sense of community, bringing joy, and significantly uplifting the mental well-being of everyone involved. Through these sessions, served 27 service users and raised **£255** in funds, with participants making voluntary donations of £1.50 each.

END OF THE YEAR PARTY

Christmas is the highlight of our year, a day filled with food, music and dance shared with our beneficiaries. This special event brings everyone together to celebrate joy, helping to ease the difficult emotions that can arise when remembering the loved ones. We also take this opportunity to recognise and thank our volunteers for their hard work and unwavering support. This year, around 180 individuals attended our celebration, bringing our community together. It was a wonderful opportunity to share our learning, showcase our work, and present testimonies etc

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The charity is a public benefit entity.

Who has benefitted from our services:

- Our charity's objectives and funding support both women and men who are bereaved, regardless of age, culture, religion, ethnicity, race, colour, sexuality, belief, faith, or disability.
- We have seen significant improvements in gender access to our services, with an increasing number of widowers now benefitting from one-to-one home visits, ensuring both genders receive the support they need.
- The impact of our work extends beyond the individuals we help directly. It also benefits volunteers—both young and elderly members of our community—as well as students from universities such as Manchester, MMU, GBS, Kent University, the University of Law, and Salford University. These students gain valuable experience while contributing to the charity's mission.
- Research shows that older widowed individuals are 5.2 times more likely to experience loneliness (*Age UK: Loneliness in Later Life*), and 29% of widows report feeling isolated, which can lead to poor health and mental challenges. Widows in the UK often struggle to have their voices heard by mainstream governmental systems, which can make them one of the most marginalised groups in society. This makes them particularly vulnerable and in need of support, whether it be financial, emotional, or related to physical and mental health (*Women's National Commission*).

To ensure we continuously improve, we conduct assessments of our activities using baseline evaluations before and after each project, gathering data through questionnaires and interviews. These evaluations allow us to track our progress and achievements, ensuring we meet

the needs of our service users. We also encourage feedback from those we serve after each activity, fostering a culture of openness and responsiveness.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held in June 2024. During the meeting, we reviewed the charity's activities and financial performance for the year. Key highlights included:

- Presentation of the Annual Report, showcasing program successes and community impact.
- Review and approval of the financial statements, with a positive outlook on our financial health.
- Election of new board members, ensuring continued leadership and governance.
- Discussion of goals and strategies for the upcoming year, including expanding outreach and strengthening fundraising efforts.

We are grateful for the ongoing support from our donors, volunteers, and partners, and look forward to continuing our work in the coming year.

SETTING UP EASY FUNDRAISING PLATFORM

This year we tied up with easy fundraising platform that allows donations from various entities. The platform lists numerous brands from different sectors selling products such as vacation package, grocery, meal orders, clothes, etc. Every item purchased from a brand using this platform enables a donation from that entity into our account without an additional cost to the buyer. So far we have been able to list 18 supporters onto the platform.

PARTNERS

To ensure our charity is accessible to those who are in need, we have become community partners working in collaboration with other great organisations:

- Cruse Bereavement Manchester,
- GPS
- NHS Navigator and housing association,
- Other professional agencies and other community organisations
- Community explorer
- MACC
- Age UK
- ROCHDALE COMMUNITY
- GMCVO
- NCVO
- Key businesses such as Asda, Tesco, Morrison, Sainsbury
- Manchester Royal Children Hospital
- Manchester BME
- CAHN

- Home Office
- Trust Law Foundation (Pro Bono)
- Manchester Central Library
- Manchester City Council
- Higher institutions (Manchester University, Manchester Metropolitan University, Salford University, Global Business School, and many more)
- Santander Bank
- Northward Housing Associations
- Nigeria community Rochdale
- Root and branch production
- ACCG- African Caribbean Care Group
- ACCA
- SAWN
- ASDA
- TESCO
- MORRISONS
- CEDE FOUNDATION

HOW WE ENHANCE OUR PARTNERSHIP

We work closely with a wide range of organizations to ensure that bereaved individuals receive the support they need. Our partnerships with NHS Navigators across North, South, East, and West Manchester have been instrumental in reaching individuals who are struggling with loneliness and isolation following a loss. In addition, we receive referrals from professionals such as social workers, ambulance crews, and community nurses. Through home visits and assessments, we identify the specific needs of our clients, and when we are unable to provide the required services, we signpost them to relevant organizations.

GP practitioners also refer individuals in need of bereavement support, expanding our outreach and enabling us to connect with people we might not have otherwise reached. Collaborations with established groups like CAHN, ACCA, Cruse Bereavement, Greater Manchester Bereavement Services, Befriending Network, and Be Well ensure that we offer culturally sensitive and inclusive support, increasing the breadth of our services and enhancing our capacity to assist those in mourning.

We also collaborate with community organizations such as MACC, Salford CVS, Action Together, and Volunteero, which help us engage with volunteers, promote our services, and secure funding. Our partnership with Manchester City Council is crucial in securing additional funding, ensuring that we can continue to provide vital services to those who are grieving.

Additionally, our collaboration with local universities enables us to offer student placements, internships, and volunteer opportunities, which fosters community involvement while promoting our volunteer opportunities across university platforms.

Key businesses, including Asda, Morrisons, and Tesco, partner with us to raise funds and awareness. These collaborations allow us to engage with the public in-store, distribute informational materials, raise awareness, and recruit volunteers. During these events, we also give back to customers by assisting with packing bags, supporting those with limited mobility, and helping organize shopping and transport to cars.

Finally, we ensure that our outreach is diverse by engaging with bereavement support groups on social media, and by sending literature to BAME community groups across the UK. We also share our learning and initiatives on various social media platforms to further raise awareness and ensure that those who need support can find it.

HOME OFFICE

We collaborate with the Home Office to invite volunteers from other countries to support the work of our charity. This is due to our expansion, reach, growth and to help meet our demand. This partnership enables us to engage individuals from diverse backgrounds, enriching our volunteer base and expanding our reach. By welcoming international volunteers, we foster cultural exchange, provide valuable opportunities for personal growth, and strengthen our ability to serve bereaved individuals in the community.

STUDENT PLACEMENTS

- We have recognised the need to establish the skills and empathy needed in the caring profession in the life of students, by building a sense of community and care in all people we can create an environment where those that suffer loss can be cared for.
- We have partnered with Manchester University, Salford University and Metropolitan Manchester University for student placements and have attended 6 career fairs bringing out total volunteer recruited to **90** students.
- We worked with universities to provide work-based learning to **79** students.
- We conducted a research project into West African grief traditions to raise awareness of these cultural practices within the UK, funded by the Heritage Fund – 10 students participated as a volunteer in the research program

INTERNSHIP

We partnership with Santander Bank via Salford University for Internship programme. A paid sponsorship program for a **£1000** each student that we recruited into the programme. Presently, we have recruited one student as a project/administration staff. This project is open to all students at the university to apply for the advertised role, and we make sure we complete the recruitment processes including interview.

VOLUNTEERS

- Our volunteers are the backbone of the trust, without them giving up their own personal free time we will not be able to support our service users as effectively as we do right now.
- We have a bank of **65** volunteers

- We have **25** regular active volunteers
- We are committed to recognising and rewarding our volunteers by providing opportunities to develop valuable workplace skills that will enhance their future career prospects.
- Through our active support in building employability skills, six of our volunteers have successfully secured employment.
- We provide the option of learning:
 - Administrative work
 - Accounting
 - Digital marketing
 - Bid writing
 - Community care skills.
 - Critical writing skills

VOLUNTARY CHARITY WORKER – TEMPORARY WORKER (Certificate of Sponsorship)

Our charity is working in partnership with the Home Office on the charity worker scheme (Temporary worker). We have currently recruited and sponsored one volunteer from Abroad (Nigeria) with the Certificate of Sponsorship to support our organisation for one year. This scheme has helped to provide consistence for our service because for the reliability of the volunteer.

IMPACT OF OUR WORK:

Our work has created a lasting and positive impact on both the bereaved individuals we support and the wider community. Through our range of services—one-to-one home visits, group workshops, and skill-building activities—we have provided essential support to those navigating the difficult journey of grief.

In the past year, we reached 971 individuals and provided direct support to 641 bereaved individuals (excluding 180 participants at the End of the Year Party). Our services have empowered people to connect, learn new skills, and regain a sense of purpose. For example, one of our beneficiaries shared, "I felt like I was drowning in my grief, but the support I received here helped me find a way back to living again. I no longer feel alone." This feedback reflects the immense value of our services in helping individuals through their grief journey.

Our weekly workshops, which combine skill-building activities such as sewing, knitting, and cooking, have been instrumental in alleviating isolation and promoting social inclusion. Approximately 85% of workshop participants reported feeling more socially connected and emotionally supported after attending, highlighting the significant role our services play in reducing loneliness. Another service user commented, "The workshops gave me something to look forward to each week, and I made friends who truly understood my pain."

In addition to our work with bereaved individuals, we have had a meaningful impact on the volunteers, placement students, and interns who support our mission. Over the past year, we have supported **25** volunteers, who have contributed over **1,000 hours** to our operations, assisting with activities, community outreach, and event management. Their dedication has not only helped expand our services but also provided them with valuable experience. As one

volunteer shared, "Being part of this charity has given me purpose and taught me so much about supporting others in difficult times."

Furthermore, we have welcomed **79** students from universities including Manchester, MMU, and Salford University, offering them hands-on experience in the charity sector. **20%** of these students have gone on to pursue careers in social work, mental health, or related fields, demonstrating the impact of their time with us. As one student said, "My placement here has been a life-changing experience. It has shaped my career path and deepened my understanding of grief support."

We have also provided internships for **one** intern, who have played a key role in implementing specific projects and bringing fresh ideas to our charity's work. Their contributions have allowed us to improve our outreach, refine our programs, and offer even greater support to those in need.

Our partnership with local businesses such as Asda, Morrisons, and Tesco has further amplified our impact, allowing us to engage with the wider community, raise awareness, and secure funding to continue our essential work. These collaborations have also given us the opportunity to assist customers in-store, promoting our services while offering help to those with limited mobility.

The feedback we receive from beneficiaries and partners consistently reinforces the value of our work. 75% of service users report feeling more confident and supported in managing their grief after accessing our services, while 68% say they feel more connected to their community. These statistics demonstrate the tangible difference our charity makes in people's lives.

In conclusion, the impact of our charity goes beyond just supporting individuals through their grief. Through the dedication of our volunteers, students, and interns, we are building stronger, more resilient communities, offering hope, connection, and practical support to those who need it most.

AWARDS

- CEO was invited to Salford Lawry to watch Danny Echo show Root & Branch Productions and raise awareness and donations
- CEO was interviewed by Manchester Evening Newspaper and BBC Radio about West Africa Grief Heritage Project to raise awareness
- CEO was one among 6 panellists invited by the Parliament and Civil Society to speak at Art Gallery in Manchester.
- CEO was awarded the British Empire Medal and was invited to Buckingham Palace for lunch and celebrate her achievement with the His Majesty King Charles III.

OUR FUTURE PLANS

We are committed to evolving our services to better meet the needs of those navigating the difficult journey of grief. Our future plans are designed to not only enhance our current offerings but also expand our reach to ensure that no widow or widower feels isolated, unsupported, or marginalized. We aim to address the gaps in bereavement support across the country and establish a more comprehensive, accessible support system for individuals in need.

1. Nationwide Expansion and Regional Outreach

While we have been successful in supporting widows and widowers locally, we aim to expand our services across the UK. Our goal is to establish regional hubs that cater to underserved areas, ensuring that support is available in both urban and rural settings. These regional centers will serve as local access points for in-person support groups, counselling services, and skill-building workshops. Through partnerships with local councils, health services, and community groups, we plan to raise awareness of our services and ensure that no one feels left behind, regardless of their location.

2. Digital Bereavement Support Hub

We recognize that grief is a deeply personal journey, and sometimes individuals may feel more comfortable accessing support in private, especially when they cannot attend in-person sessions. To bridge this gap, we plan to launch a digital bereavement support hub. This platform will offer online support groups, virtual grief counselling, and educational resources that individuals can access from the comfort of their homes. Additionally, it will include self-guided courses on grief management, mindfulness practices, and tips for building resilience after loss. This will help us reach a much broader audience, especially those who face mobility issues, live in remote locations, or have other barriers to in-person services.

3. Collaboration with Healthcare Providers and NHS Services

One of our primary future goals is to create stronger ties with healthcare providers, including the **NHS and GP practices**, to integrate grief and bereavement support into mainstream healthcare services. We believe that grief often goes unaddressed in medical settings, leading to long-term emotional and physical consequences. By collaborating with GPs and healthcare practitioners, we aim to provide early intervention for those experiencing grief. These professionals will be able to refer individuals directly to our services, ensuring that we offer holistic support that addresses both mental and physical health. Additionally, we plan to host training for healthcare providers, helping them identify the signs of unresolved grief and refer patients to our network.

4. Widows' Financial Literacy and Empowerment Program

The financial burden of widowhood can be overwhelming, as many widows and widowers face challenges in managing finances alone. To support their financial independence, we plan to launch a **Widows' Financial Literacy and Empowerment Program**. This program will offer workshops, webinars, and one-on-one sessions focused on budgeting, debt management, un-

derstanding inheritance rights, and accessing financial support. We will collaborate with financial institutions and legal experts to provide advice and resources to those struggling financially after the loss of a partner. By improving financial literacy, we aim to reduce financial stress and help widows regain control over their financial futures.

5. National Grief Awareness Campaign

Grief and bereavement often carry a social stigma, and many people suffering from loss do not know where to turn for help. We plan to launch a **National Grief Awareness Campaign** to raise awareness about the emotional, mental, and physical impact of grief. This campaign will highlight the unique needs of widows and widowers and encourage open conversations about grief in the media, schools, and workplaces. By working with public figures, media outlets, and grief specialists, we will promote understanding and normalize grief as a natural part of life. This campaign will also direct individuals to our services, helping us reach those who may not know they need support.

6. Partnerships with Educational Institutions for Research and Support

To address the ongoing gap in bereavement research, we aim to form partnerships with universities and research institutions. By collaborating with these organizations, we will contribute to the development of evidence-based practices for grief and bereavement support. We will also work with universities to create **internship and placement programs** for students in social work, psychology, and related fields. These students will gain valuable experience working with bereaved individuals, while also helping us expand our capacity to provide support. This partnership will create a feedback loop of continuous improvement, helping us refine our services and stay at the forefront of grief care.

7. Grief and Wellness Retreats

A new initiative we are excited to introduce is **Grief and Wellness Retreats**. These retreats will provide widows and widowers with the opportunity to disconnect from the stressors of everyday life and immerse themselves in a supportive environment. They will engage in grief-focused workshops, mindfulness practices, yoga, and nature-based healing activities, all aimed at restoring their emotional and physical wellbeing. The retreats will also offer opportunities for social interaction, allowing participants to connect with others who are going through similar experiences. These retreats will serve as a safe space for healing, reflection, and personal growth.

8. Peer Support Networks and Mentorship Programs

We recognize that the most meaningful support often comes from those who have lived through similar experiences. To empower widows and widowers, we plan to expand our **Peer Support Networks and Mentorship Programs**. These programs will pair individuals who have experienced loss with trained mentors, allowing them to share their journeys and offer mutual emotional support. Peer support groups, both online and in-person, will foster community and reduce the isolation that often accompanies widowhood. These networks will also provide an avenue for widows to become mentors themselves, promoting empowerment and personal growth.

9. Innovative Fundraising Initiatives and Corporate Partnerships

To secure the funding necessary to expand and sustain our services, we plan to explore innovative fundraising initiatives, including virtual events, charity auctions, and corporate partnerships. We will reach out to national businesses and brands, asking them to support our mission through employee volunteer programs, donation matching, and fundraising campaigns. These partnerships will not only provide financial support but will also help raise awareness about our services among a wider audience.

Conclusion

The future of **The Widows Empowerment Trust** is one of innovation, expansion, and continuous growth. We aim to break down the barriers to grief support, ensuring that every widow and widower in the UK has access to the resources, community, and support they need to heal and thrive. Our comprehensive plans—ranging from nationwide outreach to digital support platforms, financial literacy programs, and creative wellness initiatives—will help us address the unmet needs in bereavement care. By staying committed to our mission and continuously adapting to the needs of the people we serve, we will create lasting change for widows and widowers across the country.

REACH AND PROFILE

Marketing and communication strategy and plan

Our marketing and communication strategy focuses on enhancing visibility and expanding outreach to support widows and widowers in need. By integrating digital innovation with community engagement, we aim to create a lasting impact.

Digital Outreach: We'll improve our website with compelling stories, grief resources, and easy donation options. Social media campaigns and email marketing will deepen connections, while SEO optimization ensures better discoverability for those seeking bereavement support.

Traditional Media: We will strengthen partnerships with local media outlets, distributing press releases, print materials, and building awareness in underserved communities.

Community Engagement: Events like charity walks and workshops remain central to our efforts, bringing people together while promoting our mission. Partnerships with local community groups and corporate partners will further extend our reach.

Stakeholder Feedback: Beneficiary and volunteer feedback will guide service improvements. Regular engagement with staff, volunteers, and supporters ensures we stay responsive to community needs.

By focusing on both digital and traditional channels, alongside deep community engagement, we aim to ensure that more individuals facing grief find the support they need.

Network of Champions:

Our network of champions plays a pivotal role in expanding the reach and impact of The Widows Empowerment Trust. Through strategic partnerships, we've forged connections with a diverse range of organizations, academic institutions, businesses, and community groups, all of which help amplify our efforts and broaden our support base.

Collaborations with Housing and Community Organizations: Our ongoing partnership with Northwood Housing has given us deeper insights into the housing challenges faced by bereaved individuals, allowing us to offer more targeted and relevant assistance. This collaboration has enabled us to address a critical need for stable housing in the bereavement process, ensuring that individuals have secure spaces to grieve and rebuild.

Academic Institutions and Volunteers: Working with universities like The University of Manchester, MMU, Global Business School, and the University of Salford has been instrumental in providing enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers. These volunteers bring fresh perspectives, energy, and expertise, strengthening our capacity to deliver support and enhancing our internal resources.

Women's Empowerment Partnerships: Collaborating with organizations like Wonderfully Made Woman has bolstered our commitment to women's empowerment, especially for widows navigating the challenges of grief and rebuilding their lives. These partnerships have facilitated workshops, resources, and support networks that directly address the unique needs of women in bereavement.

Corporate Support and Fundraising: Our relationships with key retail partners such as ASDA, Tesco, and Morrisons have been invaluable in organizing fundraising events. These partnerships not only provide essential financial support but also raise awareness of our cause, bringing our mission to a wider public. The fundraising efforts at their stores help us generate the resources necessary to continue offering critical services to those we serve.

Reaching Diverse Communities: In our commitment to inclusivity, we actively engage with BAME community groups and other marginalised groups across the UK. We share literature, insights, and resources via social media and direct outreach, ensuring that bereavement support is accessible to all. This allows us to break down barriers and ensure that our services are available to those who may not traditionally seek help.

Each of these partnerships plays a vital role in empowering our charity to continue supporting bereaved individuals, expanding our reach, and ensuring that our services are accessible, inclusive, and impactful for all. Through these champions, we build a strong, collaborative network that enhances the care and support we provide to those navigating grief.

Awareness Raising Work Effort

Raising awareness about the unique challenges faced by widows and widowers is central to our mission. Our goal is to ensure that individuals who are grieving understand they are not alone, while also educating the public about the emotional, social, and practical difficulties of bereavement.

Community Engagement: Through a series of community events, including charity walks, remembrance ceremonies, and workshops, we create spaces for individuals to come together, share their experiences, and support one another. These events also serve as platforms to raise awareness of our services and the broader issue of grief. They not only provide emotional support but also educate attendees about the resources available to those struggling with the impact of losing a loved one.

Collaborations with Key Organizations: Our work with partner organizations like Northwood Housing, local universities, Wonderfully Made Woman, and corporate supporters such as ASDA, Tesco, and Morrisons has been instrumental in raising awareness. These partnerships allow us to engage with a wider audience and to reach individuals who may not be familiar with our services. Whether through fundraising events or community workshops, our network of partners helps amplify our message and spread awareness to those in need of support.

Social Media and Digital Outreach: We leverage digital platforms, including social media channels, to engage with a broader audience and educate the public on the often-overlooked challenges of grief. Our social media campaigns highlight stories of our beneficiaries, share helpful resources, and spark conversations around the importance of grief support. We also actively post about events, workshops, and news related to bereavement, encouraging individuals to seek help when needed.

Targeted Outreach to Marginalized Groups: Recognizing that bereavement affects everyone differently, we specifically focus on reaching marginalized groups, including BAME communities, who may face cultural or social barriers to accessing support. Through targeted outreach on social media, literature distribution, and collaborations with community groups, we work to ensure that grief support is inclusive and accessible to all individuals, regardless of their background.

Media and Public Relations: Our efforts to raise awareness also include working with local media outlets to feature articles, press releases, and interviews that highlight the challenges faced by widows and widowers, while also showcasing the work of our charity. These media appearances help bring attention to the often-overlooked issues of isolation, loneliness, and mental health struggles experienced by the bereaved.

By focusing on these awareness-raising initiatives, we strive to educate the wider community about the profound effects of bereavement, reduce stigma, and promote the importance of support during times of grief. Our efforts aim not only to highlight the needs of widows and widowers but also to inspire action, create empathy, and drive greater engagement with our services.

The Widows Connect: Empowering Widows Worldwide

The Widows Connect is a private, online social media platform created by The Widows Empowerment Trust to offer a safe, supportive space for widows around the world to connect, share their experiences, and access the resources they need. With over 300 widows currently engaged, the platform has become a vital tool for creating a global community of support, compassion, and empowerment.

Managed by one of our dedicated volunteers—who was once a widow supported by our organisation and is now giving back to help others—the Widows Connect has evolved into a sanctuary where women can find understanding and encouragement from those who have experienced similar challenges. This unique platform allows widows to share their personal journeys, seek advice, and offer guidance, breaking down isolation and building solidarity.

Through the Widows Connect, we provide essential support services, including information on financial assistance, mental health resources, skill-building opportunities, and more. We also share updates on our ongoing projects, such as food donations, business skills training, and other empowerment initiatives that directly impact widows across the globe.

By utilizing online platforms like the Widows Connect, we bridge geographical boundaries and reach widows in remote or underserved areas, ensuring they have access to vital information and a network of like-minded women. This digital space has proven to be an invaluable resource, enabling widows to connect, learn, and grow together, no matter where they are in the world.

The Widows Connect embodies our commitment to creating a global community of support, helping widows rebuild their lives and reclaim their strength, one connection at a time.

Widows Empowerment Initiative for Africa Charity (WEIFA)

The Widows Empowerment Initiative for Africa (WEIFA) is a charity dedicated to supporting widows across Africa, with a focus on Nigeria and Kenya. Founded in August 2020, WEIFA aims to relieve the poverty and hardship that widows face, empowering them to become self-sufficient and rebuild their lives after the loss of their spouses.

In Africa, widows are often subjected to extreme social, economic, and legal challenges. Many face stigmatization, lack of access to education, and limited employment opportunities. In some regions, traditional practices leave widows with little to no rights to inheritance, further entrenching their poverty. With over 8000 widows supported so far, WEIFA's work has been life-changing for countless individuals.

Every year, WEIFA provides essential food donations to widows in Nigeria and Kenya. In 2024, 625 widows received special festival food donations, ensuring they could celebrate alongside their communities. Beyond food, WEIFA supports widows with training in businesses, trades, farming, poultry, and cash grants to help them sustain livelihoods. Through these initiatives, widows gain practical skills that allow them to be financially independent and secure a better future for their families.

The impact of WEIFA's work extends far beyond immediate relief. Through strategic partnerships with organizations like Come together Widows and Orphan Organisation in Kenya, WEIFA has been able to widen its reach and provide continuous support. With the generous donations from global supporters, WEIFA is changing the lives of widows, ensuring that they are not forgotten, but are empowered to rebuild and thrive.

Founded by Mrs. Oyovwe Kigho BEM, the initiative is committed to creating sustainable change for widows in Africa, ensuring that every widow receives the help, respect, and opportunities they deserve.

Fair Events – Recruitment

The Widows Empowerment Trust actively participates in various career fairs and recruitment events to engage with potential volunteers and raise awareness about our mission. We are proud to collaborate with institutions such as Salford University, the University of Manchester (UOM), Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), the Greater Manchester Broughton Society (GBS), and local job canterers. These events offer a platform for us to connect with individuals who are passionate about supporting widows and making a meaningful impact in their communities.

Through our involvement in these fairs, we not only recruit volunteers who help us in our operations but also provide opportunities for those seeking employment, giving them insight into our charitable work and how they can contribute to our cause.

These recruitment events play a crucial role in expanding our network of supporters, ensuring that we continue to grow and strengthen our mission to uplift bereaved spouses. By engaging with diverse communities and fostering new connections, we are able to increase the impact of our work and provide more opportunities for individuals to get involved with the Widows Empowerment Trust.

Impact of Our Services on Beneficiaries

We consistently measure the impact of our services to ensure we are making a positive difference in the lives of those we support. Through our regular workshops, one-on-one consultations, and community engagement, we aim to improve the emotional and social well-being of our beneficiaries while fostering connections and reducing isolation.

Evaluation and Feedback: To assess the effectiveness of our services, we conduct regular pre- and post-workshop surveys, using standardized scales to measure key areas such as loneliness, mental health, and overall well-being. This data provides us with measurable insights into the positive changes our beneficiaries experience after engaging with our services.

Statistical Impact:

- **85% of participants** report a noticeable reduction in feelings of loneliness and isolation after attending our workshops and support groups.
- **70% of participants** have expressed an increase in their resilience and coping mechanisms, showing improvement in managing the emotional and psychological impacts of grief.
- **60% of beneficiaries** say they have formed meaningful connections with others through our services, leading to lasting friendships and peer support networks.

A particularly heartwarming example of the success of these connections is that a group of beneficiaries, who initially met through our services, are now planning a cruise together. This not only demonstrates the lasting friendships that have formed but also highlights the sense of belonging and community that our charity fosters.

Feedback from Beneficiaries: Beneficiaries regularly report feeling less alone and more empowered to navigate their grief. Many express how our workshops have provided them with practical tools to cope with their emotions, while others have highlighted the value of sharing their experiences in a supportive environment. One beneficiary shared, "Before joining the group, I felt isolated and unsure of how to move forward. Now, I have a sense of purpose, and the people I've met have become like a second family."

Volunteer and Staff Feedback: Volunteers, many of whom are former beneficiaries, also report significant personal growth from their involvement. They appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the community while developing new skills. Volunteers frequently highlight how rewarding it is to see the transformation in participants and the community-building aspect of the charity.

These impactful results show that our services are not only providing immediate relief but also fostering long-term change, helping our beneficiaries rebuild their lives after a devastating loss. Through ongoing assessment and feedback, we continue to refine our programs to ensure we're meeting the evolving needs of those we serve and making a lasting, positive impact on their lives.

Management and analysis of data

We prioritize effective management and analysis of data to enhance our services and ensure informed decision-making. We collect data through surveys, feedback forms, and service usage reports, providing valuable insights into our programs. This data allows us to track progress, evaluate program effectiveness, and pinpoint areas for improvement.

Our data management system ensures that all information is securely stored, accurate, and accessible to our staff. We track key metrics such as participant engagement, workshop outcomes, and fundraising success. By analysing this data, we identify trends, measure the impact of our services, and adjust strategies to better meet the needs of our beneficiaries.

We maintain detailed records of service delivery, including volunteer applications and referrals, using spreadsheets to monitor engagement and identify trends in service provision. Additionally, we use online tools like SurveyMonkey and Google Forms for efficient data collection and Microsoft Excel for data analysis, streamlining our data management processes.

By regularly assessing the data, we are able to make data-driven decisions that improve service delivery, increase accountability, and ensure transparency to our stakeholders and funders. This systematic approach enhances our ability to provide the most effective support to those we serve while continuously improving our long-term sustainability.

Quality of delivery and operation required

At The Widows Empowerment Trust, our delivery and operations are designed to provide consistent, high-quality support to bereaved individuals while ensuring the charity operates efficiently and effectively. To achieve this, we rely on a clear operational framework, a skilled team, and the right resources to meet the needs of our beneficiaries.

Staffing and Training: Our operations are supported by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers, each committed to delivering high-impact services. We invest in regular training and development to ensure our team is equipped with the knowledge and skills required to handle the sensitive nature of bereavement support and provide the best care to our service users.

Technology and Tools: We utilise modern technology and data management tools to streamline our processes and ensure effective communication across the charity. This includes online platforms for volunteer coordination, data collection tools for service evaluations, and project management software to ensure the smooth delivery of programs.

Service Delivery: Our services are delivered through a combination of one-to-one support, group workshops, and community engagement initiatives. We have developed robust systems for scheduling, tracking, and delivering our services to ensure accessibility and responsiveness to the needs of our beneficiaries.

Operational Infrastructure: To sustain our operations, we rely on strong financial management practices, including budgeting and monitoring expenditure, alongside an efficient infrastructure for service delivery. This includes office facilities, transport for outreach services, and access to venues for community events and workshops.

In summary, our operational requirements focus on maintaining a well-trained team, leveraging technology for efficiency, and ensuring financial sustainability to meet the needs of bereaved individuals.

Photo consent

At The Widows Empowerment Trust, we are committed to respecting the privacy and dignity of all our beneficiaries, staff, and volunteers. As part of our operations, we may take photographs or videos to document our activities, events, and the impact of our services. These images are used for promotional purposes, fundraising, reports, and social media to raise awareness about our work and the support we provide.

Before any photos or videos are taken, we obtain explicit consent from individuals involved. This consent is sought through a clear and transparent process, ensuring that individuals understand how their images will be used. Consent forms are provided and signed prior to taking any photographs or recordings, and individuals are given the option to opt-out if they do not wish to be included. We make it clear that participation is entirely voluntary and does not affect the support or services they receive from the charity.

We are mindful of the sensitivity of bereavement and, therefore, take extra care to ensure that any images used are respectful and appropriate. In the event that someone changes their mind about consent, we immediately respect their wishes and remove any images or videos involving them from our materials.

By prioritizing consent, transparency, and respect, we ensure that our photo usage aligns with ethical standards and maintains the trust of our beneficiaries and supporters.

Funding Strategy and Plan

We have developed a comprehensive and multi-faceted fundraising strategy to secure the financial resources needed to sustain and expand our services. This strategy is designed to ensure we remain financially stable while diversifying our income sources to support the growing demand for our bereavement services. Our funding plan focuses on individual donations, grants, community fundraising initiatives, corporate partnerships, and ethical fundraising practices.

Grant Funding

Grants form a central part of our funding model and are essential to the delivery of our key services, including our befriending programs, mental health workshops, and community outreach initiatives. These funds enable us to develop and implement projects aimed at promoting social inclusion, mental well-being, and practical support for widows and widowers.

Our strategy includes seeking funding from a wide variety of grant providers, including charitable foundations, government agencies, and local authorities. We aim to maintain a strong portfolio of grants that will help sustain our existing programs while also funding new initiatives that will further extend our reach and impact.

Individual Donations

We rely on the generosity of individual donors to support our charity's ongoing work. This includes both one-off donations and regular contributions from individuals who believe in our mission and want to make a difference in the lives of bereaved individuals.

To increase individual giving, we plan to implement a more structured donor engagement strategy, which includes a well-managed donor database, personalised communication, and regular updates on the impact of their donations. We also aim to introduce a donor recognition program to express gratitude for their ongoing support and to encourage continued giving.

Community Fundraising Initiatives

Community fundraising is a key pillar of our strategy, allowing us to engage directly with local supporters and raise funds in a fun, meaningful way. Events such as charity walks, supermarket bag-packing, and community fun days provide both financial support and valuable opportunities to raise awareness about our services.

In addition to traditional fundraising events, we will continue to organise prize draws, including raffles and bingo sessions, to engage participants and raise vital funds. These activities also serve as an opportunity to build a strong sense of community among our supporter

Corporate Partnerships and Sponsorships

Building partnerships with local businesses, organisations, and professionals is a critical component of our funding strategy. We plan to create mutually beneficial relationships with corporate partners, offering sponsorship opportunities for specific events or programs.

Corporate sponsorships will not only provide much-needed financial support but will also allow us to expand our reach by engaging with the corporate partners' customer base and employees. Additionally, these partnerships can create opportunities for employee volunteering, further strengthening our community connections.

Expanding the Befrienders' Network

A major focus of our funding strategy is the expansion of our befrienders' network. We aim to increase the number of volunteers providing one-on-one support to bereaved individuals, with a target of over 1,000 active befrienders.

This expansion will require investment in capacity-building, including the recruitment, training, and support of new befrienders. Securing funding to support this network expansion is a key priority in ensuring that we can continue to meet the growing demand for our services.

Capacity-Building and Long-Term Sustainability

To achieve long-term financial sustainability, we are investing in capacity-building efforts. This includes hiring dedicated staff to manage fundraising efforts, improving board leadership, and enhancing our financial management systems. We also plan to build long-term relationships with existing and new donors, ensuring that we have a sustainable base of support for the future.

As part of this, we will implement a clear fundraising plan with specific targets and timelines. This plan will guide our efforts, ensuring that we are focused on diversifying our funding sources and building a financially secure future for the Trust.

Ethical and Transparent Fundraising Practices

We committed to ethical and transparent fundraising practices. To ensure accountability, we are implementing robust systems and policies that will guide all our fundraising efforts. This includes the creation of a comprehensive donor database, clear communication of how funds will be used, and regular reporting on the impact of donations.

We will also ensure that our fundraising practices comply with all relevant regulations, including the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Practice, and maintain transparency with our donors about the use of funds.

Conclusion

Through these strategic efforts, we are confident that The Widows Empowerment Trust will continue to make a lasting impact on the lives of widows and widowers across the UK. By diversifying our funding sources, building strong partnerships, and maintaining transparent and ethical fundraising practices, we will be able to empower those in need and ensure our charity's long-term success.

Tap to Pay

We have access to the NatWest Tap to Pay app, which enables our staff to easily receive donations on behalf of the charity. The app can be downloaded onto any staff member's phone and is directly linked to the trust's bank account, ensuring that the donation process is quick and seamless. When a donation is made, the app displays the trust's name on the screen, guaranteeing that funds are transferred directly to the trust account. This convenient and secure method makes it easy for supporters to contribute while ensuring transparency.

Pro Bono Services

The Trust Law Foundation has been an invaluable pro bono partner for our charity, providing essential legal support that strengthens our operations and ensures compliance with regulatory requirements. Their expertise in nonprofit law helps us navigate complex legal matters, from governance and contracts to risk management and data protection.

By offering their services at no cost, they enable us to focus more resources on our core mission of supporting bereaved individuals. This support has not only enhanced our legal framework but also contributed to building trust with donors, partners, and the wider community. The Trust Law Foundation's involvement is crucial in helping us maintain operational transparency, reduce legal risks, and ensure the charity's long-term sustainability, ultimately allowing us to have a greater impact on the lives of those we serve.

RISK REVIEW

As part of our commitment to good governance and sustainability, we regularly conduct a risk review to identify and address potential risks that could impact the charity's operations. This process involves assessing financial, operational, legal, and reputational risks, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of our internal controls and policies.

We work to mitigate risks by implementing strong financial management practices, ensuring compliance with regulations, and diversifying funding sources. Additionally, we have contingency plans in place to manage unexpected challenges, such as changes in funding or external factors that could affect our beneficiaries.

By proactively reviewing and managing risks, we ensure the charity remains resilient, adaptable, and focused on its mission to support bereaved individuals.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

As part of our ongoing commitment to financial transparency and sustainability, Trustees conduct regular financial reviews to assess the charity's financial health and ensure we are using resources efficiently. Our aim is to maintain free reserves of approximately two months' worth of routine expenditure, which is £5,000. This reserve will then provide a buffer to manage any unforeseen circumstances or cash flow fluctuations, ensuring we can continue to deliver essential services to our beneficiaries without disruption. In the meantime we are confident the restricted funds we have available are able to deliver these services.

We aim to gradually increase our reserves to provide a greater safety net for the charity's future, while balancing this with our commitment to investing in programs that directly benefit those we serve. Regular monitoring and strategic financial planning help us maintain a stable and resilient financial position, allowing us to focus on our mission with confidence.

The Trustees are of the opinion that this reserve provides sufficient flexibility to cover temporary shortfalls in incoming resources. The charity's expenditure is primarily composed of restricted costs, which are allocated to specific projects and services. Through effective management, we ensure that funds are used appropriately and in alignment with the charity's goals, maximizing our impact while maintaining financial stability.

Going concern

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

The total income received in the year was £129,109 (2023: £113,588). The Charity's expenditure exceeded income by £3,427 (2023: expenditure came in below by £15,092).

The Trustees are satisfied with the Charity's performance.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes charitable incorporated organisation.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees are elected and co-opted according to the constitution and under the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The elections on to the board take place on an annual basis at the Charity's Annual General meeting. All trustees offer their services as volunteers and do not receive any payment for their time and commitment.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1171317

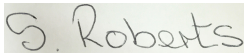
Principal address
Wilsons House
Biz Space Business Park Monsall Road Manchester
M0 8WN

Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

Trustees

V Keke
S Roberts
E. Udi
J. Mooney
C. Onumara
E Idiegbe (appointed 24.9.24)

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 11 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Roberts".

S Roberts - Trustee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
The Widows Empowerment Trust

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Widows Empowerment Trust

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Widows Empowerment Trust (the Trust) for the year ended 30 September 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Su Rai

Raise
Chartered Accountants
10th Floor
3 Hardman Street
Spinningfields
Manchester
M3 3HF

11 March 2025

The Widows Empowerment Trust

**Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 30 September 2024**

		Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	30.9.24 Total funds £	30.9.23 Total funds £
Notes					
	INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM				
	Donations and legacies	25,437	-	25,437	9,933
	Charitable activities				
	Fundraising and events	-	21,100	21,100	9,550
	Befriending	-	-	-	4,500
	Africa Initiative Programs	360	-	360	-
	Art & Craft/Bingo nights	-	-	-	8,750
	Community work	-	20,417	20,417	21,542
	Cook & Taste event	-	-	-	800
	Projects	-	61,601	61,601	58,443
	Investment income	2	195	195	70
	Total	<u>25,992</u>	<u>103,118</u>	<u>129,110</u>	<u>113,588</u>
	EXPENDITURE ON				
	Raising funds	3	55	55	-
	Charitable activities				
	Travel and subsistence	-	9,276	9,276	-
	Facilitators	-	4,003	4,003	-
	Fundraising and events	2,147	6,957	9,104	7,307
	Meals out	-	1,274	1,274	-
	Befriending	-	-	-	5,474
	Africa Initiative Programs	133	-	133	1,004
	Raising funds	23,509	-	23,509	-
	Art & Craft/Bingo nights	-	1,843	1,843	4,980
	Community work	-	22,844	22,844	14,505
	Cook & Taste event	-	-	-	524
	Projects	847	59,649	60,496	64,702
	Total	<u>26,691</u>	<u>105,846</u>	<u>132,537</u>	<u>98,496</u>
	NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(699)	(2,728)	(3,427)	15,092
	Transfers between funds	11	402	(402)	-
	Net movement in funds	(297)	(3,130)	(3,427)	15,092
	RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
	Total funds brought forward	312	50,045	50,357	35,265
	TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>15</u>	<u>46,915</u>	<u>46,930</u>	<u>50,357</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

The Widows Empowerment Trust

Balance Sheet
30 September 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	30.9.24 Total funds £	30.9.23 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	8	-	193	193	1,565
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	-	-	-	700
Cash in hand		2,854	46,723	49,577	49,868
		<u>2,854</u>	<u>46,723</u>	<u>49,577</u>	<u>50,568</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	10	(2,841)	1	(2,840)	(1,776)
		<u>13</u>	<u>46,724</u>	<u>46,737</u>	<u>48,792</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		<u>13</u>	<u>46,724</u>	<u>46,737</u>	<u>48,792</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>13</u>	<u>46,917</u>	<u>46,930</u>	<u>50,357</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>13</u>	<u>46,917</u>	<u>46,930</u>	<u>50,357</u>
FUNDS	11				
Unrestricted funds				13	312
Restricted funds				<u>46,917</u>	<u>50,045</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>46,930</u>	<u>50,357</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 11 March 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

S. Roberts

S Roberts - Trustee

**Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 30 September 2024**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, 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)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, 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 accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost
Computer equipment	- 33% on cost

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

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.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been received by the charity for specific 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.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charity's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Financial instruments

The charity only enters into basic financial instrument transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities, such as trade and other debtors and creditors, loans, overdrafts and cash at bank, which are measured at amortised cost.

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	30.9.24	30.9.23
	£	£
Deposit account interest	195	70
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The Widows Empowerment Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

3. RAISING FUNDS

Raising donations and legacies

	30.9.24	30.9.23
	£	£
Support costs	55	-
	<u>55</u>	<u>-</u>

4. AUDITORS' REMUNERATION

	30.9.24	30.9.23
	£	£
Independent examination	834	858
	<u>834</u>	<u>858</u>

5. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration payments or other benefits for the year ended 30 September 2024 nor for the year ended 30 September 2023.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 30 September 2024 nor for the year ended 30 September 2023.

6. STAFF COSTS

	30.9.24	30.9.23
	£	£
Wages and salaries	75,057	51,850
Other pension costs	642	703
	<u>75,699</u>	<u>52,553</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	30.9.24	30.9.23
CEO	1	1
Support staff	9	13
	<u>10</u>	<u>14</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

The key management personnel of the charity comprises the CEO.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £46,588. (2023: £13,878).

7. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted fund	Total funds
	£	£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	9,932	1	9,933
Charitable activities			
Fundraising and events	-	9,550	9,550
Befriending	-	4,500	4,500
Art & Craft/Bingo nights	-	8,750	8,750
Community work	-	21,542	21,542
Cook & Taste event	-	800	800
Projects	-	58,443	58,443
Investment income	70	-	70
Total	<u>10,002</u>	<u>103,586</u>	<u>113,588</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

7. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Fundraising and events	1,084	6,223	7,307
Befriending	1,465	4,009	5,474
Africa Initiative Programs	1,004	-	1,004
Art & Craft/Bingo nights	-	4,980	4,980
Community work	160	14,345	14,505
Cook & Taste event	-	524	524
Projects	11,125	53,577	64,702
Total	14,838	83,658	98,496
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(4,836)	19,928	15,092
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	5,148	30,117	35,265
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	312	50,045	50,357

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 October 2023 and 30 September 2024	919	9,508	10,427
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 October 2023	556	8,306	8,862
Charge for year	180	1,192	1,372
At 30 September 2024	736	9,498	10,234
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 30 September 2024	183	10	193
At 30 September 2023	363	1,202	1,565

9. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30.9.24 £	30.9.23 £
Other debtors	-	700

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30.9.24 £	30.9.23 £
Taxation and social security	1,739	924
Other creditors	1,101	852
	<u>2,840</u>	<u>1,776</u>

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.10.23 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 30.9.24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	312	(701)	402	13
Restricted funds				
Restricted funds	50,045	(2,726)	(402)	46,917
	<u>50,357</u>	<u>(3,427)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>46,930</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	25,992	(26,693)	(701)
Restricted funds			
Restricted funds	103,118	(105,844)	(2,726)
	<u>129,110</u>	<u>(132,537)</u>	<u>(3,427)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.10.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 30.9.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	5,148	(4,836)	312
Restricted funds			
Restricted funds	30,117	19,928	50,045
	<u>35,265</u>	<u>15,092</u>	<u>50,357</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2024

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	10,002	(14,838)	(4,836)
Restricted funds			
Restricted funds	103,586	(83,658)	19,928
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>113,588</u>	<u>(98,496)</u>	<u>15,092</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.10.22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 30.9.24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	5,148	(5,537)	402	13
Restricted funds				
Restricted funds	30,117	17,202	(402)	46,917
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>35,265</u>	<u>11,665</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>46,930</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	35,994	(41,531)	(5,537)
Restricted funds			
Restricted funds	206,704	(189,502)	17,202
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>242,698</u>	<u>(231,033)</u>	<u>11,665</u>

12. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 30 September 2024 (YE 30 September 2023: nil)

13. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The total restricted funds as at 30 September 2024 was £46,3915 (YE 30 September 2023: £50,045)

The restricted funds received were as follows:

National Lottery Fund (Reaching Community) - training, session work, wages and contribution towards rent. Edward Gosling - training, session work and contribution towards wages.

Foyle Founding- community outreach.

Francis Winham - community outreach.

Prince's Trust- new workshop.

National Lottery Fund (Heritage Grief) - community shopping.

Dowager Countess - arts & crafts and bingo events.

National Lottery Fund (Award For All) - events and contribution towards rent.

Voice Scape - training and session work.

Manchester CC - community outreach.

Stafford Trust - community outreach.

DWF Foundation - community outreach.

Duchy of Lancaster - community outreach.

W G Edwards - community outreach.

Zedra Trust - community outreach.

Charity M P G - community outreach.

Forever Manchester - training and session work.

Bewell Social Prescribe - training and session work.

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

Material restricted funds	Brought Forward £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Carried forward £
National Lottery Fund (Reaching Community)	27520	41941	46597	22864
Edward Gosling	4175		4175	
Foyle Foundation	8000		8000	
Francis Winham	1981		1981	
Princes Trust	1954	1954		
National Lottery Fund (Heritage Grief)	4823	10433	13247	2009
Dowager Countess	173		173	
National Lottery Fund (Award 4 All)		20000	5857	14143
Voice Scape		1000		1000
Manchester CC		9984	8189	1795
Stafford Trust		5000	1657	3343
DWF Foundation		3036	1274	1762
Duchy of Lancaster		1000	1000	
W G Edwards		2124	2124	
Zedra Trust		2000	2000	
Charity M P G		3500	3500	
Forever Manchester		100	100	
Bewell Social Prescribe		3000	3000	
Totals	48626	103118	104827	46917

The Widows Empowerment Trust

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 30 September 2024**

15. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

The total unrestricted funds as at 30 September 2024 is £15 (YE 30 September 2023: £312)

The unrestricted funds received in the year were as follows:

Donations - £21,541 (2023: £8,466)

HMRC (gift aid) - £4,097 (2023: £1,466)

Widows Africa - £360 (2023: £nil)

The Widows Empowerment Trust

**Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 30 September 2024**

	30.9.24 £	30.9.23 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Gifts	(1)	1
Donations	21,341	8,466
Other income	4,097	1,466
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	25,437	9,933
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	195	70
Charitable activities		
Grants	103,478	103,585
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total incoming resources	129,110	113,588
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Wages	75,057	51,850
Pensions	642	703
Insurance	187	171
Telephone	1,192	1,156
Postage and stationery	877	-
Sundries	321	378
Travel and subsistence	13,052	9,170
Gifts to Widows	559	280
Purchases	1,988	3,332
Office expenses	232	2,403
Facilitators	3,480	6,727
Fundraising and events costs	7,019	7,446
Rent	4,873	4,409
Meals out	1,274	-
Support costs	13,728	-
Memberships	2,027	-
Training	1,188	270
IT costs	2,540	3,239
Projects	-	4,196
Storage costs	-	213
Fixtures and fittings	180	182
Computer equipment	1,192	1,402
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	131,608	97,527
Support costs		
Finance		
Bank charges	95	50
Governance costs		
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	834	858
Accountancy and legal fees	-	61
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	834	919
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total resources expended	132,537	98,496
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net (expenditure)/income	(3,427)	15,092
	<hr/>	<hr/>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements