

2023/24

Annual Report

CreateBolton



**The King's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups

Creationships that make a difference...

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1. Introduction

CreateBolton has had another incredible yet interesting year...

Our employed staff have now settled in and are an absolute blessing to us, perhaps in more ways than they will ever know.

Carol Hardman - Operations Manager

Jo Young - Creative Co-ordinator

Toby Wray - Cook/Kitchen Manager

In this year, we started our celebrations connected to our 10th anniversary as a charity (July 2023) and have enjoyed the experience and the milestone that enables us to build on the last ten years.

Statement from our Chair

Alison Lomax - Chair of Trustees

I'd like to start by saying a huge thanks to all our customers, our volunteers and to our supporters for being with us through the highs and the lows of the last year. We hope that you remain with us on the next phase of the journey. It makes such a difference every week, seeing volunteers turn up for duty, customers visibly enjoying what we do and seeing beneficiaries growing in confidence in so many ways.

We continue to see many examples of just how important the support we provide is to more and more people. We have so many stories sharing the difference we are making in the lives of those we connect with and for that we can be thankful.

On this occasion, I also want to thank my fellow trustees and to those people that have been praying for us especially at key points through the year.

Finally, I would just like to thank all our volunteers again and again, as their efforts have been recognised with the Kings Award for Voluntary Service.

This annual report **covers the period September 2023 through to August 2024**, as we are a Charitable Incorporated Organisation CIO (1179761) and these dates define our accounting year. We continue to work in reflection of our values, mission and our vision as follows:

2. The Vision – Why does CreateBolton exist?

Our **Objectives**, remain consistent with the Charity Commission Objects originally submitted within our application:

To advance and promote the use of the 'Creative Arts' in their widest sense, as a way of:

- ❖ Providing support and creative experiences for young people that develop their skills, capacities, and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible creative individuals.*
- ❖ Reducing social isolation and building confidence in both vulnerable adults and older people.*
- ❖ To preserve and protect the health of those caring for people with physical, mental or sensory impairment within the family or home by offering a creative break from caring through the provision of a creative experience away from the home.*
- ❖ To advance the Christian faith lived out in practice for the benefit of the public in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ.*

Vision

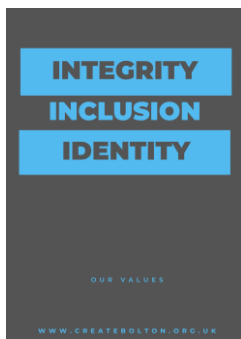
Our vision is a Bolton Community where everyone is included, and where everyone's creative talents and contributions are welcomed, utilised, and celebrated.

Mission

We use multiple forms of creative arts to bring out the gifts and talents of those people who face barriers to being able to confidently play an active part in their community. Through workshops, support groups and one to one mentoring we build confidence, trust, and an aspiration to both create and to contribute. We refer to this as **'creationships that make a difference'**.

Values

Our values reflect who we are and are synonymous with CreateBolton:



- ❖ **Inclusion**
 - We are a charity that includes all, that actively seeks to attract all and will bring all together
- ❖ **Integrity**
 - We are a charity that is authentic in all that we seek to accomplish; acting in our communities' best interests,' and we can be trusted and relied upon to honour our commitments.
- ❖ **Identity**
 - We value all people as unique individuals with something to give. We are a Christian charity, and the teachings and person of Jesus are core to our identity

Within this year, we have been particularly struck by the following verse from Romans and have used it as a guide at different points in the year:

Romans 15:13

New International Version

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

3. Resources

Section 4 will update you on the use of the CreateBolton space at Claremont House, however, there have been significant changes to our resources in the last 12 months:

- a) **People** – Our paid staff team (3) have now truly grown into a team during this year. Carol Hardman our Operations Manager is now into her third year and Jo Young our Creative Co-ordinator (24 hrs) and Toby Wray our Cook/Kitchen Manager (20 Hrs) are now into their second year. They are very ably supported by Andy Lees in particular, working freelance 14 hrs weekly with Create.



- b) During the year our volunteer numbers have continued to grow to nearly 50 on our books, with different volunteers at different points across different services. We are seeing signs of new growth, in those supporting us to deliver services.



We continue using younger volunteers from 14+ in the Café and most of them either come to us through word of mouth, churches, schools or through one of the local colleges. Our eldest volunteer is in their 80's, full of energy and wisdom. We cannot exist without our volunteers as they are the heart and soul of what we do, and we are blessed with such a diverse range of people. Between January and August 2024, we recruited 15+ new volunteers.

As Cafe Create is the hub of our charity, most of our volunteers are deployed in this service area. In January 2024, we held three volunteer briefings where we shared updates on what's going on in CreateBolton, shared Policies and listened to ideas from our volunteers around areas we could improve. We provided practical safeguarding guidance and real examples of where our policies matter.

During this year, we have also cemented our working relationship with a growing number of local artists who have become associates with CreateBolton. This has been a blessing to us, and we can see more fruit to come in the years ahead. We continue in our wonderful partnership with Birtenshaw College providing mutual benefit to both parties.

- c) **Financial** – CreateBolton continues to operate in line with Charity Commission guidelines, holding enough reserves which are currently slightly greater than we require which is a healthy position to be in.

Our unrestricted liquid funds combined with appropriate use of our Designated and Restricted funds supports our policy to accumulate sufficient reserves to mitigate risks associated with delayed capital receipts (cash-flow), unforeseen essential expenditure, costs arising from management of change or short-term cessation of project funding. Our reserve holding has been established to reflect approximately three months operational costs, which is set at £40,000.

We continue to rent space at Claremont House for many of our services but specifically for Café Create and Create Community, for all our activities that take place within the café, the Rudkin Room and the Create Studios on the mezzanine level. We are doing our best to manage the impact from the cost of living crisis, in particular the increase in energy costs. The cost of food has really increased, and it remains challenging keeping our menu prices affordable for both Create and our customers. The cost of 'creative' materials like clay, glaze, glass have also increased significantly.

- ❖ We have continued to bid for grants to help achieve our financial targets and have maintained our partnership with [Chell Perkins](#) fundraisers to help us achieve sustainable funding options at the same time as supplementing the annual grants or one-off commitments.
 - ❖ We have been blessed again this year by some amazingly generous donations and kindness and we have noted a very significant increase in regular giving.
 - ❖ In January 2023, we commenced a major fundraising initiative, trying to encourage 100 new funders to pledge £10 per month, applying gift aid if they can. It's been a tremendously encouraging initiative, and at the end of this period we are on track with our target. At the end of August 2024, we sat at 87 givers, which is a huge encouragement to us.
- d) **Physical** – The most significant change in our physical resources has been the refurbishment and upgrade to our kitchen, which we happened at Easter 2024. We were able to raise c£30k to make this possible. We will continue to upgrade and

improve other aspects of what we do as money and good wisdom suggests in 2024/25.



4. Claremont



We continue to creatively use the space we rent at Claremont House which currently stands at Café Create, the kitchen, The Rudkin Room, and the Create Studios on the mezzanine. The Boltones use the Rudkin Room as the Band Room. We continue to benefit greatly from additional storage space within Claremont and continue to maintain good relationships with the Church and other building users. We've been excited to see the new neighbours on the land next to the Church, as the developers progress with the building of the 52 houses. We are very mindful that changes are upon us, and we are therefore spending time planning and praying into the best way of engaging with new people.

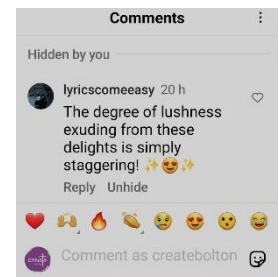
5. The Services

The following update on services reflects the extent of the work during the last 12+ months (Sept 2023 - August 2024) and forms the basis of how we hope to grow

during 2024/25 and beyond. We are very mindful as we celebrate each year as a charity that change always lies ahead and that we need to seek God's will not ours as we move forward. We will constantly review what we do and why we do it to ensure that it meets the needs of those we support and continues to be viable.

a. **Cafe Create**

- ❖ Café Create continues to be the central meeting place at the heart of CreateBolton. We continue to be open every Thursday, Friday and Saturday and have committed to maintain this and even consider in the year ahead if we can increase the opening hours. The café wouldn't exist without our regular willing and very able band of volunteers. We have benefited from a very static team of approx. 15-20 volunteers across Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and this continues to be an answer to prayer and our thanks go to our Operations Manager Carol Hardman for making the Thursday team happen so smoothly. She is regularly looking for new volunteers with the skills and commitment we need. Toby Wray, our new Cook/Kitchen Manager has settled well and introduced a new menu which is very well received.
- ❖ We continue to function as a 5* café which is well deserved recognition for all the volunteers' hard work.
- ❖ We continue to put some of our volunteers' through their Food Hygiene training and for some, specific training in Allergens, and Toby has been undertaking a great deal of training locally to ensure he's suitably equipped.



b. **Create Experience (Workshops)**

- ❖ As we reach the end of this reporting period, we have been able to facilitate more and more creative workshops as an integral part of Cafe Create, with a mix of art/craft and both paid and free sessions. There is such a demand from people for these courses, for meaningful activity and a reason to break the cycle of isolation. It's been vital that we have provided weekly sessions for people that don't necessarily have the resources to access such activities, and we are providing more than we've ever done.
- ❖ One of our Associate Artists Andy has continued to run pottery courses and another, Sue has been selling her creations at Craft Fayres, from which they both choose to donate to CreateBolton.



c. **Create Boltones**

The Boltones have had a good year, on tour in Middleton and welcoming new members. There's such a good feel about the band at the moment and there are more concerts planned for the year ahead.



d. **Create Community**



The Create Community continues to utilise the Create Studios space in Claremont and the Rudkin Room. Create Community (including Create HOPE and Studio Create) meet regularly every Tuesday, Wednesday, (Thursdays and Fridays), with the numbers still growing. Jo Young along with Andy Lees are delivering the service and are managing the changes we need to make as we approach 2025.

e. **Create HOPE (Allotment)**



Our allotment has had an up and down year, with significant changes in need for some people using the service. We've added another two raised beds.



f. **Studio Create**



Studio Create is an offshoot from the Create Community, a group of younger adults with a learning disability, creating their own range of work and in the process growing in confidence, communication, and social interaction. There is much potential in the people involved and they're supported by Jo, Carol, and Carol.

g. **Create Well**

During this period, we have spent many hours working with the Bolton Hospice Well-Being Hub, on a project called Murmuration's, culminating in an installation being revealed in August 24.



h. **Create Retail**



Create Retail is a central feature of Cafe Create. The retailers are very committed to CreateBolton, They spend time with us and it's very clear that they 'get' who we are and what we're about.

6. The Kings Award

In November 2023, we were advised that our nomination for the Kings Award had been successful and that our volunteers were to be celebrated for all that have done, past, present and future. Joy and Alison attended a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in May and in June we received the actual award, and a certificate signed by King Charles III. To say we are pleased is an understatement and we will continue to uphold such high standards through our voluntary service.



[Bolton News Article](#)

7. The Future (2024/25)

In Summary

- ❖ Continue to raise awareness of CreateBolton across Churches, Community groups, the general public and of course the Town Centre of Bolton as an integral part of the Bolton 2030 vision.
- ❖ Expand the number and range of praying partners - in particular through our [Create Prayer Facebook](#) page and Christian outreach/inreach that we plan to facilitate going forward.

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- ❖ To increase the numbers of people subscribing to our news bulletin
 - ❖ To continue to increase the pool of volunteers and the range of gifts they bring to enable CreateBolton to be all that God wants us to be.
 - ❖ To develop new partnerships that align to our charitable objects.
 - ❖ Continue our work with Chell Perkins on a more sustainable funding strategy for CreateBolton - maximising the funding opportunities available to us to enable us to sustain and multiply that which God has already provided.

This Annual Report owes thanks and appreciation to our Trustees as they continue to serve God through this position.

We continue to appreciate all the support from everyone connected with [Claremont Church](#); in particular, without their understanding of our charitable status we would not be in the position we are today. We give thanks to the growing range of partners linked to Create; and of course, to the volunteers that give of their time and resources out of their desire to serve, and ultimately to our wonderful Creator God for His faithful provision every day. We thank God for those that have supported us financially by providing us with grants, with donations, and with regular pledges. These people know who they are, and they know the difference this makes – thankyou.

The following headlines reflect the **media attention** we have received this year, reflecting the difference we are making in the lives of those we meet ...



Our desire through 2024/25 is to continue establishing Creationships that make a difference...

If you want to see more of what we're about, please go to our web-site www.createbolton.org.uk or view us on Instagram [@createbolton](https://www.instagram.com/createbolton), on Facebook [@createbolton](https://www.facebook.com/createbolton) or on Twitter [@BoltonCreate](https://twitter.com/BoltonCreate)