



IMPACT REPORT

INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION



2023
2024

WELCOME



Dear Valley CiDS supporters and friends, welcome to our annual impact report for April 2023 to March 2024.

Throughout this past year, Valley CiDS has remained committed to its mission of building and strengthening community through serving, inspiring and equipping children, young people and families to develop their full potential. This report will provide some insight into the continued development of our many projects and the launch of new initiatives that enable us to fulfil this mission, including the opening of two new Lighthouse Charity Shops, which are so important to our ongoing sustainability and growth.

As a Christian charity, we believe passionately that the successful delivery of our mission happens when people feel they belong, have purpose, and where an inclusive community and family atmosphere is fostered. The past twelve months has therefore also been a time of journeying deeper

into the meaning and expression of our core values of hope, belonging, compassion and inclusion, which are inspired and shaped by our Christian ethos, and we have sought to clearly incorporate and embed these values into this report to further demonstrate how they are shared, embedded, and expressed across our work.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support. In this coming year we will be looking ahead to celebrating our 25th anniversary and I trust that you will continue your journey with us as we approach this important milestone with vision, faith, and the hope of what's to come in the next chapter of our story.

Warm regards,
Ian Tannahill, Chief Executive

OUR MISSION: “To build and strengthen community through serving, inspiring and equipping children, young people and families to develop their full potential.”

Take a look at the pages below, to find out what we have been up to this year:

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**some names throughout the report have been changed to preserve anonymity*

Our values underpin and inform how we approach our work and the actions we take.

Valley CiDS is a Christian charity, and we are committed to embodying these four values:



HOPE: We want to journey with people, providing opportunities that enable them to embrace new possibilities and realise a brighter future.



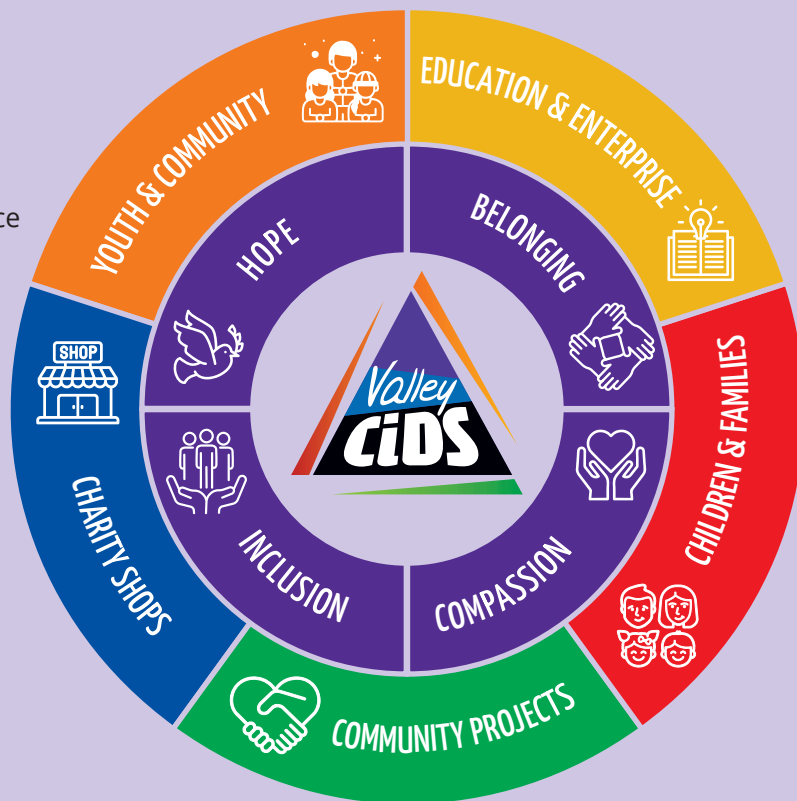
BELONGING: We want people to experience a sense of community and meaningful connection, through which they feel supported, valued and included.



COMPASSION: We are actioned to be person-centred and holistic in our support, treating others with kindness, empathy and respect.



INCLUSION: We recognise that everyone has the right to be seen, to be heard and to belong, and we commit to fostering a culture where diversity is celebrated.



Our work focuses on five key areas:



YOUTH & COMMUNITY

Offering activities, support services, and educational opportunities tailored to young people within their local communities.



EDUCATION & ENTERPRISE

Providing opportunities for young people who are disengaged from or struggling to connect with mainstream education.



CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Enriching schools RE curriculum, using creative approaches to explore the Christian faith, and offering support to families through out of school clubs.



COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Connecting with local communities to foster relationships, enhance well-being, build friendships, and reduce social isolation.



LIGHTHOUSE CHARITY SHOPS

Local stores and an online shop, promoting sustainability and generating vital funds to support the delivery of our work.



YOUTH & COMMUNITY



The Blend Youth Project continues to offer a wide range of activities and support services designed to enrich the lives of young people, helping them navigate the complexities of today's world, while developing the skills they need to enhance their life opportunities and build positive relationships.

Over the past year, the Blend team have focused on enabling young people to become more active, make informed health and wellbeing choices, express themselves creatively, develop and engage with others, and participate in community projects. They remain dedicated to providing youth programmes across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, both at our centres and through street and project-based initiatives.

This year saw the expansion of the Blend Youth Project into the High Peak area, starting in Buxton. With our well-established presence through the Lighthouse Charity Shops, it is exciting to now engage directly with the local youth community.

We are thrilled to begin working with these young people weekly and look forward to building on these connections in the future.

We continue to engage with young people through our key thematic streams, as illustrated.

Health & Wellbeing

A highlight of the year was our collaboration with the Freedom Foundation, an organisation that helps children and young people express their creativity through music and dance. Together, we secured funding through the Holiday Activity Food Programme (HAF), and this enabled us to offer additional activities during school holidays. These sessions included sports, healthy eating and music, held at the Chesterfield and Ripley Blend Youth

Hub's. The music sessions were particularly impactful, as they explored the emotional impact of music, encouraging them to share their views, and experience different genres. Participants also had the opportunity to write their own lyrics and poems, producing powerful expressions of their thoughts and feelings. The various sessions introduced new sports activities to encourage physical activity, promote mental and physical wellbeing, foster new friendships, provided a space to express their emotions, and more importantly have fun.



650

Young people
each week

22

Sessions
each week

18

Locations

Creativity

Throughout the year, young people have made several visits to the Blend Woodcraft Enterprise Unit, where they have had the chance to develop valuable new skills. During these sessions, they learnt how to safely and effectively use various tools and equipment in the workshop, worked together to build their own bird boxes, and supported one another to successfully complete their projects. These hands-on experiences not only taught them practical skills but also fostered teamwork and collaboration.

Keeping Active

Promoting the participation of young people through involving them in the development and delivery of our programmes is a key priority for the team. This was demonstrated when two young people expressed interest in a fishing trip.

In response, the Blend team organised an outing, with equipment purchased through funding from a local councillor. Although no fish were caught, the young people had a fantastic time. Since that first trip, many of the young people have continued to visit the lake together, enjoying the fun, camaraderie, and challenge of fishing. Some have even continued to use the equipment gifted to them after the inaugural trip, further nurturing this newfound interest.

Community

This year, the Blend team were proud to be part of a winning partnership supporting young people in Barrow Hill, a collaboration that earned recognition as the Partnership Award winners at The Voluntary Sector Awards 2023. The Blend team feel privileged and proud to be part of such a dedicated community group.

Values are at the core of our identity, shaping every aspect of the Blend Youth Project.

We strive to be guided by our values in everything we do, ensuring that staff, young people, parents and partners, truly experience and engage with them. Our goal is to create environments, and offer opportunities where young people can fully embrace these core values.

We believe it is important for young people to develop an awareness of those around them, fostering a culture where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and respected. One of the year's most inspiring experiences was a session with comedian Benny Shakes, who, in addition to his comedy, works at Turner Farm. Ben is passionate about raising the awareness of the challenges faced by people living with disabilities.

Through a series of interactive games, the young people gained insight into what life with a disability can feel like. They attempted to draw with their feet and navigate obstacles in a wheelchair, sparking meaningful discussions and enhancing their understanding and empathy. The activities provided a valuable opportunity to foster awareness and promote a deeper appreciation for the experiences of individuals with disabilities.



What young people tell us...

Consulting with young people is vital to ensure their voices influence the development of youth services delivered by the Blend Youth Project. Our bi-annual participant consultation survey plays a key role in shaping the programmes and services Blend offer.

Our latest evaluation revealed some valuable insights about the young people we support. Notably, 28% reported having a disability, including conditions such as autism, ADHD, and dyslexia, which can impact how they participate in activities. This is an important consideration for the team as they design and deliver sessions.

Through their involvement with Blend, young people have received support in various areas:



54%
have engaged
in supportive
conversations
with Blend staff



53%
have spoken about
their mental and
emotional wellbeing



68%
have tried
new things

Mentoring plays a crucial role in youth work, offering young people essential guidance, support, and positive role models. Through mentorship, Youth Workers help young individuals overcome challenges, develop new skills, and build confidence, read how Megan benefitted.

Megan's Story: Megan* (15) has been a regular attendee of Blend sessions. Over the years, she has built a strong relationship with the youth workers, and eventually confided in them about her struggles with mental health and relationships at home. The youth workers offered mentoring support, and after discussions with Megan's school, she began a mentoring programme with Blend.

The mentoring focused on mental health, relationships, self-esteem, confidence, and encouraging Megan to be equipped for learning. With the use of creative tools, Megan engaged in meaningful conversations, allowing targeted support to take place.

At the start of the mentoring programme, Megan's school attendance was 50%, she didn't carry a school bag or any equipment, and her behaviour was a concern for the school. **Megan's Deputy Headteacher commented:**

"Megan* is doing so well; her attendance is up 20% since the start of the year, and behaviour incidents have decreased. She continues to be well-presented and has her bag! Thanks so much for your support, I know she really appreciates it, and so do we!"

Reflecting on her journey, Megan shared that before mentoring, she felt; "alive but didn't feel like I was there, now my attendance has improved, my mental health has gone way up, and I feel so much better in myself. I feel like I'm actually here and actually alive."



When asked to describe their experience with Blend, the top responses were happy, listened to, comfortable, safe and welcome.

At Blend Youth Project, understanding what young people find beneficial about our services is essential. This feedback helps us to continue delivering relevant services and expand our offer to include activities that young people enjoy.

Looking Ahead

The team plans to further expand their work in the High Peak, with continued focus on the Buxton area and are excited about these new opportunities.

Having won a tender to provide health & wellbeing support to young people in Amber Valley. The team will be delivering a new schools based programme of wellbeing workshops & mentoring support, together with additional street-based youth work locations.

We have also begun exploring a partnership with the Derbyshire Youth Justice Service to collaborate on providing restorative justice activities for young people.



Words of Inclusion ...

"Blend has created an open space where you can be honest and 100% feel included." – Max, 21



EDUCATION & ENTERPRISE



blend
youth project
raising aspirations, releasing potential

Through our education programmes, we have helped young people re-engage with learning, gain qualifications, improve their self-esteem and confidence, and develop positive social relationships.

An amazing 72% of the Year 11 students have achieved qualifications that have secured them college places and we are so proud of their achievements. This will enable them to continue their educational journey to help them move forward in their lives and fulfil their potential.

This year, the number of students we have worked with has increased by 30%, and we have built strong relationships with several new schools and referring agencies. Over the past year, we have expanded the range of courses we offer, allowing students of all abilities to earn nationally recognised qualifications.

Many of our students are referred to us because they are struggling in school and are at risk of permanent exclusion. Our education provision

offers a viable alternative, allowing schools to practice inclusivity by alleviating the social and academic pressures of mainstream education. This gives students the opportunity to build the confidence and skills needed to successfully navigate the rest of their week in school.

We have also been able to accommodate more students in Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) by creating bespoke, age-specific days at two of our sites. This allows us to cater specifically to this age group. Generally, the longer a student is able to attend our programmes, the greater the positive impact we can have, making this a very exciting development.

Carl's Story: Carl*, who has autism, came to us in Year 8 feeling socially isolated and completely disengaged from learning. Over time, he built trust with several staff members and, after trying days at various sites, found a course he felt comfortable with at our farm. Initially, Carl was extremely reluctant to write or engage in formal lessons. However, by Year 10, he had gained confidence in his skills and was willing to evidence them on paper. Now in Year 11, Carl has formed strong friendships with several other students, achieved a BTEC Award in Land-Based Studies, and secured a college placement for next year.



Words of Hope ...

"I don't know where I would be without Blend Youth Project, it's more than a charity, it's a family." – Post 16 student

"My son has really come out of his shell through attending education with Blend and it has given him a purpose, security, stability and allowed him to form positive relationships." – Year 11 Parent

Oscar's Story: Oscar* was referred to us during Year 11 after being out of formal education for 18 months. Nowhere was willing to offer him a place, as he had been permanently excluded from his school for extreme negative behaviour. We were very cautious; but, decided to give him a chance at our Woodcraft site. Oscar seized this opportunity and achieved a BTEC Award in Construction, as well as taking exams in Maths and English, in just 5 months. He is an exemplary student and now has many more options for education and employment, with a glowing reference.

Looking Ahead

We plan to expand our visits to various businesses and work sites as part of the students' courses. These experiences provide young people with firsthand knowledge of working environments and help them explore future pathways for work experience placements and potential apprenticeships.

Over the next year, with the help of funding, we plan to update our educational technology to offer more personalised learning opportunities, tailored to each student's unique needs. This will enhance communication, creativity, and student engagement.

73

Students

30

Referring schools
and agencies

72%

Year 11's progressed
to further education
courses



CHILDREN & FAMILIES



Our children and families outreach work has created new opportunities to engage with schools, churches, and local communities. In addition to enriching the RE curriculum in local schools, we are now fostering broader connections within the community.

Enriching RE

The Quest team is strengthening and expanding their partnerships with local schools and has been approached by several new schools, allowing them to reach and engage with even more children. They are finding new and imaginative ways to help the children explore their spirituality and experience God in meaningful and engaging ways. The team has fostered strong, positive relationships with many of the schools, where the staff have expressed gratitude for the opportunity to talk and pray with the team about personal challenges they too are facing.

Exploring Faith

Throughout the year, the team has continued to support churches and has developed a strong partnership with Derby City Church. Together, they organised a residential weekend at the Peak Centre in Edale for children aged 7-11 from the church. Children and church leaders joined the Quest team for a fun-filled weekend that provided opportunities to explore and engage with the Christian faith in exciting ways. The group discovered Bible stories, explored their meanings, and reflected on how these messages are relevant to their lives today. The team used creative storytelling, games, crafts, songs, and prayer to engage the group.

“The weekend was a huge blessing to us and the children, and I have had good feedback from the team, children, and parents. We are really thankful that you gave us the opportunity to be with the kids, get to know them better, and create these memories with them.”

– Children’s Worker, Derby City Church.



Mission & Outreach

This year marked the launch of the Great Book Giveaway initiative, designed to gift books to children in schools and other projects, to help boost literacy and inspire reading. So far, the team has given away over 1,800 books, donated by our Lighthouse Charity Shops and other donors. The Quest team have personally delivered books to various schools and community projects, including food banks and a children’s Café Church.

Schools have frequently reported that many children do not have books at home or that reading isn’t a priority. These books are helping to ignite a passion for reading among their pupils.



Words of Compassion ...

“I’ve had lots of books eagerly shown to me by children. Thank you so much.

– Headteacher, Cophthorne Infants School.

Looking Ahead

The team has begun exploring opportunities and making plans with other churches to run holiday clubs in the coming year.

Building on the success of the Great Book Giveaway, they aim to deepen their engagement within local communities by further collaborating with the Lighthouse Charity Shops and schools to provide essential items, such as clothing, to families.

They are also exploring additional ways to offer pastoral support to schools, particularly for children with emotional needs who require extra care, and they hope to partner with the Saltpot Café to establish a wellbeing drop-in youth café.

8,000

Children engaged each term

47

Schools visited

777

YouTube video views



CHILDREN & FAMILIES



Out of School Clubs

The Zest out of school clubs have been busy, continuing to provide wraparound care before and after school. The clubs are a caring and enriching environment where parents can trust their children are safe, and can learn and have fun with others.

This year, the team has focused on revamping the club's food offerings, introducing healthier meals to ensure that all children receive nutritious, well-balanced options, including a variety of fruits and vegetables. Families can be rest assured that their children are receiving wholesome and balanced meals during the day.

“Zest provides a welcoming, calming, and enjoyable start to the day. Children come into the class ready to learn thanks to their nutritious breakfast.” – Yr 1 Teacher

We understand that it is important that parents know that they can leave their children with our teams in a calm stress free environment, so that they can get to work or get other children to different schools or childcare settings, without having to worry. In response to the ongoing cost of living crisis, we have also prioritised keeping our clubs affordable by reflecting this in our attendance fees, ensuring that essential out of school care remains accessible to all.

This year, we celebrated Easter by giving out an Easter egg to every child attending a Zest club, along with an Easter themed comic to celebrate this important festival.

The children also benefitted from the Great Book Giveaway initiative, where over 150 books were distributed. They had a wonderful time browsing through the selection of gifted books and choosing their favourites. They were delighted and surprised to discover that they could keep the books and take them home.

We believe it is important to offer out of school provision to all pupils, striving to make it as accessible as possible. This year, we have been able to provide one-to-one support for children with additional needs. One child has been able to attend, which not only enabled their parent to go to work but also provided the child with targeted activities to support their fine motor skill development, which they struggle with due to their disability.



Words of Inclusion ...

“The Breakfast Club staff have been fantastic in supporting some of our children with SEND, and they have developed good relationships with all the children.”

— EYFS Teacher

The team engaged with the children in exploring our core values of Hope, Compassion, Belonging and Inclusion. Together they discussed the meanings of these values and how they can be reflected in their attitudes and behaviour. The children shared their thoughts on what these values mean to them personally and how they can influence their actions towards others.

Inclusion: “It means that it’s accessible for any kind of people” – Dominic, Yr 5

9,945

Meals provided
each year

108

Families using out
of school clubs

138

Children attend out
of school clubs

Looking Ahead

We plan to explore the possibility of opening new out of school provision at additional schools, so that more children will have the opportunity to attend.

The Quest team aim to deepen their involvement with the Zest clubs, building on the existing relationships they have with the children through their work in schools.

Additionally, Zest seeks to strengthen their connections with their local Lighthouse Charity Shops. In the past, the children have created artwork for display in the shop windows, and they hope to build on this in the future.



COMMUNITY PROJECTS

SALTPOT Community Café

The Saltpot Community Café continues to offer a warm and inviting environment where friendship, community spirit, and delicious food and beverages come together.

This year, the café has once again opened its doors as a 'Warm Space,' welcoming locals to pop in and enjoy an atmosphere where they can relax and socialise, over a hot drink alongside a slice of Bella's delicious cakes.

The café attracts people of all ages, including students from the local secondary school, particularly those in Year 12 and 13, who frequently visit for something to takeaway or to relax during breaks between lessons. Their lively conversations and laughter enhance the atmosphere of the café, highlighting its essential role at the heart of the community.



Words of Belonging ...

The Saltpot team is great. I feel accepted and part of the Saltpot family. I have never felt good enough before, but here I feel accepted."

— Saltpot Community Café Volunteer

In addition to serving the community, the Saltpot Café has partnered with our alternative education programmes, providing young people with a safe and supportive environment to gain work experience. One such student, Eddy, has been volunteering at the Saltpot through this initiative.

Eddy's Story: Volunteering at the Saltpot created a natural and very positive bridge between planning to leave our education provision and starting a new course at college. Eddy was keen to find a part-time job whilst studying and is now gaining the skills and experience that he needs to do so. It has been a mutually beneficial placement, with several reports of his easy charm being appreciated by customers.

Eddy has enjoyed his placement so much that he continues to volunteer in his own time and plans to keep doing so alongside his college studies next year.

“Working at the Saltpot has boosted my confidence and given me something positive to add to my CV. I’ve learned a lot from talking with the older generation and have developed both my people and catering skills. I really enjoy my shifts there.” - Eddy, Post 16 Student



The café is not just a place where customers feel cared for; it's also where volunteers find a true sense of belonging. This is evident in the loyalty of its volunteers, like Maureen, our longest serving volunteer of 23 years.

Here's what volunteering at the Saltpot means to Maureen:

“I absolutely love meeting and chatting with the people who come into the café. It's a true community hub, and I know everyone who walks through the door. It's heartwarming to see people from all generations visiting. The people I work with here are like family, offering me warmth and friendship—they're like a big hug, and I feel a deep sense of belonging. The staff and volunteers here are wonderful, and it's a lovely environment to be part of. The café is a lifeline for me.”

Looking Ahead

Given that the young people from the local secondary school are a valued part of the Saltpot Community Café family, plans are underway to explore the possibility of extending the café's hours one day a week exclusively for Year 12 and 13 students. This would provide them with a safe and welcoming space to gather and socialise in the familiar setting of the café.



COMMUNITY PROJECTS



Swanwick Men's Shed continues to flourish as it actively engages in community projects that bring people together to forge social connections and build friendships.

Members, known as 'Shedders,' both men and women use their practical skills to create, repair, and repurpose items, all while connecting with like-minded individuals. This shared activity fosters a renewed sense of purpose and belonging. One member expressed the value of this community by saying;

"I connect with many shed members and can rely on each for support. Some help with projects, others provide mental support when I'm feeling low. The shed is a family, and being a part of it gives a massive sense of belonging and support." – Men's Shed Member

Throughout the year, they have formed new connections with various local community groups, including Make/Shift, an organisation that works with and promotes communities in Amber Valley. Swanwick Men's Shed was invited to attend their Golden Glue Awards event, which celebrates the everyday makers, connectors, and shifters of Amber Valley who do extraordinary things to bond communities.

At the event, the team had the honour of receiving a Golden Glue Award, acknowledging the impact that Swanwick Men's Shed has within the Amber Valley community. The event was a joyous occasion, filled with sharing and celebrating alongside other deserving winners and community projects.

The Shedders have been collaborating with other community projects and schools. They worked with Grow Outside, a local social enterprise that uses therapeutic nature and regenerative horticulture methods to deliver community gardening and outdoor wellbeing activities. Swanwick Men's Shed responded to Grow Outside's request to make some planters for the group, by producing several planters for their community garden. These were so successful that they will be making more in the future. Similarly, Loscoe School enlisted the Shedders' skills to build a storage bin area.



Words of Compassion ...



“Having suffered from depression, it soon became apparent to me that others were in the same boat, and gradually we were able to talk to each other about these issues and support each other.” – Men's Shed Member

Beyond their involvement in local projects, Swanwick Men's Shed is a close-knit community. It offers members with a welcoming space to forge friendships and share experiences, knowing they belong to a supportive and caring group. Here, they not only take pride in their valuable contributions to the community but also find strength in supporting one another through personal challenges and life's ups and downs.

“The Swanwick Men's Shed group have been supplying The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) with ready built and flat pack bird boxes. All boxes have been gratefully received and proudly used to benefit a variety of songbirds and owls. We are very grateful to the Swanwick Men's Shed group for their on-going support.” – Lewis Thornley, Regional Director

“Swanwick Men's Shed were fantastic to work with when they provided some planters for our community project. They are lovely quality and they arrived right when they said they would. The members that came to deliver them were very friendly and knowledgeable, and after seeing some of their range of crafts available, there is obviously great skill in the group. Everything is made with care and to a high standard.

The team have also been keen to join in with our community collaborations, and are a very welcome addition, bringing their skills and passion. We very much look forward to continuing to work with you.” – Grow Outside



LIGHTHOUSE CHARITY SHOPS

Lighthouse Charity Shops play a vital role in generating the funds necessary to support our work with children, young people, and families across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Without the income from these shops, we would not be able to continue delivering the services we provide.

In the past year, we have expanded by opening two new shops in South Normanton, Derbyshire, and Teal Park, Nottinghamshire. It was wonderful to see children from local primary schools help to open these shops, which have been warmly welcomed by their communities. Many residents have been eager to volunteer, donate items, and shop with us. We are passionate about engaging with local communities and have been thrilled to connect with those surrounding our new shops.

We have established meaningful connections, especially through our work with the children and families team, at Teal Park. We have formed a close partnership with Rivendell Flying High Academy, participating in school assemblies and events like World Book Day, where we distributed books to children as part of the Valley CiDS Great Book Giveaway initiative.

“Rivendell Flying High Academy has loved working in partnership with Valley CiDS across a wide range of events and activities. We are already looking forward to strengthening this relationship further next year” – Miss Newson, Deputy Head at Rivendell Flying High Academy.

Several of our shops have generously donated children's books, fully embracing the spirit and vision of the Great Book Giveaway initiative. Their support was instrumental in this year's World Book Day, ensuring that every child who visited a Lighthouse Charity Shop received a free book of their choice.

Additionally, the Blend Youth Project's Woodcraft students have partnered closely with several of our shops throughout the year, by selling the students' hand-crafted wood products. This initiative has provided students with the rewarding experience of seeing their work appreciated by customers, giving them a real sense of accomplishment and motivating them to continue creating.

We maintain an online presence through our eBay shop, Lighthouse Online, offering people the opportunity to purchase our fantastic donated products and support us from wherever they live.



Words of Hope ...

"It means I have some good friends. I feel valued. I'm pleased to be helping make people's lives better! It enriches my retirement." – Carol, Lighthouse Charity Shop Volunteer



34

Charity shops

870K

Items sold this year

20M KG

Annual CO2 saving

Sustainability

The Lighthouse Charity Shops not only fund our work but also make a significant environmental impact, which is important to us as a charity. By helping people reuse and recycle pre-loved items, we extend their lifespan and reduce waste.

From April 2023 to March 2024, our charity shops found new homes for just over 870,000 items that would otherwise have been discarded. This prevented a staggering 1.57 million kg from going to landfill and avoided nearly 20 million kg of CO2 emissions from entering the atmosphere.

Our new app tracks the environmental impact of every donation made to a Lighthouse Charity Shop, highlighting the difference donors are making for the environment. By donating to us, you are not only helping the environment but also making a positive difference in the lives of children, young people, and families in local communities.



VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are essential to Valley CiDS, and we are deeply grateful for their remarkable contributions. By generously offering their time and talents, our volunteers play a vital role in bringing our mission and values to life.

The work of our volunteers, and their dedication is at the very heart of what we do. We truly appreciate their commitment, passion, and willingness to support us. Here are some experiences of volunteering:

Each of our volunteers come to us with unique experiences, skills, and energy, joining for a wide variety of reasons. Volunteering with Valley CiDS offers the opportunity to build social connections, meet new people, and strengthen ties within the local community. It also enhances an individual's sense of purpose and identity, providing a rewarding and fulfilling experience.

"I feel 100% part of the Valley CiDS community. I connect with all the staff and our lovely customers."
– Anita, Volunteer

"I love working with others, it has helped with my confidence. The team is friendly and helpful."
– Theresa, Volunteer



Words of Belonging

"I really feel part of the Valley CiDS family and it is such a precious feeling! Being at The Saltpot helps me mentally, physically - my whole being - it keeps me going."

– Catherine, Volunteer

Mary's Story: This year at our Ilkeston Lighthouse Charity Shop, we had the pleasure of celebrating with one of the volunteers, for their amazing commitment of volunteering for over 15 years. Mary, marked this significant achievement in store surrounded by her family, friends and customers. Volunteering at the shop has meant a lot to her, keeps her active, and she looks forward to the days when she is helping in the shop.

We are grateful for Mary's time, commitment and passion, but volunteering in the shop has brought so many personal benefits for Mary too. Here is Mary's personal reflection on what volunteering at the shop means for her and what keeps her coming back so many years later.

Here's what volunteering with Valley CiDS means to Mary:

"Following a cancer diagnosis in early 2007 for both me and my partner, I made a promise that if we both came out the other side, I would repay God by volunteering to work in a charity shop.

I don't really know why I chose the Lighthouse shop, I was just wandering past one day, walked in and started talking to Joe behind the counter and that was it. I've been there ever since.

Last year I lost my partner, and the people at the Lighthouse Charity Shop have all been there to help me by cheering me up and generally being incredible, kind people." – Mary, Volunteer



Additionally, volunteering can help individuals gain valuable experience for future employment, learn new skills, and improve social confidence. This is the experience of one of our volunteers:

"I started volunteering back in 2013 on the suggestion of the job centre. Nearly 10 years passed, and I had no luck getting a job or even an interview. I was starting to lose hope. One day, when I was volunteering, the management team was in, helping to rearrange the shop. I was doing my regular duties, serving customers at the till. The manager was so impressed with my customer skills that a week or two later, I was offered the job of supervisor. I accepted, and I'm still here now."

– Sophie, Lighthouse Charity Shop, Langley Mill

4.75

Volunteering experience
star rating out of 5

300

Volunteers

72K

Volunteering
hours a year



THANK YOU

We are so grateful to all those who have supported us not just over the past year, but for the continued support through donations and purchases at our Lighthouse Charity Shops, financial donations from individuals, churches and other organisations and businesses.

Also, to the schools, churches and various organisations we work with on a daily basis, who enable us to deliver the work of Valley CiDS. We are also extremely grateful to those who freely give us their time, skills, and commitment though out the year. All of this provides us with the resources we require as a charity, to make a positive difference in the lives of children, young people and their families.

SUPPORT US

If you would like to help us further or start supporting us in helping to make a difference, here are some of the ways you could get involved:



GIVE - SIMPLY SCAN THE QR CODE OPPOSITE!

You can support us financially by making a one-off or a regular donation, helping us to plan for the future.



DONATE GOODS

Your donations are the lifeline of our charity and we would love to turn your unloved items into cash. Our charity shops need your good quality, reusable items. We accept donations at all of our Lighthouse Charity Shops.



PRAY

Your support through prayer is invaluable to us and those children, young people and families we journey with. Please pray for the work that we do and those we meet.



VOLUNTEER

Whether it's working with children, young people or in one of our many charity shops, there are always plenty of volunteering opportunities with us.



FUNDRAISE

You can help us by organising your own fundraising event and ask your friends and family to join you or organise an event, at work, your local church or in your local community.



SCAN ME
TO DONATE





If you are interested in finding out more about Valley CiDS, please get in touch:



info@valleycids.co.uk



valleycids.co.uk

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