



THE  
CHESTER  
BLUECOAT  
CHARITY

# IMPACT REPORT

2022

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# Foreward

# 13

organisations supported  
with grants

The goal of The Chester Bluecoat Charity is to help tackle the causes of poverty, disadvantage and inequality across the city.

We fund various projects run by community and educational organisations that help improve peoples' lives. Based at the historic Bluecoat building, in the centre of Chester, we provide office space to local charities and voluntary organisations, as well as meetings rooms for hire. We also offer almshouse accommodation to people in need.

As the city's oldest charity, The Chester Bluecoat Charity is proud to have been helping the people of Chester and the surrounding area for more than 800 years.





# Office space

11

tenants

The Chester Bluecoat Charity owns, and is based at, the Grade II listed Bluecoat building on Upper Northgate Street, which it has turned into a hub for charities, voluntary organisations and the office of the MP for the City of Chester.

Here, we offer affordable and accessible office space for local third sector organisations and hire our meeting rooms to the tenants at a discounted rate.





# Meeting rooms

The Grade II listed Bluecoat building has two meeting rooms available for hire at competitive rates at The Bluecoat – the Conference Room and the Oak Room. Our meeting rooms can accommodate from 12 up to 70 people and are situated right in the heart of the city.

In 2022, the meeting rooms were hired out 226 times, with the vast majority of those hiring a room being a repeat customer, demonstrating the quality of the rooms.

# 31

organisations  
hired a room





# Almshouses

17

tenants

Behind The Bluecoat is a courtyard of comfortable and secure almshouse accommodation. The 16 homes in Bluecoat Square are for local people in need. In 2022, the almshouses housed 17 tenants.



# Grants

We support some of the most disadvantaged in Chester's society by funding organisations that work to improve peoples' lives through social unity, community development and education. Over the years, our grants have helped a variety of local charities with people of all ages benefitting from our funding, however we currently have a particular focus on supporting children and young people. In 2022, The Chester Bluecoat Charity distributed £239,609 to the local community, of which £118,091 was given in grants to charities and voluntary organisations and £120,708 was given in school bursaries.

£118,091

donated in grants to local charities and voluntary organisations

5

new organisations supported



£19,000 to Platform for Life

£15,000 to KidsBank

£10,000 to Blacon Beacon





# CHESTER ZOO

**279**

primary school pupils

**49**

secondary school pupils

The Chester Bluecoat Charity has collaborated with the UK's largest zoo by funding a three-year project that allows young, disadvantaged people from the city to access opportunities to connect with nature. The outcomes are to improve wellbeing, confidence and transferable skills through the provision of family wildlife clubs, after school clubs and bursaries for Chester Zoo's activities.

Chester Zoo is working with six local primary schools and three high schools in areas of highest deprivation in Chester allowing the most disadvantaged pupils to gain better access to nature through the programme.

In 2022, two hundred and seventy nine primary school pupils benefited from the sessions. The clubs focus on connecting children with the nature that is right on their doorsteps in a hands-on manner, for example pond dipping, and provides opportunities for families to spend quality time together. Sessions are run in schools, in Chester Zoo itself and at Chester Zoo's nature reserve.

In three secondary schools, Chester Zoo has run a weekly, interactive after-school club which encourage young people to engage with environmental issues relevant to their own lives and local area through engaging, imaginative activities. The clubs strongly support wellbeing, as well as a wide range of other outcomes, such as increased confidence, team working, communication skills and a belief their actions, no matter how big or small, can make a difference.





# THEATRE PORTO

# 79

young people in 6  
months

In 2021, The Chester Bluecoat Charity awarded Theatre Porto £15,000 a year, for at least three years, in order to fund drama sessions for isolated children from an area of high deprivation and child poverty. The weekly, term-time sessions offer young people aged 7 – 17 the opportunity to come together in a safe and supported space to help develop social skills and confidence. The sessions have also started discussions with the young participants about mental health and wellbeing.

In the first 6 months of 2022, 135 sessions were delivered to 79 young people, of which 23% have special educational needs and 27% are from under-performing schools. These sessions have made a great impact on the participants lives, and positive outcomes from it including improving emotional literacy, reducing isolation and improving mental health.

One child commented “Without Theatre Porto, I definitely wouldn’t be where I am today. It has given me opportunities, life experiences, friends and a super safe space to be....it feels like a place where I can unapologetically be me and be as creative as possible.”

A parent of a child who has attended the sessions said “These sessions are the highlight of my child’s week. They are well run, varied and provide a safe and enjoyable time”



# End Homelessness

The Chester Bluecoat Charity was delighted to be part of a new initiative in 2022, End Homelessness in Chester. The project will allow the public to donate to services and support for those experiencing homelessness through tap-to-donate points placed in the city.

End Homelessness in Chester is a collaborative project between Chester BID, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Chester Aid to the Homeless, Share, Soul Kitchen and The Chester Bluecoat Charity. The project was established to raise charitable donations in our increasingly cashless society and to provide an alternative way to donate to those experiencing homelessness.

At The Chester Bluecoat Charity, we are the 'fundraiser' of the project, meaning the proceeds raised are held by us and we pass them onto the three beneficiary charities. Soul Kitchen plan to use funding from the scheme primarily to support the up-skilling and training of people through their weekly cookery 'Soul in a Bowl' sessions, which have been a fantastic way for people to build relationships whilst cooking and eating together.

Let's End Homelessness  
In Chester Together

**JUST TAP TO GIVE**



**Grosvenor Shopping Centre**

#LetsEndHomelessness  
endhomelessness@thechesterbluecoatcharity.co.uk

Let's End Homelessness  
In Chester Together

Tap to give


**£3**



**£3**

Let's End Homelessness  
In Chester Together

**JUST TAP TO GIVE**



**The New Chester Market**

#LetsEndHomelessness  
endhomelessness@thechesterbluecoatcharity.co.uk





# Looking forward to 2023

Following on from the success of 2022, The Chester Bluecoat Charity is hoping to have a bigger impact in 2023 by extending our reach to new charities and voluntary organisations.

In 2023, The Chester Bluecoat Charity is seeking charities and voluntary organisations whose work supports the disadvantaged and those living in poverty in Chester and the surrounding areas. We are particularly keen to hear from those who work with children and young people. The grants can have a huge impact on people's lives, for example on their education, employment prospects or their mental health.

In 2023, The Chester Bluecoat Charity will continue to support organisations including Chester Zoo, Kids Bank Chester, West Cheshire Credit Union, Theatre Porto and Platform for Life. New organisations being supported in 2023 include:

- Blacon Beacon - funding provided to recruit an administrative assistant to help extend their services and support to families in Blacon
- Children Today - grant awarded to fund specialist equipment for disabled children to help them live more independently
- Cycling Without Age - funding given in order to be able to recruit more volunteers to extend the service which helps to reduce isolation of elderly members in the community

Funding has also been provided to Cheshire West Voluntary Action to allow them to run training sessions for third sector employees and volunteers in 2023. This support will continue to strengthen the local charity and voluntary organisation community.

We are actively seeking match funders and other contributors who can help support the work we do meaning we can extend our reach and have a bigger impact. Please get in contact if you might be able to work collaboratively.

For more information on The Chester Bluecoat Charity's grant giving scheme, please contact [info@cheesterbluecoat.org](mailto:info@cheesterbluecoat.org).





**WE THANK YOU**  
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

[WWW.THECHESTERBLUECOATCHARITY.CO.UK](http://WWW.THECHESTERBLUECOATCHARITY.CO.UK)