

# Annual Report

## 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

### Leeds Weekend Care Association

Registered Charity Number - 1077162

Company Limited by Guarantee Number – 3827833

Suite 4, Gledhow Mount Mansion, 32 Roxholme Grove, Leeds LS7 4JJ

☎ 07506 722 495 / 07508 240 555

✉ [Office@lwca.co.uk](mailto:Office@lwca.co.uk)



# LEEDS WEEKEND CARE ASSOCIATION



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## Our Mission

To make a positive difference to the lives of disabled children and teenagers in Leeds

## Our Purpose is:

- To deliver safe, fun, exciting, inclusive activities, and environments
- To encourage friendship, independence, exploration and understanding
- To provide a much-needed break for parents and caregivers
- To recruit, retain and train enthusiastic, energetic, and experienced staff
- To advocate for those whose voice is often ignored or not heard.
- To build a community that welcomes and celebrates difference.

## Our Guiding Principles are:

- To improve the lives of families with disabled children and young people.
- To recognise and understand the needs of parents and carers and to work closely with them in shaping and delivering our services.
- To encourage a positive approach to children and young people with disabilities on our projects and in the wider community.
- To promote the recognition of young people with disabilities as important and integral members of society.
- To provide equality of provision and access to service users regardless of disability, gender, ethnic origin, skin colour, race, religion, or sexual orientation.
- To provide a positive, developmental environment for all our staff.

## Our Values are:

- **Fun** - We believe that having fun and making friends is fundamental to a person's happiness. Fun is a release. It provides freedom, enjoyment, fulfilment and connection.
- **High Quality** - We provide safe, creative, exciting, collaborative spaces/experiences for our children, staff and volunteers. We always strive to be, and do, better.
- **Inclusive** - We support, value and respect each other. Shared values and goals help everyone reach their full potential.
- **A Can-Do Attitude** - We focus on what our children, staff and volunteers can do. By recognising and celebrating achievements, big and small, we empower individuals and our community.
- **Honesty** - We take responsibility for our successes and failures. We are open to what is possible, not afraid to fail, and we learn quickly.

## **Chair's Report to AGM**



It is with great pleasure that I write my initial Chairperson Annual Report for Leeds Weekend Care Association (LWCA), for the financial year ending 31st March 2024. I became a trustee in June 2018 then became Chair in June 2023.

The period to March 2024 has been another year where LWCA has experienced some logistical challenges such as securing and retaining staffing, and issues with premises and the sharing tenants. However throughout all of this, the skills, experience and sheer hard work of all at LWCA has shone through to ensure that we continue to provide a high quality, fun service for our users, and give their families crucial downtime with peace of mind that their loved ones are being well cared for.

LWCA continues to be extremely appreciative of the support from those various organisations, legacy trusts and individuals who have very kindly provided financial support during the year. We also acknowledge the continuing role played by Leeds City Council, both in their financial provision and as a key sponsor and stakeholder.

Post the end of this financial year we secured an agreement with Leeds Mencap to provide our weekend service from their premises: a move which I know was greatly welcomed by staff and volunteers, and so far has proved to be a great success - long may this continue! I would like to use this report to put on record our sincere thanks to Leeds Mencap for their all-round professionalism and support regarding our move.

Last but not least, I, on behalf of the board of trustees, would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to Liz Sunderland, (Short Breaks Services Manager) and her supporting team who work so hard during the week to ensure the activities at Weekenders Club and the Out and About project run smoothly. As trustees we also want to thank all the staff and volunteers for their efforts, often having to work in very testing situations but always done with the utmost professionalism and dedication"

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Hewson" followed by a horizontal flourish.

Richard Hewson  
Chair of Trustees



## **MEET THE TEAM**

### **Executive Management Committee**

Management Committee Members during the year 1st April 2023 - 31 March 2024  
We have a minimum of six meetings per year plus our AGM in July. These are held via virtual meetings or at our office of the Leeds Weekend Care Association.

Richard Hewson	Chair
David Bossingham	Treasurer
Georgina Nijjar	Secretary
Caroline Bond	Trustee
Ellie Brown	Trustee
Marianne Hewitt	Trustee
Adam Barclay	Trustee
Hafsa Sharif	Trustee

### **Office Staff**

Liz Sunderland	Service Manager
Lisa Sheader	Office Manager
Liz Colbeck	Office Assistant

### **Scheme Staff**

Chantelle Pearce	Senior Play Leader
Lorraine Dempsey	Deputy Play Leader
Caroline Grayson	Deputy Play Leader
Caragh McHugh	Deputy Play Leader

## SERVICE MANAGER'S REPORT TO AGM



### Our Projects

**Weekenders Club** is a Saturday play scheme for children and young people aged between 5 and 17 years old, living in Leeds, who have inclusive needs. Our eligibility criteria includes children from a broad spectrum of additional needs including those with complex care needs for which our experienced staff team undergo specific medical training.

Social workers or lead professionals make referrals to our service on a young person's behalf, although we also accept referrals directly from families.

Each child/young person attends one session each month. Morning sessions run from 9.30 a.m. until 12.30 p.m.; afternoon sessions run from 1.30 p.m. until 4.30 p.m. We have been operating from Queenswood Education Centre (formerly Vine College), Becketts Park, Leeds 6. This venue has enabled us to accommodate children and young people with physical difficulties as the site has an inclusive environment including ramps, hoists, a personal care suite and wheelchair-accessible spaces, both indoors and outdoors.

Activities include large play equipment such as a bouncy castle, trikes, go carts and lots of sports equipment. It is important that our children spend energy indoors and outdoors during the time they are with us, as well as have the opportunity to play on equipment they may not have access to at home. We like them to go back to their families - tired and happy! Our creative team manage to make each session different; based loosely on weekly themes, we encourage all the children to get involved with games, art, making and baking (and eating!).

**Teen Scene** Teen Scene runs under the umbrella of Weekenders Club but has a group all of its own. The age range is 14-17 and is a great way to meet up with friends and embark on group activities with a little more independence. Often, we have young people who move on from Teen Scene and 'graduate' to the Out and About Project when they feel they have grown out of a play scheme environment and are ready for more age-appropriate activities in the community with their peers.

Each session runs with 15 young people, most of whom are allocated their own 'key worker' to facilitate them accessing all the equipment and resources. Weekend breaks are in high demand and there is a waiting list for Weekenders Club. However, we continue to endeavour to move through this as quickly as possible; as soon as someone leaves, we fill the place.

**The Out and About Project** is for teenagers between the ages of 14 and 17, to go out together with our staff. Youngsters are facilitated to take part in activities which teenagers typically enjoy. We have around one event each week so aim for 52 outings in the year, although this year we had 66 and have planned the same for 2024-25. This is to avoid having a waiting list; simply the more teenagers who join, the more trips we do! In this way, we can meet demand in a timely manner.

## **Reflection**

The first thought which springs to mind is the dynamic and cohesive team I am fortunate to work within. This includes trustees, staff (both administrative and those who work directly with our children and young people) and our brave volunteers, often for whom, this is their first taste of working in the care sector with children and young people with inclusive needs. From limited experience to a lifetime's worth of experience, they all bring enthusiasm and a 'can do' attitude which invariably sees us through the challenges presented to us.

Those challenges broadly come under three categories: Staffing, Venue and Finance. This year we have had challenges under all three headings.

Staffing We have been short staffed for over two years, needing to use our 'bank staff' to increase their scheduled shifts to ensure we run with the right ratio of children to staff each session to run safely, according to each child's individual supervision needs. I am delighted to say that, at this point, we have a full team, putting less pressure on those who have elected not to work every Saturday.

Venue Weekenders Club has operated from a Council owned building (Queenswood Education Centre) for 12 years, sharing the space with Vine College who used the building Monday to Friday. Sharing the building has, historically, not been ideal. The building itself has been poorly maintained for decades. Huge efforts on a weekly basis were spent just tackling environmental issues such as security, broken windows, ineffective heating, old plumbing and leaks; just to mention a few issues although there is a long list! We were given notice by the Council, following their explanation that the building was to be decommissioned.

Long story short. With little notice and a tight deadline, we moved our Weekenders Club Play Scheme. The move itself spans over two accounting periods but it is worth updating here how this has played out.

On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024, we moved Weekenders Club to The Vinery Centre, East End Park, Leeds 9 – the home of Leeds Mencap. Their purpose-built community hub is perfect for the needs of our children and young people. A building, only 8 years old, which boasts activity rooms, a soft play area, a safe, well-equipped playground, a state-of-the-art sensory room and high quality personal care suite. Yes – the move was stressful and yes – it was worth it! I'm compelled to mention the teamwork of everyone involved in getting us there. There were folk who physically shifted everything; those who coped with all the administrative elements of moving and those who were involved in the early stages of planning and decision making. Not least, were the families and children, some of whom may have had to forfeit their scheduled session (to be replaced) but have been brave enough to make the change with us. It's not easy for many of our children to manage any change in their lives. Our world, for them, often presents as a confusing and unpredictable place, but so far, they have moved out of their comfort zone and it's rewarding to see them enjoying the new space.

Leeds Mencap is a charity we have been closely affiliated with for over 25 years. Indeed, our first play scheme opened from their Hawthorne Nursery (in their old building at East End Park) on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1998, almost 26 years to the day from when we returned to them! We also operate our Out and About Project's youth club nights from The Vinery Centre. It feels like coming home! Thank you to all at Leeds Mencap for your support and warm welcome.

Finance As a small charity, underfunded by the Council, there will always be a concern around sustainability.

We are operating within the specification and targets of a five-year Council contract which ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Over this time period, the needs of our cohort of children and young people have changed. At the start of the contract, in April 2019, around a third of our children had 1:1 supervision needs. Currently, this has risen to 92% of our children needing an allocated worker. This obviously means; to keep the same numbers of children, we have had to increase the staffing. This is not tenable. Although we have been given a further extension of 6 months' funding for 2024/5, we are awaiting a revised contract from Leeds City Council. We have therefore become dependent on using funds raised, independent of the Council grant.

Set against the economic backdrop of tight Council budgets and families feeling the pinch has been difficult. We kept our fees for families the same during the year and put our faith in our freelance fundraiser, Sam Lambert, to make up the shortfall.

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising is therefore an essential part of our charity's work. Sam Lambert sends out Appeal Letters and each year we give her a target, representative of the shortfall. This systematically increases year on year as our grant remains the same, but wages and inflation rise. Thankfully, she never flinches when I reveal what we need to keep the service stable.

### **Finally**

I would like to express my grateful thanks to those who perform their own vital role in contributing to the ongoing success of our charity....

Thank you to our colleagues in Leeds City Council for their continued financial support of our work.

Thank you to our board of trustees who guide L.W.C.A. through the gauntlet of all the above challenges with endurance, wise consideration and a collective wealth of experience. Thank you to Richard Hewson who agreed to take the role of Chairperson in June 2023 following Caroline Bond's temporary reprieve from board duties; and welcome back to Caroline who rejoined us in the role of trustee.

Our intrepid volunteers are to be applauded. What they lack in experience, they make up for in enthusiasm, and a willingness to learn.

Thanks, are also due to:

Our Office Assistant, Liz Colbeck, whose role consistently deviates from her job description. She is heavily relied upon to invent time efficient systems, wrestle with our ever-changing technology, and is willing to, and capable of, turning her attention to whatever pressing issue has just come to the top of the priority list.

Our Senior Play Leader at Weekenders Club who doubles up as the Out and About Project's Group Leader – Chantelle Pearce. She has been with us for 18 years now and her wealth of experience is valuable to us all. Thank you to the children and young people and families who use our service, for being the sole reason why Chantelle is still here. You all give her both pleasure and motivation.



Our Office Manager, Lisa Sheader – we all benefit from her expertise and her overt enthusiasm for supporting everyone at L.W.C.A. as well as her excellent communication with other agencies in Leeds.

The fabulous staff team who win my admiration every Saturday. I simply love watching them work with the children. The time I spend at the scheme is my pleasure point in every week.

Final thanks are to the parents, carers, and their children – it is your project and a privilege to work for you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Liz Sunderland".

Liz Sunderland  
Short Breaks Services Manager

## DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING 2023-2024

We are grateful for the support of our children's families, friends of Leeds Weekend Care Association, Trustees, and our staff and volunteers (and their families, friends, and neighbours) We have continued to benefit from Sam Lambert's experience and skill in the past year, as well as the following who have given generously.

Donor	Description	Amount
Amazon Smile	Cash back on Amazon purchases	£41.12
Friends & Families		£1,255.06
London Marathon	Refund for unused place (previous a/c period)	£396.00
Supported Giving	Donations Platform (linked to website)	£1,139.18
Trusts	The Cotton Industry War Memorial Trust	£5,000.00
Trusts	The Potel Charitable Trust	£250.00
Trusts	The David Lister Charitable Trust	£2,000.00
Trusts	The Masonic Charitable Trust (grant 3 of 3-year grant)	£5,000.00
Trusts	The LAPA Charitable Trust	£1,000.00
Trusts	The B.S. Charitable Foundation	£50.00
Trusts	The Sylvia and Colin Shepherd Charitable Trust	£1,000.00
Trusts	Marsh Charitable Trust	£500.00
Trusts	Castanea Trust	£3,000.00
Trusts	The Trees of John R Murray Charitable Trust	£3,000.00
Trusts	The Alchemy Foundation	£1,000.00
Trusts	The Webb Family Charitable Trust	£2,500.00
Trusts	David Solomon Charitable Trust	£500.00
Trusts	The Blakemore Foundation	£100.00
Trusts	The Michael and Morven Heller Charitable Foundation	£1,000.00
Trusts	The Michael & Anna Wix Charitable Trust	£200.00
Trusts	The Liz and Terry Bramall Charitable Foundation	£5,000.00
Trusts	Ladbroke Coral Trust	£1,000.00
Trusts	Usborne Publishing Limited	£750.00
Trusts	The Mollie Croysdale Charitable Trust	£500.00
Trusts	The Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust	£1,000.00
Trusts	The Ardwick Trust	£100.00
Trusts	Anonymous	£500.00
Trusts	A M Fenton Trust	£3,000.00
Trusts	R E Chadwick Charitable Trust	£500.00
Trusts	Irving Memorial Trust	£2,000.00
Trusts	Squire Patton Boggs	£250.00
Trusts	The Barnard Kenneth Hufton Trust	£1,000.00
Trusts	Culra Charitable Trust	£500.00
Trusts	The Pat Newman Memorial Trust	£750.00
Trusts	W L Pratt Charitable Trust	£2,000.00
Trusts	Happy Days Children's Charity (for Out & About trip)	£191.10
Trusts	Beryl Sleigh Charitable Trust	£10,000.00
Trusts	The Christine Hall Trust	£500.00
Trusts	The Earl and Countess of Harewood's Charitable Trust	£500.00
Virgin Money	Virgin Money Cashback	£52.19
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£59,024.65</b>

“Here we have captured some of our memorable moments from Weekender’s Club during 2023-2024.”



## Testimonials

### **Erin D – Weekenders Club**

My daughter Erin doesn't have many words, but she simply calls Weekenders "Friends". When she sees her little rucksack on a Saturday, she knows that's where she's going. The surroundings are very familiar to her now & she knows the staff & other children. I think it's important for her to do things away from me & my husband, as she spends the vast majority of her time outside school with us. It gives me & my husband a little bit of quality time together, to maybe go for a coffee or do some jobs around the house.

### **Lillie S – Teen Scene**

The 'Teen Scene' service for me and my daughter Lillie is indispensable! Lillie has friends at school but like a lot of teens like her she finds socialising outside of an educational setting very difficult and filled with anxiety. Going to the same setting and seeing the same people each time is extremely comforting for her and she thoroughly enjoys it and the fabulous activities on offer! For me and her dad personally we love seeing our daughter socialising and enjoying her time with others her age and coming home feeling so much happier for going, we especially love how trustworthy and caring the people are, we really feel peace of mind knowing she's going to have a great time 😊

### **Harvey K – Weekenders Club**

Harvey gains so much from coming each month, from social skills, communication, being part of a group, making friends having fun and more. The staff are always so friendly and welcoming each time and seem excited to have him for the day which is an amazing feeling as a parent. We would really be lost without weekenders. Thanks for having us!

### **Joshua A – Out & About**

Our grandson attends some of the Out and About activities, we feel it has created an environment in which he feels comfortable in his interactions with others and therefore has played a part in his increased confidence. The group activities create an opportunity for young people to be themselves in a non-judgmental caring environment and most importantly have fun! We get great pleasure in seeing his joy and excitement when he gets the list of future activities. A shout out to Chantelle and the team for the on the going support.



## INFORMATION

### Client Statistics – Weekenders & Teen Scene

1<sup>st</sup> April 2023– 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

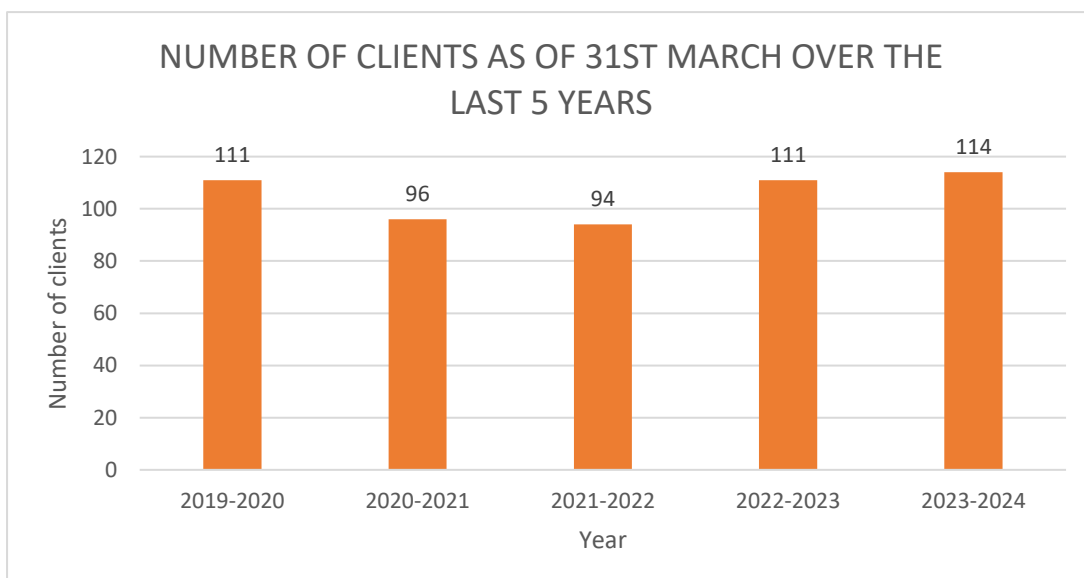
Total number of clients at Weekenders Club as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024: **114**

**132** clients accessed the service during 2023-2024.

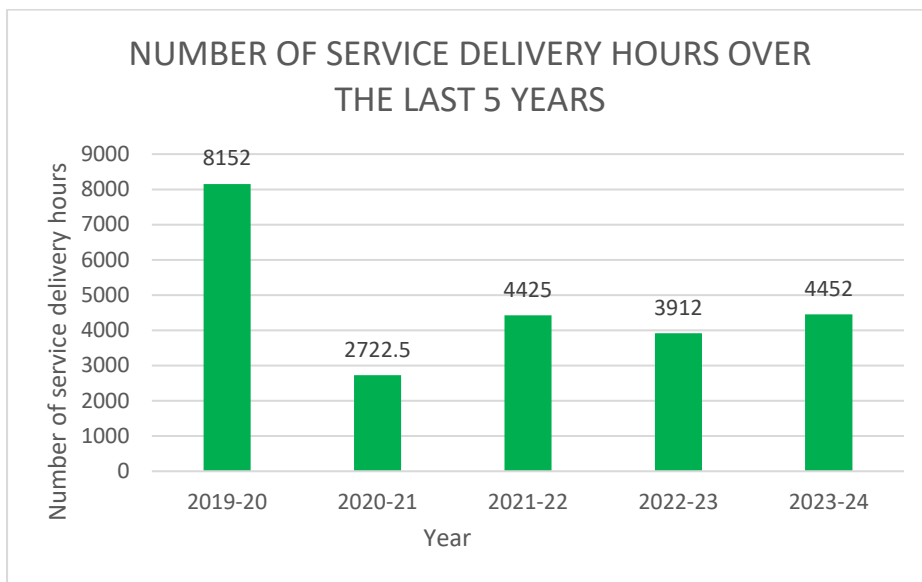
Number of new clients who joined the scheme during this year: **22**

Number of clients who left the scheme during this year: **22 (8 of these joined and left in the same financial year )**

The following chart shows a comparison for number of clients with the previous 4 years:



Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 Weekenders Club provided **4,452** hours of short breaks in total.

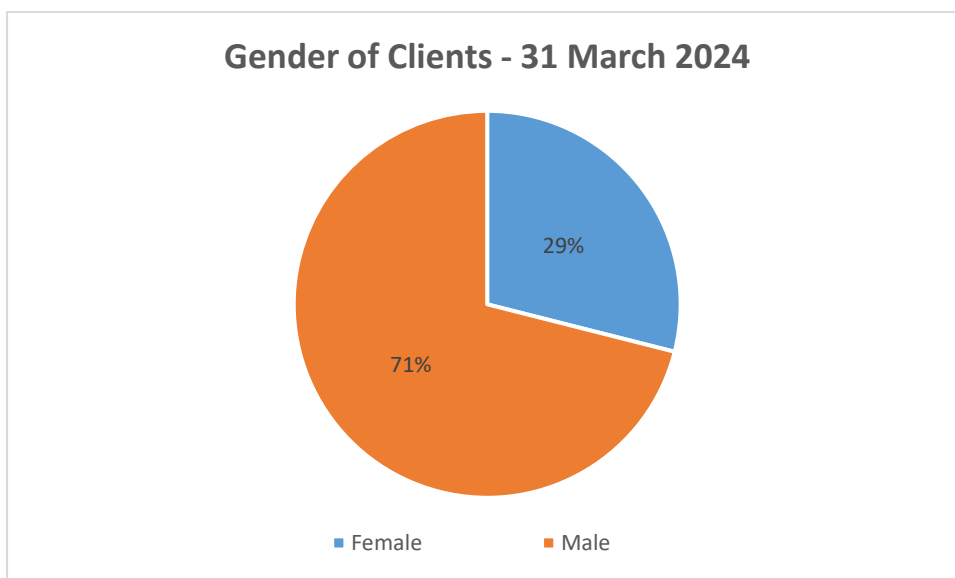


### **Waiting List**

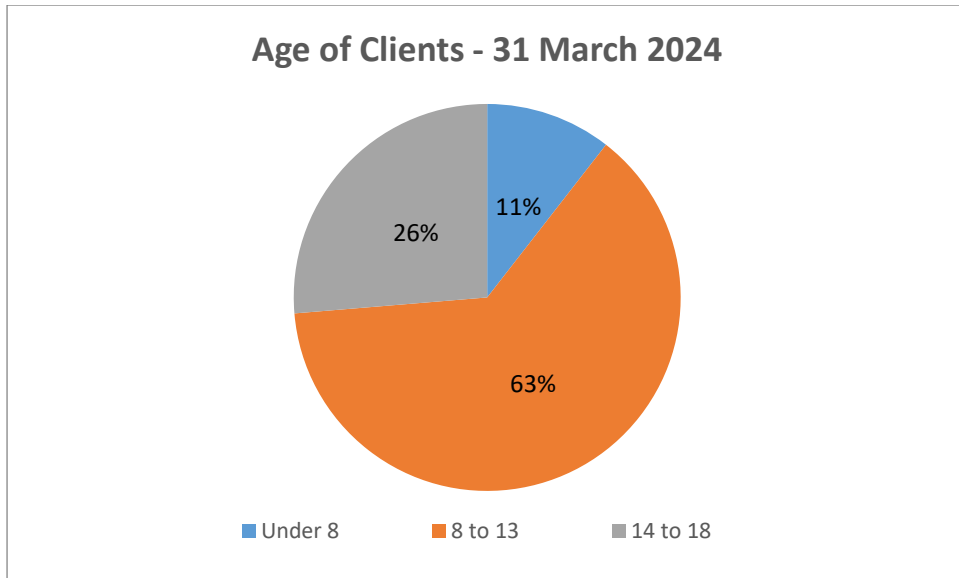
As of the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2024, there were 18 clients on our waiting list and the demand has increased significantly. We aim to get back to maximum capacity of clients in 2024-2025 to reduce our waiting list.

### **Client Stats**

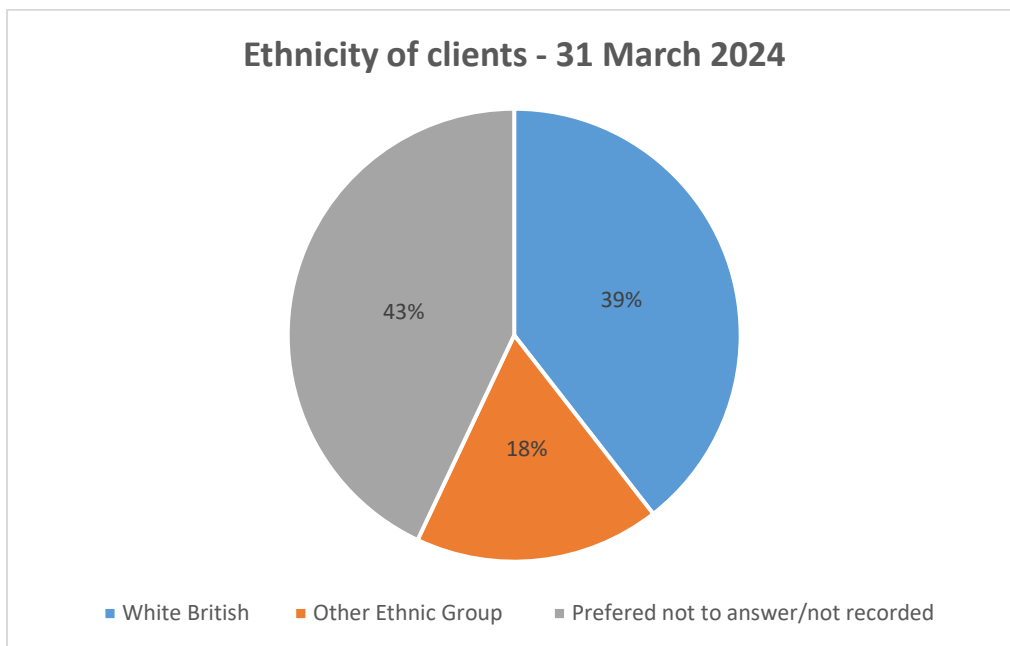
#### **Gender of our clients at the end of March 2024**



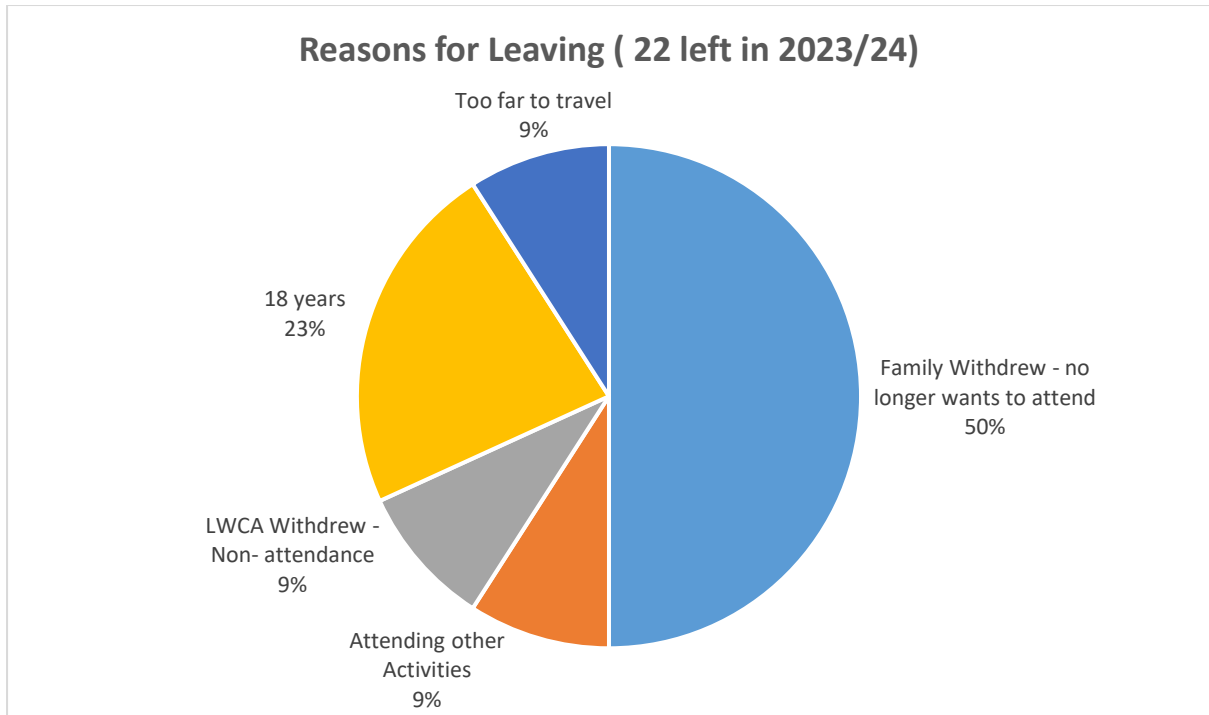
**Our client age range at the end of March 2024**



**Ethnicity of clients at the end of March 2024**



## Reasons for Leaving 2023-2024



### “Weekenders Showcase of Activities”



Here are some of the wonderful pieces of artwork made at the scheme!







We usually organise around four events per month for the teens who attend the Out and About Project. This is anything from bowling, climbing, cinema, eating out, snooker, theatre, full days out in the school holidays, trampolining; basically, anything teens would like to do!

### Client Statistics

1<sup>st</sup> April 2023– 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Number of clients attending Out & About as at 31st March 2024: **34 clients**

**45** clients accessed the service during 2023-2024.

Number of new clients who joined the scheme during this year: **7**

Number of clients who left the scheme during this year: **18**

Service delivery hours - **1,704 hours**.

**Here are all 65 trips which the Out & About Project's enjoyed during April-March 2023-2024!**

EVENT	No. OF EVENTS IN THE YEAR
Bowling & Food	12
Mencap Night In	24
Puttstars Golf	4
Cinema & McDonalds	0
Panto(Robin Hood)	1
Theatre	3
Forbidden Corner	1
Gravity	4
Snooker	4
Laserzone	4
Yorkshire Wildlife	1
Stockeld Xmas Adventure	1
Clip 'n' Climb	2
Park & Picnic	1
Circus Zyair	1
Ninja Warriors	2

“Here we have captured some of our memorable moments at the Out & About Project during 2023-2024.”



## Financial Information

### Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	<u>Note</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>Funds</u> £	<u>Restricted</u> <u>Funds</u> £	<u>Total</u> <u>2024</u> £	<u>Total</u> <u>2023</u> £
<b>INCOME</b>					
Contributions & donations		59,037	-	59,037	37,625
Client fees		24,662	-	24,662	20,383
Grants	1	157,581	-	157,581	157,581
Bank interest & sundry income		<u>6,295</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,295</u>	<u>747</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		247,575	-	247,575	216,336
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Raising funds		19,127	-	19,127	19,728
Charitable activities		143,362	-	143,362	118,577
Other		<u>51,749</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>51,749</u>	<u>51,630</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	2	214,238	-	214,238	189,935
<b>NET INCOME</b>		33,337	-	33,337	26,401
Balance brought forward at 1 April 2023		300,262	-	300,262	273,861
Fund transfer		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance carried forward at 31 March 2024		<u>333,599</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>333,599</u>	<u>300,262</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

## **Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024**

		<u>2024</u>		<u>2023</u>	
	<u>Note</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>					
Tangible assets	3		500		500
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Debtors and prepayments		493		705	
Short term bank deposits		185,685		42,098	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>149,472</u>	<u>335,650</u>	<u>260,205</u>	<u>303,008</u>
			336,150		303,508
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due</b>					
<b>within one year</b>			2,551		3,246
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>333,599</u>		<u>300,262</u>
Unrestricted funds			333,599		300,262
Restricted funds			—		—
<b>Total funds</b>			<u>333,599</u>		<u>300,262</u>

## Notes to the Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

### Note 1. Grants

	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>Funds</u> £	<u>Restricted</u> <u>Funds</u> £	<u>Total</u> <u>2024</u> £	<u>Total</u> <u>2023</u> £
Leeds Social Services	157,581	-	157,581	157,581
<b>Total</b>	<u>157,581</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>157,581</u>	<u>157,581</u>

### Note 2. Expenditure

	<u>Raising</u> <u>Funds</u> £	<u>Charitable</u> <u>Activities</u> £	<u>Support</u> <u>Costs</u> £	<u>Total</u> <u>2024</u> £	<u>Total</u> <u>2023</u> £
Staff costs & volunteer expenses	16,680	102,964	40,522	160,166	139,876
Rent & rates	1,060	15,878	4,241	21,179	17,924
Training	-	-	-	-	1,305
Scheme costs, events & travel	-	24,520	-	24,520	16,718
Audit & accountancy	-	-	1,440	1,440	1,440
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	692
Office costs	<u>1,387</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,546</u>	<u>6,933</u>	<u>11,980</u>
	<u>19,127</u>	<u>143,362</u>	<u>51,749</u>	<u>214,238</u>	<u>189,935</u>

### Note 3. Tangible fixed assets

	<u>Office</u> <u>Equipment</u> £	<u>Toys &amp;</u> <u>Resources</u> £	<u>Total</u> £
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 April 2023	8,052	8,443	16,495
Additions in year	-	-	-
Disposals in year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>8,052</u>	<u>8,443</u>	<u>16,495</u>

Continued/...

**Depreciation**

At 1 April 2023	7,552	8,443	15,995
Charge for year	-	-	-
Eliminated on disposal	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>7,552</u>	<u>8,443</u>	<u>15,995</u>
<b>Net book value at 31 March 2024</b>	<u>500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>500</u>
<b>Net book value at 31 March 2023</b>	<u>500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>500</u>