

Trustees' Annual and Strategic Report 2022



Blesma, The Limbless Veterans

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association

Reference and Administration:

Charity Number: 1084189

Company Limited by Guarantee

Number: 4102768

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Vice Chairman:

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Mr R Gilbert

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Trustees' Annual and Strategic Report and Financial Statements

Year end 31 December 2022

Lamin Manneh lost three limbs when he was caught in an IED blast serving in Afghanistan in 2010



The Blesma mission: To assist limbless veterans to lead independent and fulfilling lives

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Strategic Report

Introduction

Blesma is a specialist Service charity, an Association. Its Members are the war wounded, disabled veterans and their dependants. Blesma shall work tirelessly to meet the challenges of injury, to bring comfort, and to help its Members realise their fullest potential.

Blesma entered its 90th year in 2022 anticipating a challenging year as the country took time to recover from the Covid pandemic. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February had significant economic consequences that were then made worse by considerable political and economic upheaval at home. The cost-of-living crisis, caused by huge increases in global energy prices, had a major effect on household incomes towards the end of the year, while market uncertainty also impacted on investment performance.

The consequences for Blesma were an increase in the need for charitable support for its Members, a more difficult fundraising environment and a loss on the market value of the Association's reserves. Whilst the Charity made a conscious decision to maintain existing levels of service by drawing on these reserves in 2022, it will continue to closely scrutinise and prioritise its spending in order to meet its commitment to provide life-long support.

Our Blesma Support Officers, Outreach Officers and volunteers maintained close

contact with our Members throughout the year, visiting in person whenever possible and increasing the number and scope of regional and online outreach events that kept Members in touch with each other.

Although the backlog from the pandemic continues to affect the delivery of statutory services, staff have been actively engaged with other agencies to overcome obstacles and help coordinate the delivery of support. The Association also took the decision to assist Members when energy prices rose significantly in the Autumn, offering all our Members a £200 grant to help with high inflation and the additional living costs that are often incurred by people with disabilities. Approximately two thirds of the membership took up this offer, with many commenting on the difference Blesma's support made at a critical time.

With the ending of most Covid restrictions in March, Blesma was finally able to re-start a full activities programme at home and overseas. As well as skiing trips, sailing and cycling events, and fitness and lifestyle courses, Members travelled to Flanders for a battlefield tour. Closer to home, others took part in family glamping events, Widows and Seniors weeks, and a wide range of group activities across the UK. Other Members were supported in their own personal challenges, including



From left: Vinod Budhathoki, Member Trustee Alison Grant, and Lamin Manneh

mountaineering, motorsports, endurance events and competitive sport. Our 90th anniversary was commemorated at a hugely popular Members' Weekend in June, and the Association thanked its many partners and supporters for their unstinting commitment to our injured veterans at a special anniversary reception at the Royal Hospital Chelsea in October.

Although UK Forces were not directly involved in major combat operations in 2022, UK personnel were once again heavily committed. As well as deterrence operations, soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen conducted intensive training and provided vital logistic support. Others stood-in at short notice to sustain essential services during industrial action. The year reminded us that conflict is never far away and the world remains a dangerous place. Blesma will maintain its ability to react to conflict when necessary.

This year Blesma conducted a membership survey in order to ensure that the views of Members would inform its next strategy review in 2023. The initial survey will be followed up with Member interviews from across the Association.

During 2022, we welcomed 152 new Members into the Association, providing advice, assistance and the friendship and support of others familiar with the experience of limb loss. Sadly, we also learned of the loss of 164 Blesma Members, Widows and Widowers over the year. Our sympathies go to their families and friends.

This report summarises Blesma's objectives, activities and financial position for 2022. Financial results and considerations have been reflected in the Financial Review and Independent Auditor's Report.

The Association remains steadfast in its determination to be there for its Members, through life.

Objectives for 2022

OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTS

Blesma is there:

To promote the welfare and wellbeing of all serving and ex-Service men and women who have lost a limb or limbs, or one or both eyes, as a result of Service in any Branch of Her Majesty's Regular or Auxiliary Forces as may from time to time be defined.

To promote the welfare and wellbeing of all those serving and ex-Service men and women who suffer loss of a limb, permanent loss of speech, hearing, or the loss of sight in one or both eyes, or the loss of use of a limb.

To assist needy Widows, Widowers and dependants of the above.

LINES OF OPERATION

Blesma is not just a charity provider that has beneficiaries in the normal sense; it is an Association with the membership (contributors and beneficiaries) central to all aspects of its existence and purpose. As a matter of principle, and as far as practicable, Member is encouraged to help Member to overcome the challenges of serious injury.

The membership's interests are pursued in four principal ways, termed Lines of Operation, these being: Security, Identity, Connectivity and Resourcing. Within these lines, in 2022, we sought to achieve the following:

SECURITY

- Mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the delivery of statutory Health and Social Care services to Members
- Sponsor and contribute to relevant academic research for the benefit of Blesma Members and their families, including the 'Caring and Coping 2' project to understand the impact on families living with the loss of use of limb/s
- Work with central and national governments to promote consistent standards across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Continue to develop robust working relationships with key agencies, for example the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre, Veterans UK and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) acting as a 'critical friend' in the interests of our Members
- Mitigate the impact of the closure of the Veterans Mobility Fund, and work with the Help for Heroes charity to seek replacement government funding to support those injured by conflict
- Influence the future organisation of NHS mobility/limb services within the context of a national integrated care system

IDENTITY

- Re-start a full activities programme at home and abroad once COVID-19 restrictions allow

The Association continues to push the bounds of rehabilitation, prosthetic knowledge and capabilities for veterans and the wider nation alike.

Knowing Blesma is there, should they suffer traumatic incident, reassures the Service community.



- Support Members' personal and professional development through training
- Take part in commemorative activities, including the annual Remembrance Day ceremony at the Cenotaph
- Commemorate Blesma's 90th anniversary throughout the year

CONNECTIVITY

- Keep all Blesma Members closely linked to the Association and each other
- Develop the programme of face-to-face and online outreach activities for Members across the UK and abroad
- Maintain close and productive links between Branches, volunteers, Blesma Support Officers and Outreach Officers
- Regularly communicate to Blesma

Members and external audiences through print and digital means

- Conduct an independent external evaluation of the Making Generation R programme and decide on its future
- Actively promote the Association, making sure that all who are eligible to join the Association know of us and our offer

RESOURCING

- Ensure that Blesma's future is secure in the post-Covid economic environment
- Ensure that Blesma's funds are carefully managed and appropriately targeted for the benefit of Members
- Continue to explore new methods of raising funds for our Members, for example by expanding the use of digital platforms



Members are encouraged to help Members to overcome the challenges of serious injury

- Ensure that Blesma's Long-Term Financial Plan is up to date and relevant

Looking forward, the priority for the Board is to continue to provide appropriate support to Blesma Members during the recovery from the Covid pandemic.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's three-part guidance on public benefit.

Living with limb loss or loss of use of limbs is an everyday challenge, often a painful one. It is a condition that must be managed for the rest of life.

For many Blesma Members, the effects can be compounded; battlefield blast injury in particular carrying complications far beyond those that might be experienced with other elective and

non-elective forms of amputation. The most severely injured of recent conflicts benefit from the advance of medical treatments and are grateful to have their lives, but we have little experience of the long-term effects. Other veterans are affected by limb loss in later life.

Our Members and their families must learn to cope with all this; Blesma is here to help them take their full and rightful place in society. The Association continues to push the bounds of rehabilitation, prosthetic knowledge and capabilities for veterans and the wider nation alike, encouraging deeper expertise in health services and supporting academic research. Knowing Blesma is there, should they suffer traumatic incident, reassures the Service community. This is Blesma's contribution to the nation.

Blesma's Values

The Blesma pledge
is to always:

Care

Be there for our
Members through life

Share our
Members' stories

Strive to learn more

Offer support
and guidance

Put Members' needs first

Be relevant
to independence
and fulfilment

Be the expert Service
charity on living
with limb loss

Activities in 2022

With its focus on meeting the needs of its Members, Blesma acts as the specialist Service charity dedicated to those serving or ex-Service personnel who have lost limbs or the use of limbs. It will know all its Members individually, and will strive to understand and meet their needs to live independent and fulfilling lives. It will be recognised as the authoritative voice in its field. In 2022, its ongoing operations are summarised as:

SECURITY

Wellbeing, the physical and mental essentials

Blesma continues to provide professional welfare and outreach services, backed up by a body of volunteers providing comradeship, advice and informed support to Members across the UK and overseas. This support includes professional counselling, securing proper provision of pensions and allowances, supporting and informing the delivery of statutory services, making grants to alleviate the effects of disability, and a range of activities to connect Members in comradeship and reduce social isolation.

IDENTITY

Respect and realisation of potential

A broad range of activities, both face to face and virtual, range from challenging expeditions and playing sport at all levels to online activities and local days out, all arranged within a social framework of

Members working together and sharing their particular knowledge and experience. We hold to the belief that providing Members with a relevant and engaging range of activities contributes significantly to their wellbeing, confidence and self-belief.

CONNECTIVITY

External outreach and internal community communications

Connectivity between Members is the foundation of Blesma's proposition to its Members. It is why Blesma exists. The Association uses a variety of communications to foster close links between its Members and with other agencies. The Association participated on many bodies of influence in 2022. These included:

- The MoD Central Advisory Committee for Compensation (CAC) with access to the Independent Medical Expert Group
- The Armed Forces Casework Steering Group
- The Cobseo Executive Committee – The Confederation of Service Charities (Board Member)
- The Executive Committee of Veterans Scotland (Board Member)
- The Northern Ireland Veterans Support Committee
- The NHS England Veterans Prosthetics Panel

Activities ranged from the cerebral to the artistic to the action packed in 2022



- The NHS England Prosthetics Service Review
- The Centre for Blast Injury Studies Amputee Advisory Board
- The Veterans Trauma Network and the Direct Skeletal Fixation Policy working group

In broader context, we played a role and consulted widely with:

- The Ministry of Defence, the Office for Veterans Affairs, the Department of Health and Social Security, and the Department for Work and Pensions
- Devolved governments across the UK
- NHS England and the Health Services of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Prosthetic Providers

RESOURCING

Finance, people, knowledge and training

Our capacity to support our Membership is enabled by Blesma's ability to raise funds and its organisational efficiency. Our fundraising staff conduct a wide range of fundraising activities, while our Finance and Support Directorate manage the Charity's resources from Head Office, keeping tight control, ensuring compliance and reducing costs. The Association is focused on getting the most out of every pound raised.

Blesma 2022 in numbers

3,654

Members, family members and carers took part in face-to-face and virtual activities

1,003
grants paid

16.8m

The number of people who saw Blesma content on social media

9,774

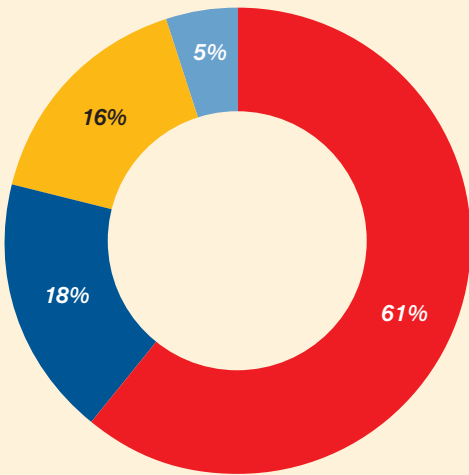
visits, contacts and communications by Support and Outreach Officers

68,000

Followers across social media

● 152 New Members

22 pence of every £1 of income in 2022 is planned to be spent to raise funds in 2023 (2021: 21 pence)

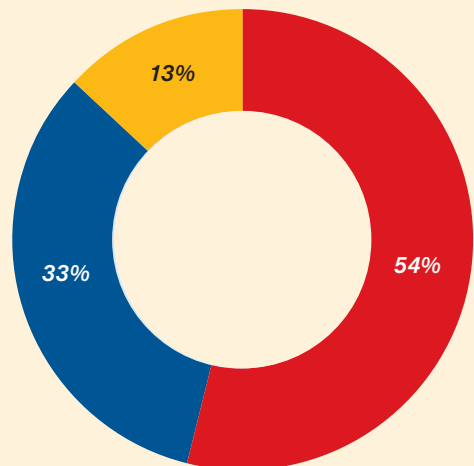


EXPENDITURE

Membership Services	61%
Activities	18%
Fundraising and Investment	16%
Management Fees	5%
Awareness & Representation	5%

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES EXPENDITURE

Advice, Support, Visits Engagement, Other	54%
Grants	33%
Overheads	13%



Our Achievements and Performance in 2022

The fundamental principles that guide Blesma’s operation remain unchanged year on year in that supporting our Members is undertaken on a daily basis, in person wherever possible, as it always has been. The vital support our Members themselves and their families provide each other comes from lived experience and first-hand knowledge, gained over decades. In this respect our perspective is unique. We know about living with limb loss in all stages of adult life. Members tell us their stories in their own homes and we strive to understand and to deliver appropriate and timely support. Our principal beneficiaries are also Members with a vote on how Blesma is run. Their guidance and scrutiny promotes genuine impact and efficiency, ensuring Blesma is responsive and relevant in what it does.

Delivering the Priorities

In accordance with the Blesma Strategic Plan, the Charity’s Lines of Operation, Priorities and Outputs are mapped out in the table (right). Explanatory notes follow.

LINE OF OPERATION AND PRIORITY	
SECURITY	<p>Confirm the full extent of Members’ needs; refresh constantly, ensuring relevance and determining partnerships with other charities to meet need in full.</p> <p>Understand all government and administrations’ position and provision for limb loss and loss of use, and be geared to act on judged gaps.</p> <p>Deliver the Blesma position on later life care and the most vulnerable, focusing on any lack of, or distressing, statutory provision.</p>
IDENTITY	<p>Continue to bring Members’ activity programmes, including high-end events such as the Paralympics, to a position of prominence.</p> <p>Extend the programmes to meet the widest possible range of individual membership and whole Association needs, for example the Making Generation R programme.</p>
CONNECTIVITY	<p>Grow our inclusive, positive and crisply responsive communications network, exploiting the latest communication technology but not to the exclusion of those unfamiliar with the digital age.</p> <p>Grow voluntary support across the network, at the hub of communities, and reaching out, including best use of Members’ skills and commitment, especially reinforcing the impact of the activity programmes.</p> <p>Actively promote the Association, making sure that all who are eligible to join the Association know of us and our offer.</p>
RESOURCING	<p>Establish a broad range of fundraising functions that are able to engage with funders/donors across multiple mediums, from video calls to live-streamed events.</p> <p>Provide a welcoming, safe, and Covid-free environment for Members, staff, volunteers and supporters.</p> <p>Operate a fit-for-purpose support and operational structure for Blesma.</p>

DELIVERY	OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES
<p>Personal access to the relevant Support or Outreach Officer.</p> <p>Timely and responsive grant assistance.</p> <p>'In-person' specialist support on limb loss and loss of use treatment, compensation and social care provision to ensure prescribed standards are met fully, consistently and fairly.</p> <p>Support and representation with statutory bodies, specialist providers and Limb Centres.</p>	<p>950 home visits, 111 online meetings, 8,713 other contacts and communications including letters, emails, texts, phone calls and social media contact.</p> <p>1,003 grants to 603 recipients.</p> <p>163 referrals to other charities. 47 collaborative grants.</p> <p>A total of 2,008 hardship grants paid to Blesma Members.</p> <p>11 active tribunal cases in addition to PIP Assessments and Mandatory Reconsiderations.</p> <p>370 Veterans' Prosthetics Panel grants secured in 2022, totalling £2,345,148.</p> <p>190 referrals to the NHS Veterans Trauma Network.</p> <p>328 individual counselling sessions.</p>
<p>Opportunity to lead, support and partake in activities of interest.</p> <p>Communication to Members to inspire and motivate fellow Members.</p> <p>Access to physical, mental and social engagement-focused activities to unfold new horizons, potential, confidence and self-respect.</p>	<p>242 live and 46 virtual activities conducted, with 3,654 Members, family members and carers participating.</p> <p>21 Member-led events.</p> <p>28 Members supported at elite level by the Venture Programme (four in 2020).</p>
<p>A connected Outreach programme.</p> <p>Regular magazine, bulletin, website and social media news.</p> <p>Introduction to fellow Members and civilian user groups.</p> <p>Opportunity to volunteer and support Blesma and its Members.</p>	<p>16.8 million people saw Blesma content on social media in 2022.</p> <p>Blesma has 68,000 followers across social media.</p> <p>£21,000 of donations raised via Facebook and Instagram.</p> <p>Blesma was featured 34 times in national and local print media articles, and in 982 online articles.</p> <p>Making Generation R – 58 active Members reached an audience of 14,959. This brings the total number of people who have heard a Blesma Member's story through the MGR programme to 141,799 since 2016.</p> <p>86 active volunteers gave 819 working days in support of our Members in 2022.</p> <p>152 new Members in 2022.</p>
<p>A well-established, cost-effective, agile, and efficient fundraising function with the ability to quickly adapt to new methods of fundraising as the situation dictates.</p> <p>Prioritise the health and wellbeing of Members, staff, volunteers and supporters.</p> <p>Efficient and timely delivery of support services to the Association while keeping a tight lid on overheads and related support costs.</p>	<p>A return on investment of 3.02 (2021: 2.7).</p> <p>22 pence of every £1 of income in 2022 is planned to be spent to raise funds in 2023 (2021: 21p).</p>

Security

Throughout 2022, Blesma's Support and Outreach Officers – supported by specialist head office staff – continued to deliver advice, assistance and welfare support to our 2,697 Members in the UK and abroad. In addition, more than 86 active volunteers selflessly provided more than 800 days of additional support to Members and their families.

In the early part of 2022, a spike in Covid cases partially interrupted face-to-face service provision. The experience gained throughout the pandemic was put to good use before we were able to revert back to the more traditional model of welfare delivery, supplemented by online and telephone services being provided by Support Officers, Outreach Officers and Branch and regional welfare volunteers. In total, there were 9,774 contacts with our Members during 2022, of which, 950 were home visits and 111 were online consultations. Our work to counter digital isolation continued throughout 2022, with Members engaging online with family, friends and other Members across the country and overseas.

In total, Blesma awarded 1,003 welfare grants to 603 Members in 2022, providing support across a range of Members' needs including powered and manual wheelchairs, mobility scooters, stairlifts, disabled bicycles, and white and brown goods. We also assisted with adaptations to bathrooms, kitchens, access to homes, car ports and gardens. Members were also

provided with equipment and training for employment. Feedback from Blesma's Support Officers indicated that casework during 2022 continued to follow a similar theme to 2021 by becoming more complex, professionally demanding and time intensive. This was largely attributed to the impact of the Covid legacy and financial pressures on statutory service delivery, particularly where support to Members has required a multi-agency intervention. Where this was evident, Support Officers continued to coordinate with other providers in multi-disciplinary teams to ensure Members received the joined-up support they needed.

During 2022, all NHS Limb Centres returned to a delivery model of in-person prosthetics support. Many centres reported longer than normal waiting times for appointments as most were required to maintain social distancing on site which reduced the numbers of patients that could be seen on any given day. This, coupled with an increase in complexity of issues post-Covid, led to waiting times of around six weeks after the request, compared to two weeks pre-pandemic.

Most Limb Centres in England now manufacture new sockets off-site using a central fabrication approach which, on occasions, led to additional delays, particularly when problems with sockets were identified at the fit and delivery stage.

In 2022, we continued to monitor developments in prosthetic provision

Widows Week 2022
was a huge success



to our Members across the UK. At an individual level, Blesma advocated directly for 106 Members who required support locally at their NHS Limb Centres. We continued to raise awareness of limb loss within the NHS, delivering four regional GP veterans awareness training sessions over the year.

Blesma's support to the Defence Recovery Capability was affected by Covid restrictions as visits by Members to Complex Prosthetics Assessment Clinics were suspended during the year. However, the Association helped 190 Members with attributable injuries access specialist clinical care via the NHS Veterans Trauma Network (VTN). Blesma was represented on the VTN programme board and was actively involved in 22 VTN multi-disciplinary teams which directly benefitted our Members. We were pleased that the vital work of the VTN was recognised by the award of the Military and Civilian Partnership Award in the 2022 Health Service Journal Awards.

Blesma continued to maintain its

close links with the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Stanford Hall, where we enjoy good working relationships with both the clinical staff and the Veteran Welfare Service. There were significant pressures on the social care team due to staff vacancies and absences in 2022. However, they maintained close contact with Blesma and continued to send referrals for new Members whom we directly supported at this critical stage. Although in-person visits were suspended, the Complex Prosthetic Assessment Clinics continued to run smoothly, accepting 10 Member referrals. Following the re-introduction of the successful osseointegration programme, several Blesma Members completed their rehabilitation at Stanford Hall during the latter part of the year, with positive outcomes for all.

For those with Service attributable amputations, the Veterans' Prosthetics Panel continued to provide an excellent route for funding components in England. In 2022, Blesma achieved 370 successful

Security Continued

advanced prosthetic component applications (95% success rate in submissions) for our Members, valued at £2,345,148. The Veterans' Prosthetics Panel and NHS England continued to support Blesma Member applications to replace out-of-warranty prosthetics through residual funds. Eligible Members living in the devolved administrations had similar access to prosthetics through national care pathways, again supported by Blesma.

Blesma's BSO (Prosthetics) continued as a member of the NHS England Prosthetic Service Review board which is at the stage of designing and drafting an NHS-wide service specification which will be publicised and subject to public consultation in 2023. Blesma is also represented on the Direct Skeletal Fixation (Osseointegration) Policy Working Group which has submitted a policy draft and evidence review to NHS England for consideration of further surgical intervention for prosthetic users who have a low tolerance of conventional prosthetic sockets.

THE PATTENMAKERS

In 2022, Blesma was pleased to engage with the Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers for the first time. We were particularly delighted that through their generous donation, we were able to assist one Member to have a pair of bespoke leather boots made by Bill Bird

Shoes which corrected a significant mobility issue. We look forward to further engagement and support in 2023.

Blesma was grateful for the financial support provided by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (AFCFT) scheme which helped fund activities in several Blesma regions. Of note was the success of the South West Photography Group which delivered a total of 100 activity sessions including 15 physical activities, 15 online craft activities, 70 photography workshops and a photography exhibition staged at the University of Plymouth. The AFCFT also facilitated a grant from the Office of Veterans' Affairs in support of veterans of recent conflicts.

Blesma's membership enquiries and application process continued to benefit from the move to an online process in 2021, with 152 new Members, including Widow memberships, joining the Association during the year. At any one time, Blesma has around 30 applications underway awaiting confirmation of Service or eligibility criteria.

Blesma's Benefits and Social Care Advisor successfully resolved 75 benefit enquiries submitted via BSOs and a further 88 directly from Members. She also conducted at-home consultations with BSOs to advise and support Members with particularly complex cases. Blesma continued to engage with the DWP and its providers to ensure the Association kept staff and Members up to date with



BSO (Prosthetics) Brian Chenier (right) visits Limb Centres to discuss Members' needs

legislation and processes. BSOs continued to directly support Members who wished to challenge their War Pensions, Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Awards or DWP benefits. This also included representing them at hearings and tribunals. Blesma continued to engage with the DWP and delivery partners, highlighting issues affecting veterans. This included monitoring and publishing changes to existing policy which may affect Members.

RESEARCH

In 2022, Blesma and Anglia Ruskin University concluded a two-year research study into living with loss of use of limb, and in particular the effects on families. This followed an earlier study on the

effects of living with limb loss. The project was kindly and generously funded and supported by the Forces in Mind Trust, who also allowed for further investigation into the experiences of female veterans and their families. The final report promises to shine a light on some key areas of need whilst proposing a practitioner's tool that will help inform and improve future clinical practice.

Blesma also applied for a £200,000 research grant from the Office for Veterans' Affairs through the Health Innovation Fund. If funded, this research will examine the benefits of using commercially available mobility devices to enhance the quality of life of users.

Security Continued

WORK WITH DEVOLVED GOVERNMENTS

Blesma continued to work with Social Security Scotland to help shape its new disability benefit system, specifically where it has impact on veterans. The Adult Disability Payment is the Scottish equivalent of the Personal Independence Payment. Staff took part in stakeholder events to help develop the claim process and help design the claim form. The Association also inputted into the Scottish Government's Enhanced Administration and Compensation Recovery consultation process.

In Wales, Blesma continued to attend the Cross-Party Group for Armed Forces and maintained a strong relationship with the Welsh Government Armed Forces Team. The Association continued to highlight gaps in support for veterans and their families in Wales while supporting

initiatives to improve service provision, reduce social isolation for veterans and improve prosthetics provision. BSO (Wales and West) collaborated directly with the new Veterans' Commissioner for Wales and now sits as Vice Chair of the Wales Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee (VAPC).

In Northern Ireland, the Association worked closely with the NI Veterans Support Office (NIVSO) to coordinate support and raise awareness of veterans' issues. Blesma also contributed to the success of six veterans' information roadshows hosted by the Veterans Commissioner. BSO (Prosthetics) and BSO Scotland & Northern Ireland are members of the NI Armed Forces Liaison Forum and worked with the Musgrave Park Limb Centre on issues affecting prosthetic provision in the province.



Blesma Branches

Blesma's five regional Branches continued to support and connect our Members through their local networks of members and volunteers, supported by regional BSOs and Outreach Officers. In 2022, the Bournemouth and District Branch held its 75th anniversary on 06 June to coincide with D-Day. Members were also able to congratulate their Branch Secretary on receiving the Blesma Earl of Ancaster award for exceptional volunteer services to the Association. The Branch was delighted to have also received a gracious response from Her Majesty The Queen to the Branch chairman's loyal greetings on her Diamond Jubilee, which in the light of her passing, made her reply that more memorable.

The Sutton, Merton and District Branch met regularly throughout the year and saw several new members expanding its ranks. The Branch invited Merton Council to brief members on its new initiative supporting veterans with housing issues, employment and welfare support in early 2023. In June, the Chairman received a certificate and shield in recognition of her long and meritorious service to Blesma.

The Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft Branch was very active and increased its membership numbers in the year. The Branch looked to widen its membership catchment area and held an event in Norwich for the first time. Other highlights included a well-supported and attended Blesma stand at Armed Forces Day in Lowestoft and large member get-togethers at Dunston Hall and Oulton Broad.

In a similar vein, the Nottingham Branch was very active supporting members both in person and via regular telephone call check-ins within its catchment area. The Branch is looking to continue to expand its numbers and diversify its activities and meeting times in 2023, in order to attract and engage a wider and younger cohort of membership.

Southampton Branch continued to actively support its members with regular online advice and engagement augmented by face-to-face social meetings in Totton. Sadly, the Portsmouth Branch became unsustainable and closed down in 2022, although more than half of its members transferred to the Southampton Branch to maintain their strong links with local members.

Identity

Blesma's 90th year began under Covid restrictions with some international events, including January's skiing trip to France, having to be cancelled due to travel restrictions imposed because of the Omicron Covid variant. By March, these restrictions were eased and international travel could restart, enabling the second planned skiing trip to France to take place. This was the first overseas Blesma activity to take place in two years.

The lifting of travel restrictions also meant that the twice-postponed Race Across America (RAAM) cycle event could take place in June. This event was probably the most challenging of any group activity that Blesma has organised, with Blesma's team of cyclists and support crew "digging deep" to overcome the loss of their captain after a bike crash and their team bus after a mechanical breakdown. Thanks to the determination of those taking part, and the enthusiastic support of their American hosts, the Blesma team were able to adapt, overcome and battle their way to the finish line.

National activities were also able to take place throughout most of the year as the threat of Omicron receded. Family glamping trips, Seniors and Widows Weeks, fitness and lifestyle camps, Blesma's second surf week and a week-long photography event in Shetland all provided opportunities for Members and their families to re-connect.

Further to the Members' Weekend that

took place between lockdowns in October 2021, we were able to return to our usual month of June for Members' Weekend 2022. Once again, this event took place at Chesford Grange in Warwickshire. Some 250 Members, family members and guests took part in a celebration and commemoration of Blesma's 90th anniversary. The event included the first in-person Annual General Meeting since 2019, with some Members attending remotely. Once the formalities were over, Members took part in a wide variety of games, workshops and displays. The weekend ended with a barbecue and several promises to "see you next year!"

The 90th anniversary commemorations continued with Blesma hosting a reception in the State Apartments of the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Members, Trustees and staff from across the Association hosted a wide range of guests, including individual donors and corporate supporters, representatives from the Armed Forces, government ministries, the NHS and other military charities to say thank you for making Blesma's work possible.

Other representational events in 2022 included the Belfast Military Tattoo, where Blesma was selected as the chosen military charity. Members were hugely touched as they received a standing ovation from the crowd. Remembrance events in November were well supported; Members attended the Cenotaph parade and conducted a wreath-laying ceremony at West Ham

In 2022, 58 Members took part in Making Generation R. The programme has reached 141,799 people since 2016



United Football Club's London Stadium.

Blesma's Venture Fund continued to support Members taking part in personal sporting challenges. Members competed in the Winter Paralympics and Invictus Games, while others were able to pursue their ambitions in a wide variety of sports including polo, aerobatic flying, motorsports, archery, ice hockey and sailing. Mountaineering successes included Member Les Binns summiting Mount Everest, Andy Reid's successful expedition to Mount Kilimanjaro and Martin Hewitt summiting Mount Vinson in Antarctica in his attempt to complete the incredible Adaptive Grand Slam – reaching both Poles and summiting the highest peak on all seven continents.

The Making Generation R programme was able to return to face-to-face training and presentations in 2022. After running this hugely successful programme for six years the Association commissioned an external evaluation of the programme to seek the views of Members, audiences and supporters before deciding on its future. After an extensive review, the Association decided to continue delivering presentations to youth audiences for one more year, then to transition into a storytelling programme, focusing on Members being able to tell their story to audiences of their choice. This new programme is planned to launch in mid-2023 for a trial period of two years.

Connectivity

Blesma continued to maintain the vital connectivity between our own Members through an expanding programme of social events and activities delivered regionally by our 10 Outreach Officers. This led to the successful delivery of 288 activities (46 virtual and 242 face to face) to 3,654 Members and their families in 2022. Feedback was hugely positive and showed that these popular activities help maintain the comradeship between our Members. Online activities continued to link our regional networks with Members across the country and beyond. These included all manner of arts and craft activities, a drama project, health and wellbeing workshops, quizzes and get-togethers over home-cooked recipes. Face-to-face activities included a huge variety of days out such as dry slope skiing and snowboarding, golf, target rifle and clay pigeon shooting, carriage driving, wheelchair sports, coarse fishing, canal boating and sailing.

More widely, the Association continued to advocate on behalf of its Members with the Ministry of Defence, the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Social Care. Our Independence and Wellbeing staff maintained close ties with both national and local agencies to deliver joined-up support, often through multi-disciplinary teams focused on individual cases. Blesma continued to develop its working relationship with Veterans UK by holding regular meetings with staff. This collaboration was strengthened in 2022 with Blesma being invited to participate in a Veterans UK communications review,

a Lived Experience event and two training sessions at Norcross for Veterans UK staff delivered by Blesma BSOs to promote a better understanding of the issues faced by our Members. This will be supplemented in 2023 by further online sessions provided to Veterans UK Welfare Service staff.

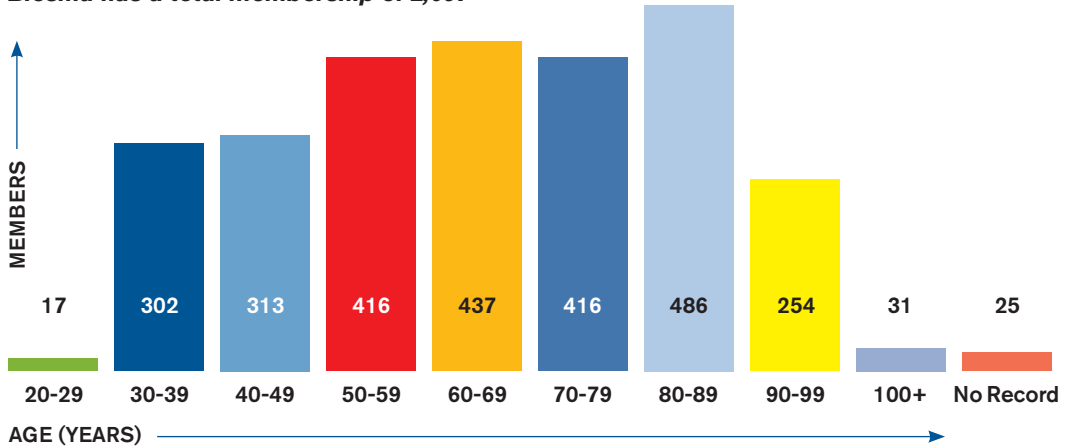
During the year, the Association provided detailed feedback and advice on several government consultation papers on health, disability, and the provision of care services. We continued to work closely with the Scottish Parliament on the Scottish Social Security Review and represented veterans in Wales through the Welsh Armed Forces Prosthetic Forum.

Blesma continued to be represented on the executive boards of Cobseo, the Confederation of Service Charities and Veterans Scotland, while collaborating with other charities supporting disabled veterans through the Disabled Veterans Charity Partnership with Help for Heroes and Blind Veterans UK. The Association also submitted a joint case with Help for Heroes to the Treasury for the restoration of the Veterans Mobility Fund, which previously used money raised through LIBOR fines to provide prosthetics and mobility equipment to veterans with attributable injuries.

In 2022, Blesma streamlined its own Communications and Marketing operations in order to focus on informing Members, supporters and the wider public about our Members and the different ways in which Blesma assists them to live independent and fulfilling lives. The year saw the successful relaunch of

THE AGE OF BLESMA'S MEMBERS

Blesma has a total membership of 2,697



Blesma magazine which now contains the *Blesma Bulletin* within it, rather than as a separate publication. This reduction in publications from seven to four meant that each issue of the magazine could have more attention and the quality of the publication could increase. The new-look magazine and Bulletin was widely complimented by Members across the Association.

A review of the Blesma Connects app found that audience and usage figures had not met expectations and the app had struggled to meet its goals. A lot of the information on the app was available elsewhere, and many of Blesma's Members preferred to use other social media platforms to communicate. The decision was made to close the app and focus on other digital media outputs.

In 2022, Blesma commissioned a membership survey to improve its understanding of Members in terms of numbers, lifestyles, work and family. Members were invited to describe how they had used Blesma's services and activities in order to establish the kinds of needs they might have going forward in terms of welfare support, activities and communications. The intention is to use this information to make recommendations on how Blesma should

develop its strategy over the next five years. The survey received more than 400 responses, representing approximately 15% of the membership. These responses have been followed up with more detailed one-to-one interviews. Results will be shared with the membership in 2023.

Press and social media coverage of Blesma focused on the achievements of Members at the Paralympics and Invictus Games, the Everest and Kilimanjaro climbs and the Land's End to John o' Groats fundraising challenges completed by Member Trustee Stu Croxford and supporter George Bromley.

Blesma Member Fran Townend's experiences with the England polo team in Argentina were covered by *The Daily Mirror* in December. The 40th anniversary of the Falklands War and Blesma's own 90th anniversary were highlighted through videos describing our Members' experiences and the support provided by the Association. The best performing piece of social media content in 2022 was a tweet about Blesma Member Ricky Ferguson MC which reached 94,500 people. Our social media following continued to grow, with an 11% increase since 2021, taking the number to 68,000 followers.

Resourcing

In 2022, 76% of all income came from general fundraising in the form of donations and legacies; 18% from the investment portfolio and investment property (rent); 5% from grants; and 1% from miscellaneous sources. Although general fundraising income (excluding legacies) was down 23% compared to 2021, it was above the target set at the start of the year by 9%, an achievement considering the significant economic and fundraising challenges experienced in 2022. Legacy fundraising recovered well from 2021, with an 80% increase in receipts. We anticipate that fundraising conditions will remain particularly challenging in 2023, and that 22p (2021:21p) in every pound of income raised in 2022 will be used to raise funds in 2023. The Association remains

determined to make the most of every pound that is raised and to prioritise outputs in support of its Members.

We remain vigilant and continue to abide by GDPR stipulations in all our fundraising activities and ensure that the Fundraising Regulator's guidelines on personal information and fundraising (consent, purpose and transparency) are adhered to. Blesma does not employ agencies to raise funds from the public in the name of Blesma. Our fundraising activities are monitored closely. Our fundraising ethics and promise, complaints policy and privacy policy are published. Our safeguarding policy toward vulnerable people is adhered to in our fundraising activities. There were no formal complaints relating to Blesma's fundraising methods in 2022.



Plans for the Future

The Board of Trustees regularly reviews Blesma's five-year rolling Strategic Plan in step with the Board's annual cycle of governance. A thorough review of the Plan was undertaken in 2018 to take the horizon forward to 2023. The purpose of the Plan is to:

- Align internal development and improvement agendas with external influences and be better able to anticipate an ever-changing environment
- Synchronise policy, resources, programmes and projects
- Bring coherence to external and internal communications
- Enable agility, manage risk for greater impact, and reduce vulnerability to turbulence and scrutiny in the Service Charity sector
- Ensure that Blesma delivers the most effective support to our Members, achieving the best possible improvement to their quality of life and happiness in the most efficient manner, whilst achieving the best value for money and sustaining an excellent reputation for the Association

The Blesma Board plans to include the views of Members in a strategy review in 2023. In future, the Plan will address:

SECURITY

- Mitigating where possible the long-term effects of the pandemic and economic upheaval on the delivery of statutory Health and Social Care services to Members
- Sponsoring and contributing to relevant academic research for the benefit of Blesma Members and their families
- Continuing to develop close working relationships with key agencies and regional/local staff
- Influencing the future organisation of NHS

mobility/limb services within the context of a national integrated care system

- Seeking government funding for the Veterans Mobility Fund, so that those injured in service can be confident that they will continue to receive appropriate support in the future

IDENTITY

- Delivering a diverse and inclusive activities programme that supports the needs and aspirations of Members
- Continuing to take part in commemorative activities, including the annual Remembrance Day ceremony at the Cenotaph
- Transitioning the Making Generation R programme to Storytelling for Blesma Members

CONNECTIVITY

- Communicating to Blesma Members and external audiences through a range of print and digital means
- Continuing to deliver a broad and varied range of outreach activities that link our Members in comradeship
- Maintaining productive relationships with government ministries, statutory agencies and other charities in order to advocate appropriately and coordinate appropriate responses to the needs of Members

RESOURCING

- Ensuring that Blesma's future is secure in a particularly demanding economic environment
- Ensuring that Blesma's funds are carefully managed and appropriately targeted for the benefit of Members
- Continuing to ensure that Blesma is structured appropriately to deliver its outputs
- Maintaining a broad range of fundraising capabilities so that the Association is able to respond to changing economic circumstances



Michael Mellon captained Scotland in the 2022 Wheelchair Rugby League World Cup

Our Thanks and Acknowledgements

We are a charity and we seek to use every donation wisely and well. We also gratefully accept all manner of support and collaboration in our various endeavours. This Report cannot possibly thank and acknowledge all who helped us make a difference in 2022 so, as ever, the list below is but an example:

All our supporters: those who donate, those who fundraise for the Association, those who provide grants to support our work, those who partner with us to assist our Members, all those who enable our Members to push their boundaries and achieve amazing things, those who give up their time for us, advise us and spread the word.

All the organisations that provided restricted funding including, but not limited to:

- **The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust** for generously supporting aspects of our activities programme, Blesma Support Services in the north of England and Outreach work in both Scotland and the south west of England.
- **The Office for Veterans' Affairs Afghanistan Veterans' Fund** managed by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, for supporting regional and national Blesma activities to support recent conflict veterans.
- **The Forces in Mind Trust** for sponsoring the second Caring & Coping study into the family experience of living with loss of use of limb, which will report in 2023.
- **The National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All** programme for supporting specific Outreach activities for Blesma Members and their families in Yorkshire and the north east of England.
- **The Sir James Reckitt Charity** which kindly supported our work with Blesma

Members this year with a one-off donation from their Centenary Fund, in addition to their regular donation.

- **To our corporate supporters** who have engaged staff, held fundraising events and sponsored a range of fundraising activities. In particular JP Morgan Chase, Brace Creative Agency, Corps of Commissionaires Management Ltd, MBDA UK, Agility plc and BAE UK staff from sites throughout the UK.
- **Our colleagues in Cobseo** – The Confederation of Service Charities, who work on behalf of Service charities for the benefit of the whole Service community.
- **The Staff at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre**, Stanford Hall and the Defence Personnel Recovery Centres, for all they continue to do for our present and future Members and for supporting Blesma's work.
- **The Staff of Veterans UK at Norcross**, Blackpool, for their assistance and advice to our Members and those who support them.
- **Officials and Ministers in the Ministry of Defence**, the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the Department of Health. NHS England and the devolved National Health Services, Armed Forces Health, and all those staff who understand our needs and strive to deliver, particularly through the Limb Centres.
- **All those who partner with Blesma** in our ventures at home and abroad, for helping our Members to push their boundaries and realise their potential.





A MEMBER'S STORY

Fran Townend

On the day Fran Townend applied to become an Army doctor she almost lost her life. She stopped to help an injured motorist and was hit by a truck whose driver failed to see her. Fran broke all her ribs, punctured both lungs, ruptured her aorta, right kidney and liver, broke her back in two places, her pelvis in three places, and suffered a severe head injury. She was airlifted to hospital and the doctors, who had to drill a hole in her skull to relieve the pressure, also considered amputating both her legs below the knee.

“It was a miracle I was still alive,” says Fran. “I was told that I would never walk again, but I wasn’t prepared to accept that.” In 2022, despite still suffering physical limitations from her injuries, she earned a place on the England women’s polo team that won silver at the European Championships and bronze at the inaugural World Championships in Argentina.

Fran was funded by Blesma to pursue her dream. “I am incredibly grateful to Blesma for believing in me and funding me for the World Championships. I hope my achievements will help others believe that they can follow their dreams and be independent,” she says.



Financial Review

GENERAL PERFORMANCE IN 2022

During the year ended 31 December 2022, the Association recorded an operating loss of **£2,398,491** (2021: £1,173,351). The net expenditure after the loss on investments of **£3,402,348**, was **£5,800,840** (2021: £2,264,127 net income after investment gain of £3,437,478) owing to the major challenges facing the economy due to the legacy of the pandemic, the economic crisis impacting upon investment performance and the squeeze on incomes as inflation hit a 40-year high at the end of the year.

Donations, legacies, grants and other income amounted to **£3,956,288** (2021: £4,225,724) and these included:

- **£1,240,673** (2021: £687,583) of Legacy Income – a significant increase of **80%** on the previous year, largely due to the easing of constraints in the probate administration process associated with the Covid pandemic in 2021. The Association also increased Blesma's Legacy fundraising capability during the year.
- **£2,715,615** (2021: £3,538,141) of General Income (total income less legacies) – a decrease of **23%** from the previous year owing to the challenging fundraising environment and a decrease in miscellaneous/other income such as government grants which reduced from the levels seen during Covid.

Total Incoming Resources less the cost of generating funds amounted to **£2,893,816**

(2021: £3,118,440). This included net Investment Income of **£537,670** (2021: £475,241). The total decrease in income was **6%** on the previous year overall.

Expenditure on Blesma's charitable activities was **£5,292,307** (2021: £4,291,792), an increase of **23%** over the previous year largely due to increasing demand for welfare grants, inflation and the one-off payment of hardship grants to our Members to cushion the impact of high energy prices caused by the war in Ukraine. This included:

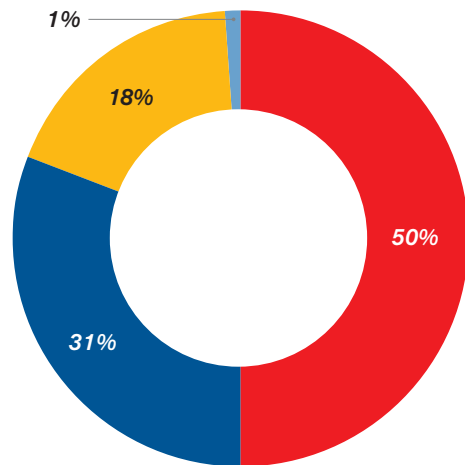
- **£3,861,705** (2021: £3,152,136) - Welfare delivery (Security) – an increase of **23%** over the previous year, largely due to increased need over the year caused by the Covid backlog and cost of living increases but also reflecting increased costs. This figure also includes **£97,000** of expenditure for grants made in conjunction with other agencies that has been refunded. The Members' Hardship Grant represented an additional cost of **£368,000**.
- **£1,117,831** (2021: £762,029) - Activities (Identity) – an increase of **47%** following the lifting of lockdown restrictions resulting in more Members being afforded the opportunity to participate in local and overseas events.
- **£312,771** (2021: £377,626) - Representational work (Connectivity) – a decrease of **17%** due to a reduction in staffing and programme costs during the year.

FUNDRAISING

Total fundraising income was **£3,024,554** (2021: £3,013,749), a slight increase on the previous year by **0.4%** despite the significant economic challenges experienced. The performance of individual income streams in 2022 was as follows:

- **Direct Mail: £355,518** (2021: £407,713), a decrease of **13%** on the previous year mainly due to reductions in household incomes.
- **Trusts and Foundations: £640,727** (2021: £978,989, 2020: £348,313), a decrease of **35%** on the previous exceptional year largely because of the relatively high number of Trusts and Foundations donors who were willing to help charities weather the pandemic in 2021.
- **Lottery Income: £165,373** (2021: £108,040), a significant increase of **53%** due to growth in the number of players and corresponding royalty payments from the Make a Smile Lottery.
- **Community and Events: £247,766** (2021: £362,266), a decrease of **32%** largely due to the cost-of-living crisis and its impact on individual donations.
- **Corporate Donations: £50,894** (2021: £203,503), a significant decrease of **75%** as corporate donors grappled with business costs largely attributable to high inflation and interest rates in the economy.
- **Major Donations: £166,125** (2021: £198,500), a decrease of **16%**

INCOME



■ Donations & Grants	50%
■ Legacy	31%
■ Investment	18%
■ Other	1%

Financial Review

INVESTMENT POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

The Association's funds are invested in line with direction given by Trustees to its Fund Managers, Cazenove Capital Management, in the form of investment policy. Trustees delegate matters of policy development and general supervision to the Finance and Investment Sub Committee. It delegates day-to-day policy management to the National Treasurer and to the Chief Executive and Finance and Support Director who remain in close contact with Fund Managers. The Fund Managers present the Investment Report to the Finance & Investment Sub Committee twice a year, and Trustees receive quarterly reports. An ethical 'look through' is conducted annually.

Investment Objective

Blesma's investment objective is to have an optimum level of income commensurate with operational requirements to meet the needs of Members whilst maintaining the real value of the investments over the longer term. A total return target for income in 2022 was given to the Fund Managers and was achieved.

Asset Allocation and Benchmarks

During 2022, Trustees and Managers reviewed and confirmed the asset allocation being set within the following ranges:

	Strategy	Ranges
UK Equities	22%	50-80%
Overseas Equities	43%	50-80%
Fixed Income	14%	5-30%
Alternatives (including property)	19%	5-30%
Cash	2%	0-10%

Investment Restrictions

Not to invest in unquoted securities, individual Futures, Warrants or Commodities, in property directly, or to participate in underwriting. Fund Managers are not to invest directly in foreign currencies or Chinese Government securities without prior agreement with Trustees. Total equity allocation should not exceed 80% and not fall below 50%.

Investment Performance

Invested funds decreased to **£32.8m** (2021:£36.7m) over the period. The net income was **£537,669** (2021: £475,241) – a yield of **1.6%** (2021: 1.3%). Stock markets rounded off a tumultuous year with gains in the fourth quarter. Within the Blesma portfolio, the return on equities exceeded the global equity benchmark. The most significant contribution came from the allocation to UK equities, which were aided in part by the country beginning to recover from the 'mini-budget' crisis. Government bond yields edged up (meaning prices fell) towards the end of the fourth quarter, reflecting some market disappointment at the hawkish tone from some central banks despite mounting evidence of slowing economic growth.

Risk Management

At a strategic level, the Charity Commission's guidance, Charities and Risk Management, on the four basic approaches of transferring, avoiding, managing or accepting risk has been followed. Strategic and operational level risks are reviewed quarterly by the Board using a traffic light system of risks against performance and management, including mitigation and trend analysis. The two most concerning strategic risks are:

- **Demand for Services.** An inability to cope with the demands of increasingly complex injuries and sophisticated treatment in the longer term, as well as a backlog as statutory services return to normal provision over time. Blesma's short-to-long-term financial planning has also been conducted in anticipation of an increased demand for financial support. Current Reserves are adequate for the implementation of these and the Strategic Plan remains robust.
- **Income Generation.** The approach to diversify income generation has proved to be a sensible strategy. However, the impact of significant economic upheaval and high inflation on household and corporate incomes may well continue to impact upon fundraising and legacy income generation.

In the opinion of the Trustees, the Association has the established resources and the review systems in place, which should allow risks identified by them to be managed appropriately.

CHARITY RESERVES

Blesma's Free Reserves (i.e. investment portfolio plus cash at bank) at the balance sheet date stood at **£36m** (2021: £41m), a decrease of **12%** as inflation surged to 40-year highs leading to an unprecedented series of interest rate increases, with significant impacts on markets that continued into the end of the year. The Total Fund balance was **£38,628,599** (2021: £44,429,439) of which Unrestricted Funds stood at **£38,081,435** (2021: £43,735,520) and Restricted Funds **£547,164** (2021: £693,919). Blesma's resources are needed to meet its main charitable objectives. Through-life support for present Members must be sustainable. The need to maintain contingency for the casualties of future conflict requires readiness, as it does for unforeseen issues such as those we have experienced over the last three years. Apart from its office building, Blesma has no assets of monetary value beyond the investment portfolio managed by Cazenove.

Twenty per cent of Free Reserves is allocated to an increase in spending on more comprehensive services to Members as defined in the Strategic Plan.

Twenty per cent of Free Reserves is allocated to funding the increased cost of supporting care for the most infirm and those in later life, specifically in the longer term under the Blesma grants scheme. There was increasing demand for welfare grants in 2022 and the State is under increasing and significant pressure to deliver appropriate health and social care provision, particularly

Financial Review

for those in later life. This is reflected across the NHS and at Local Authority/Integrated Care board level. Where State provision is found wanting in a definite way, and on the understanding Blesma is not replacing the State in a wholesale manner, grants are made to relieve distress and meet immediate need.

Twenty per cent of Free Reserves is allocated to providing instant funds for the support of casualties in a future conflict and to absorb increased costs in the provision of services resulting from medical advances and a more holistic approach. Blesma must be ready for unexpected and violent scenarios.

Forty per cent of Free Reserves will remain as such (approximately 26 months of operating costs) to ensure business continuity, thus demonstrating to beneficiaries, funders and the public the charity's continuing resilience and capacity to manage unforeseen financial difficulties. Free Reserves are the only asset available to Blesma to meet ongoing and future commitments to support the membership for life should current income streams be jeopardised.

At the balance sheet date, the Trustees are satisfied that the level of Free Reserves is adequate for the purpose, given the requirement to address a backlog in health

provision, ongoing economic uncertainty and increasing pressure on household incomes that is likely to continue to impact on charitable donations. The Board will continue to review the Association's reserves and its policy annually; more frequently if circumstances dictate. Trustees pay particular attention to the ratio of Free Reserves to operating costs.

GOING CONCERN

Despite reporting an operating loss and a reduction in the value of investments during 2022, the Trustees are satisfied that Blesma retains sufficient Free Reserves to meet its commitments in the foreseeable future and is therefore a going concern. The Blesma Strategic Plan continually looks forward five years matching policy, resources, programmes and projects, ensuring prudent balance is maintained. In 2022, Blesma made use of its reserves to sustain charitable outputs as intended. Should the financial effects of economic uncertainty exceed expectations to the point that the reserves may be significantly reduced, savings measures such as structural adjustments and/or redundancies will be considered before significant reductions in expenditure on activities or welfare provision.

A MEMBER'S STORY

Shane Henry

Shane was diagnosed with cancer after developing a lump in his right leg. Surgeons had to amputate his leg, but then he developed sepsis and was critically ill in intensive care

Shane was training for a strongman competition when he felt a strange sensation in his leg. "I had it checked out and was quickly transferred to hospital to have blood tests and MRIs. I was told I needed the amputation or I would die," he says. After joining Blesma it wasn't long before he got involved in Making Generation R.

"I'd read about it in *Blesma magazine* but didn't give it much thought. My wife said give it a go because not many people talk about going through cancer and what it does to your life. I'd never done public speaking before, so it was a bit daunting to start with but everyone was so supportive.

"As a family, we'd been through a lot and feelings were suppressed. MGR opened doors back up and there were tears. But it made us talk about what had happened and that helped."



Governance & Administrative Report

Structure, Governance and Management

CONSTITUTION

Charity Number 1084189

Company Limited by Guarantee Number 4102768

Registered in Scotland SC010315

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans is a national charity for those who lose limbs or the permanent use of limbs, or lose the sight of eyes, or suffer permanent loss of speech or hearing in Service, or as a result of service, in Her Majesty's Forces, or Auxiliary Forces, and for ex-Service men and women who lose limbs or sight of eyes, or in certain circumstances use of limbs, after Service. While the majority of its Members are ex-Service men and women, there are a number who are still serving. Membership is also open to all men and women of civilian status who lose a limb or an eye, or suffer the loss of use of limb, as a result of war service or enemy action, or terrorist action against Her Majesty's Forces with which those of civilian status are employed, or volunteer, to provide direct support, or in exceptional circumstances subject to the approval of Trustees.

The Association also accepts responsibility for the dependants of

its Members, and in particular their Widows, as beneficiaries. The Association is governed by its most recent Articles of Association and Rules adopted at the Annual General Meeting on 03 June 2021.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

The Blesma AGM was held during the 2022 Members' Weekend on 19 June 2022. A full report on proceedings was included in the Autumn issue of *Blesma magazine*.

- **The Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 were adopted**
- **Crowe U.K. LLP was appointed as Auditor**
- **Mr W Dixon, Mr S White and Ms A Grant resigned as Trustees**
- **Mr S White and Ms A Grant were re-elected as Trustees**
- **Mr R Gilbert was elected as a Trustee**

The maximum number of elected Trustees is 11. One third of Trustees are required to resign and stand for re-election, if they so wish, at each AGM. Additionally, any Trustee over the age of 70 must do likewise every year. The Board aims to achieve an

appropriate balance of knowledge and experience; at least half the Trustees should be full or associate Blesma Members while the remainder are granted honorary membership. This promotes connectivity across the Association and the right blend of experience, knowledge and expertise to fulfil all Board responsibilities. Blesma acknowledges the Charity Governance Code, abides by the Code's principles and works to implement the recommended practice. Blesma is a full Member of the Confederation of Service Charities.

TRAINING OF TRUSTEES

Following election to the Board, each Trustee is provided with relevant Charity Commission publications covering responsibilities and essential knowledge, and these are updated when necessary. Trustees also receive regular briefings on issues affecting charities at their quarterly meetings. New Trustees receive a full induction programme covering both their generic and specific responsibilities and the spectrum of Blesma business, including externally provided training.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Board of Trustees exercises supervision by holding four meetings each year. The agenda cycle is Fiduciary and Strategy (March/April), Performance and Risk (June), Strategy Review and Programme Proposal (September) and Programme Approval (December).

The Board of Trustees

National Chairman: General Sir Adrian Bradshaw KCB OBE DL

Vice Chairman: Mr S White

Honorary Treasurer: Mr M Ambler

Mr S Croxford

Ms A Grant

Mr R Gilbert

Mr R Kerrigan

Mr L Maguire

Mr C Rouse MBE

Mr R Watts

Mr B West (until June 2022)

Mr C Rouse was extended in post as a Trustee for 2022/23 in order to retain his specialist knowledge of Member events and activities.

The Finance & Investment Sub Committee (FISC)

The FISC meets twice a year under the chairmanship of the Honorary Treasurer. Its terms of reference, including delegated powers, are laid down in an appropriate Blesma Governance Instruction. At each bi-annual meeting, the FISC is briefed by the Association's investment managers from Cazenove Capital Management Limited.

The Remuneration Sub Committee (RSC)

The RSC meets once a year routinely, under the chairmanship of the Vice Chairman. It reports to the full Board to make recommendations upon the specific remuneration and terms and conditions of service for the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team, and remuneration policy in general for all staff.

The Governance Sub Committee (GSC)

Governance matters and Blesma's policies are reviewed on a regular basis by the GSC under the chairmanship of the Vice Chairman. Blesma's Governance Standing Instructions are reviewed annually.

The Executive

The Chief Executive Mr J D Bryant OBE runs the Association on a day-to-day basis from Chelmsford in Essex.

Structure, Governance and Management

The key structure is:

Director of Operations

Mr T R Bloomfield

Responsible for communications across the Association and externally – this includes all aspects of public relations, maintaining profile and raising funds to enable our charitable work. The Director of Operations is also responsible for national and international activities and acts as the deputy Chief Executive.

Director of Independence and Wellbeing

Mr I G Harper

Responsible for all membership matters, including welfare support to Members, liaison with MoD recovery services, the National Health Service and the Department for Work and Pensions, prosthetic provision, the conduct of academic research and grant making.

Finance and Support Director

Mr B C Mwense

Responsible for financial management and control, reporting and administration as well as logistics, office management, contracts and HR.

There are no trading subsidiaries of Blesma.

KEY MANAGEMENT REMUNERATION

The remuneration of key management personnel is set by the Trustees, upon recommendation of the Remuneration Sub Committee, with the policy objective of ensuring that they are provided with appropriate incentives to encourage strong performance and are, in a fair and responsible manner, rewarded for their individual contributions to the Charity's

success. The appropriateness and relevance of remuneration is reviewed annually, in particular noting role responsibilities and including reference to comparisons with sector and national statistics to ensure that Blesma remains sensitive to the broader issues of pay and employment conditions elsewhere.

The key management are the Chief Executive, the Director of Operations, the Director of Independence and Wellbeing, and the Finance and Support Director, collectively known as the Senior Management Team (SMT). The staff salary bands and sum of remuneration are noted in the Charity Accounts. The Chief Executive and SMT are employed on the same terms as all other staff and the Charity does not pay bonuses. Trustees normally receive no remuneration or benefits other than expenses incurred.

DATA PROTECTION

Trustees are briefed regularly on matters surrounding data protection and personal information, and ensure policies are appropriate and kept up to date. Blesma continues to closely monitor its compliance with General Data Protection Regulations and the Blesma Privacy Policy is published on the Blesma website.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Trustees, who are also the directors under company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the Trustees

The Blesma Board of Trustees resolves to have Blesma be the Association for the Service disabled of limb, acknowledged as experts. Its defining purpose is to assist its people to live independent and fulfilling lives.

It will be there for life.

Structure, Governance and Management

have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities (SORP 2015) issued October 2019, Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the profit or loss of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- **Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently**
- **Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent**
- **Prepare the financial statements on the Going Concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business**
- **Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP**
- **State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements**

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable

accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as each of the Trustees of the company at the date of approval of this report is aware, there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report) of which the company's auditor is unaware. Each Trustee has taken all the steps that they should have taken as a Trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

This Report which incorporates the Strategic Report, was approved by the Trustees on 06 April 2023, and signed on their behalf.



General Sir Adrian Bradshaw KCB OBE DL
National Chairman
06 April 2023

Independent Auditor's Report

OPINION ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

We have audited the financial statements of the British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association for the year ended 31 December 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulations 6 and 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (amended)

BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect

to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

OTHER INFORMATION

The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

OPINIONS ON OTHER MATTERS PRESCRIBED BY THE COMPANIES ACT 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit, the information given in the Trustees' report, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and the strategic report and

the directors' report included within the Trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- **Adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept; or**
- **The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or**
- **Certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or**
- **We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit**

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 42, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from

material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

AUDITOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Details of the extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, are set out below.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

EXTENT TO WHICH THE AUDIT WAS CONSIDERED CAPABLE OF DETECTING IRREGULARITIES, INCLUDING FRAUD

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error, and discussed these between our audit team members. We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and fundraising regulations, together with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 2019. We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which

might be fundamental to the charitable company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. We also considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company for fraud. The laws and regulations we considered in this context for the UK operations were Charity Commission regulations, fundraising regulations, taxation legislation, employment legislation, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Health and Safety legislation.

Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be within the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management and the Board of Trustees about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases, reviewing regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission, including Serious Incidents reported, and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities)

is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

USE OF OUR REPORT

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Andrew Thomas

Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of **Crowe U.K. LLP**

Statutory Auditor, London

Date: 28 April 2023

A MEMBER'S STORY

Wil Browning

Wil lost his left arm because of a vascular condition. He captained Blesma's Race Across America (RAAM) team in 2022 but suffered a crash early in the race

Tell us about your crash...

I had been riding for seven miles and was doing 27mph when, before I knew it, I was in the air. I was knocked unconscious and came round with people shouting. It turns out I had four broken ribs, a punctured lung, a broken collarbone and fractures in my shoulder blade.

Will you get back on a bike?

I'm struggling with injury, but I'm getting better. I'd love to do RAAM again, to right that wrong, but before that I'm going to do the Pan Celtic Race, which is a 1,600-mile self-supported ride. I'll be the first amputee to take part.



Financial Statements

For the year ended
31 December 2022

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND
EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted FUNDS £	Restricted FUNDS £	2022 TOTAL £	2021 TOTAL £
INCOME					
Donations and Legacies	2	2,718,267	306,287	3,024,554	3,013,749
Investment Income		664,868	-	664,868	599,509
Investment Income - Other		44,849	-	44,849	40,749
Grants		-	198,934	198,934	165,379
Other Income		23,084	-	23,084	406,338
		732,801	198,934	931,734	1,211,975
Total Income		3,451,067	505,220	3,956,288	4,225,724
EXPENDITURE					
Expenditure on raising funds					
RESOURCING					
Fundraising	5	934,274	1,000	935,274	983,016
Investment Management fees		127,198	-	127,198	124,268
		1,061,472	1,000	1,062,472	1,107,284
Expenditure on charitable activities					
SECURITY					
Membership Services - Welfare	6	3,249,893	611,812	3,861,705	3,152,136
IDENTITY					
Membership Services - Activities	7	1,078,668	39,163	1,117,831	762,029
CONNECTIVITY					
Awareness and Representation	8	312,771	-	312,771	377,626
		4,641,332	650,975	5,292,307	4,291,792
Total Expenditure		5,702,804	651,975	6,354,779	5,399,076
Operating (loss)/surplus		(2,251,737)	(146,755)	(2,398,491)	(1,173,351)
Net (loss)/gain on investments	12	(3,402,348)	-	(3,402,348)	3,437,478
Net income/(expenditure)		(5,654,085)	(146,755)	(5,800,840)	2,264,127
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		(5,654,085)	- (146,755)	(5,800,840)	2,264,127
Balances brought forward 01 January 2022	17/18	43,735,520	693,919	44,429,439	42,165,312
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD					
31 DECEMBER 2022		38,081,435	547,164	38,628,599	44,429,439

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION

Company Number 4102768

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

		2022	2021
		TOTAL	TOTAL
	Notes	£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets	11	2,143,755	2,217,756
Intangible fixed assets	11(b)	18,023	66,095
Investment properties	11(a)	839,345	857,150
Investments	12	32,769,056	36,661,070
		35,770,179	39,802,071
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stocks		15,771	13,754
Debtors	13	515,210	431,840
Balances at bank and in hand		2,838,237	4,596,194
		3,369,218	5,041,788
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	14	458,363	285,811
Provision for liabilities and charges	14 (a)	52,434	128,609
NET CURRENT ASSETS		2,858,420	4,627,368
NET ASSETS		38,628,599	44,429,439
FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds	17	38,081,435	43,735,520
Restricted funds	18	547,164	693,919
TOTAL FUNDS		38,628,599	44,429,439

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 06 April 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

General Sir Adrian Bradshaw KCB OBE DL

M Ambler

J Bryant OBE

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION
CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	2022	2022	2021	2021
	£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:				
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities		(2,906,458)		(1,497,807)
Cash flows from investing activities:				
Investment income	709,717		599,509	
Purchase of investments	(8,607,825)		(9,580,445)	
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(50,883)		(19,942)	
Proceeds from the sale of investments	9,264,224		9,374,809	
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities		1,315,234		373,931
Cash flows from financial activities				
(Increase)/decrease in amounts awaiting investment	(166,733)			742,818
Net cash provided in (used by) financial activities		(166,733)		742,818
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(1,757,957)		(381,058)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		4,596,194		4,977,252
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		2,838,237		4,596,194
(a) Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		2022		2021
		£		£
Cash at bank and in hand		2,838,237		4,596,194
		2,838,237		4,596,194
(b) Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities		2022		2021
		£		£
Net (expenditure)/income as per the Statement of Financial Activities		(5,800,840)		2,264,127
Adjustments for:				
Net (gain)/loss on investments	3,402,348		(3,415,402)	
Investment income	(709,717)		(599,509)	
Depreciation and amortisation	163,269		157,792	
(Increase)/decrease in stocks	(2,017)		9,366	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(83,370)		86,924	
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	96,377		(1,105)	
Prior year adjustment	27,491		-	
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities		(2,906,458)		(1,497,807)

Notes to the Financial Statements

CHARITY INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTING POLICIES

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association is a Member charity specialising in and helping limbless and loss of use of limbs veterans.

The Charity is a private company limited by guarantee (registered number 4102768) and was established in 1932 (charity number 1084189) and incorporated in 2000. The Charity is also registered in Scotland (registered number SC010315). The address of the registered office is 115 New London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0QT.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently for all years in dealing with items that are considered material in relation to the financial statements of the Charity.

i) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities under the historic cost convention, as modified for the revaluation of certain investments and properties measured at fair value, and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) Accounting and Reporting by Charities, 2nd edition, published in 2019, Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, and the Companies Act 2006.

The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

ii) Going concern

As stated in the Trustees' report, Trustees believe there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, and the accounts have therefore been

prepared on the basis that the Charity is a going concern. In light of the current climate in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Trustees have reviewed the Charity's finances. In the short term, cash holdings are sufficient to ensure adequate cashflow for the foreseeable future. In the medium to long term plans for, and the structure of, Blesma remain extant and will continue to be reviewed regularly.

iii) Fund accounting

Donations for specific capital projects are transferred to the fixed asset fund. Income received for specific expenditure is restricted for that purpose, as analysed under Note 18. Capital expenditure not funded by donations is allocated from the general fund. Annual depreciation is transferred from the fixed asset fund to the general fund so that the fixed asset fund is always equal to the book value of the fixed assets.

iv) Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is entitled to it and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Grant income is recognised when the criteria for entitlement, measurement and probability of receipt are met. Government grants are recognised on the performance model, when the Charity has complied with any conditions attaching to the grant and the grant will be received
- Donations income is accounted for on a received basis or when its future receipt is probable
- Legacies and bequests are recognised when the conditions of entitlement, probability and measurement are met. Entitlement is deemed to be the point of notification of a legacy or when probate has been granted, whichever comes earlier
- Rental income is recognised when receivable

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

v) Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all the costs related to a category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to a particular category they have been allocated to activities based on staff head count full time equivalents (FTE), as shown in Note 10. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

vi) Estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Estimations that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are summarised below:

- **Depreciation** – is calculated based on the useful life of the asset and written off accordingly
- **Provision for Care Home Residents** – is an estimate for third party assistance to care for Blesma Members resettled in care homes shown as part of Note 14(a)

vii) Governance costs

Governance costs are those incurred in compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements and are shown as part of Note 10.

viii) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation and are capitalised at a value of £1,000 and above. They are depreciated at rates intended to reduce their cost to their residual value over their estimated useful life on a straight line basis as detailed below:

Freehold Property	2.0% on cost
Furniture, Fittings and Equipment	10.0% on cost
Coaches and Buses	12.5% on cost
Motor Vehicles	25.0% on cost
Computer Equipment	33.3% on cost

ix) Intangible fixed assets

Intangible fixed assets are capitalised at a value of £1,000 and above and include software costs. They are amortised over three years i.e. 33.3% on cost

over their estimated useful life on a straight line basis.

x) Investment properties

Investment properties are included in the accounts measured at fair value. The properties are reviewed annually for impairment. Any change in fair value is reflected through the statement of financial activities.

xi) Investments

Fixed asset investments are stated in the Balance Sheet at market value. Realised gains and losses on disposal and unrealised gains on investments are shown in the statement of financial activities.

xii) Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

xiii) Pension costs

The Charity contributes to a Group Personal Pension Scheme with AEGON which is a defined contribution scheme. The amounts charged in the accounts are the employer's contributions payable in the financial year.

xiv) Operating leases

Rentals applicable to operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities in the period to which the cost relates. Operating lease commitments are highlighted under Note 20.

xv) Financial assets and liabilities

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when Blesma becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Additionally, all financial assets and liabilities are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. Financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs) and are subsequently re-measured where applicable at amortised cost.

Financial assets held at amortised cost comprise of cash and bank, together with accrued interest and other debtors. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise of creditors and accruals.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2022	2021
	£	£
Community and Lotteries	492,251	462,181
Corporate	50,894	203,503
Direct mail	355,518	407,713
Major donors	166,125	198,500
Organised events	78,366	75,281
Trusts and Foundations	640,727	978,989
Legacies	1,240,673	687,583
	3,024,554	3,013,749

Included in Trusts and Foundations income is an amount of £175,000 (2021: £450,000) from the Antioch Settlement Trust.

Legacy Pipeline

The Charity has been able to identify from incomplete bequests through pecuniary and residuary legacies confirmed and expects to receive approximately the sum of £267,533 (2021: £650,606).

The bequests have not yet met all criteria for income recognition.

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

4. TOTAL STAFF COSTS

	2022	<i>2021</i>
	TOTAL	<i>TOTAL</i>
	£	<i>£</i>
Salaries and wages	1,870,324	<i>1,760,484</i>
Social security	204,684	<i>183,072</i>
Pension and life cover	96,889	<i>95,422</i>
Other staff costs	47,962	<i>49,698</i>
	2,219,859	<i>2,088,676</i>

Actual number of staff employed
(headcount average over 12 months):

Membership Services	27.6	<i>25.3</i>
Activities and Events	4.0	<i>4.0</i>
Fundraising	10.6	<i>10.5</i>
Awareness and Representation	2.8	<i>4.0</i>
Support	6.9	<i>6.3</i>
	51.9	<i>50.1</i>

Total redundancies and settlement costs of £0 (2021: £0) were made in the year.

Key personnel

The Charity has four key personnel in the salary bands shown below (there are no bonus or benefit schemes).

Staff salary bands:

£60,000 - £70,000	1	<i>2</i>
£70,000 - £80,000	1	<i>1</i>
£80,000 - £90,000	1	<i>-</i>
£90,000 - £100,000	1	<i>1</i>

Total remuneration paid to key management personnel during the year is £366,809 (2021: £347,885).

Blesma contributes to a Group Personal Pension Scheme with AEGON and new employees are auto-enrolled upon joining.

Total reimbursement of travel and other expenses to members of the Board of Trustees was £2,206 (2021: £435). Trustees are remunerated when they undertake paid work for Blesma approved by the Board of Trustees. The total paid in 2022 was £2,700 (2021: £3,010).

5. FUNDRAISING COSTS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	376,778	361,341
Database costs	26,642	23,680
Advertising costs	12,787	12,181
Community	13,160	14,727
Challenge and Events	17,121	13,225
Direct Mail costs	259,446	340,071
Other related costs	43,081	38,942
Attributable support costs	186,258	178,849
	935,274	983,016

6. MEMBERSHIP SERVICES - WELFARE

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	1,185,696	1,079,178
Welfare grants to Members (all categories)	1,413,585	951,480
Continuing assistance to Widows (all categories)	1,040	2,600
Chiropody	1,772	1,157
Welfare visiting	27,287	16,249
Other related costs	378,226	362,328
Members' annual conference	91,234	85,696
Special events	41,068	10,235
Research	16,822	5,000
Members' magazine costs	184,850	144,569
Branch welfare activities	11,788	9,402
Branch support costs	880	1,938
Attributable support costs	507,457	482,305
	3,861,705	3,152,136

Included in welfare grants is a total of £368,000 (one-off individual grants of £200) paid to Members to help cope with high energy prices caused by the war in Ukraine.

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

7. MEMBERSHIP SERVICES – ACTIVITIES

	2022	<i>2021</i>
	£	<i>£</i>
Staff costs	159,163	<i>151,720</i>
Activities and Events	451,129	<i>104,794</i>
Venture Programme	131,321	<i>145,726</i>
Inspiration and Individual Recovery (includes MGR)	302,915	<i>284,031</i>
Other related costs	8,864	<i>11,451</i>
Attributable support costs	64,439	<i>64,307</i>
	1,117,831	<i>762,029</i>

8. AWARENESS AND REPRESENTATION

	2022	<i>2021</i>
	£	<i>£</i>
Staff costs	129,540	<i>173,717</i>
General media costs	116,998	<i>106,338</i>
Subscriptions and fees	9,761	<i>9,958</i>
Other related costs	8,142	<i>7,229</i>
Attributable support costs	48,329	<i>80,384</i>
	312,771	<i>377,626</i>

10. SUPPORT COSTS

Expenditure recognised in Notes 5 to 9 includes Support Costs apportioned by full-time employee equivalents (FTE) and is detailed below

Basis of apportionment (FTE)	Fundraising	Membership Services	Activities	Awareness and Representation	2022 TOTAL	2021 TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Salaries and related costs	87,390	239,372	30,396	22,797	379,955	340,748
Travel and meetings	402	1,102	140	105	1,750	715
Motor vehicle expenses	5,670	15,531	1,972	1,479	24,653	35,417
Postage	2,511	6,877	873	655	10,916	12,276
Telephone & office supplies	2,643	7,239	919	689	11,490	11,956
Pensions to retired staff	199	544	69	52	864	829
Headquarters premises cost	23,486	64,331	8,169	6,127	102,113	82,158
Publications and subscriptions	1,932	5,291	672	504	8,398	7,189
Office equipment maintenance	10,758	29,469	3,742	2,807	46,775	39,503
Other professional fees	1,105	3,026	384	288	4,803	27,816
Governance costs	10,120	27,719	3,520	2,640	43,999	51,614
Bank charges	534	1,462	186	139	2,321	3,668
Depreciation	38,318	102,233	12,982	9,736	163,269	185,323
Sundries and presentations	1,190	3,260	414	310	5,175	6,634
	186,258	507,457	64,439	48,329	806,483	805,845

Governance costs include the gross annual audit fee of £30,500 incl VAT (2021: £28,500).

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold Premises £	Computer Equipment £	Fittings & Equipment £	Motor Vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation:					
At 01 January 2022	2,369,081	119,171	139,161	69,613	2,697,026
Additions	3,922	30,374	8,078	-	42,374
At 31 December 2022	2,373,003	149,545	147,239	69,613	2,739,400
Depreciation:					
At 01 January 2022	261,645	88,357	69,081	60,187	479,270
Charge for the year	47,699	40,214	19,760	8,702	116,375
At 31 December 2022	309,344	128,571	88,841	68,889	595,645
Net book value	2,063,659	20,974	58,398	724	2,143,755
At 31 December 2021	2,107,436	30,814	70,080	9,426	2,217,756

11(a) The investment properties value of £839,345 is apportioned on the basis of floor space (sq ft).

INVESTMENT PROPERTY

	£
Fair value at 01 January 2022	857,150
Loss during the period	(17,805)
Fair value at 31 December 2022	839,345

11(b) INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Software £
Brought forward at 01 January 2022	200,543
Additions	8,508
At 31 December 2022	209,051
Amortisation:	
At 01 January 2022	134,448
Charge for the year	56,580
At 31 December 2022	191,028
Net book value	
At 31 December 2022	18,023
At 31 December 2021	66,095

12. INVESTMENTS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Market Value		
At 01 January 2022	36,144,018	32,500,903
Purchases	8,607,825	9,580,445
Sales	(9,264,224)	(9,374,809)
Net Investment gain/(loss)	(3,402,348)	3,437,478
At 31 December 2022	32,085,271	36,144,018
Cash awaiting investment	683,785	517,052
Market Value at 31 December 2022	32,769,056	36,661,070
Cost at 31 December 2022	30,015,784	29,599,972
Analysis of investments at 31 December 2022		
UK Quoted investments		
Equities		
United Kingdom	3,087,517	3,798,912
Europe/Asia	3,947,112	1,082,896
North America	5,842,532	6,395,512
Global	8,445,845	13,907,425
Total Equities	21,323,006	25,184,745
Bonds		
United Kingdom	772,308	-
North America	823,146	1,715,706
Global	1,356,908	1,574,395
Total Bonds	2,952,362	3,290,101
Alternatives		
Multi-Asset	594,224	617,485
Hedge Funds	574,118	540,581
Property	2,614,627	2,856,538
Commodities & Others	4,026,934	3,654,568
Total Alternatives	7,809,903	7,669,172
Cash	683,785	517,052
	32,769,056	36,661,070

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

13. DEBTORS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Rent incentive debtor	6,563	10,313
Other debtors	700	7,500
Prepayments and accrued income	392,842	414,027
Accrued legacy income	115,106	-
	515,210	431,840

14. CREDITORS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	82,687	63,211
Accruals	375,646	218,669
Other creditors (incl pension scheme)	30	3,931
	458,363	285,811

14a. PROVISION

The sum of £52,434 (2021: £128,609) is a provision for third party assistance to care for Blesma Members resettled in care homes. £76,175 of the provision made in 2021 was released in 2022.

15. FINANCIAL ASSETS AT FAIR VALUE

	2022	2021
	£	£
Investments	32,769,056	36,661,070
Investment Property	839,345	857,150

16. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Blesma has a 20% interest in WSY Holdings Limited (in liquidation), a company established to distribute legacies arising from an estate. During the year, Blesma received £0. Other related party transactions to report are at Note 4.

17. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	01 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Investment Gain (loss)	Transfers	31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund	40,594,520	3,451,067	(5,702,804)	(3,402,348)	139,878	35,080,313
Investment Properties	857,150	-	-	-	(17,805)	839,345
Intangible Fixed Assets	66,095	-	-	-	(48,072)	18,023
Fixed Asset Fund	2,217,756	-	-	-	(74,001)	2,143,755
	43,735,520	3,451,067	(5,702,804)	(3,402,348)	(1)	38,081,435

The Trustees have designated a Fixed Asset Fund in order to represent funds for depreciating assets in the Charity.

18. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	01 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
All restricted funds are held as part of balances at bank and in hand.					
Welfare:					
Geographic specific	468,788	254,586	(369,433)	82,229	436,170
Residential Fees	82,229	-	-	(82,229)	-
Specific restrictions - various individuals	2,867	250,634	(156,335)	-	97,166
Wives and Widows	110,347	-	(110,347)	-	(0)
Libor Funds	7,182	-	(3,188)	-	3,994
General Welfare	-	-	-	-	-
	671,412	505,220	(639,303)	-	537,329
Prosthetic Aids	-	-	-	-	-
Research	3,823	-	(300)	-	3,523
Chiropody Fund	8,085	-	(1,772)	-	6,313
Branch specific	10,600	-	(10,600)	-	(0)
	693,919	505,220	(651,975)	-	547,164

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

19. NET ASSETS

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	2022
			£
The net assets of the Charity are summarised below:			
Fixed Assets	2,143,755	-	2,143,755
Intangible Fixed Assets	18,023	-	18,023
Investment Properties	839,345	-	839,345
Investments	32,769,056	-	32,769,056
Current Assets	2,822,053	547,164	3,369,218
Creditors	(510,797)	-	(510,797)
	38,081,434	547,164	38,628,599

20. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

As at 31 December 2022, the Charity had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases of:

	Motor Vehicles	Office Equipment	2022
	£	£	£
Within one year	155,712	26,738	182,451
Between two and five years	85,588	80,925	166,513
	241,300	107,663	348,963

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

21. COMPARATIVE NOTES 2021

(a) Comparative Statement of Activities

	NOTES	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 Total £
Income				
Donations and Legacies	2	2,577,811	435,938	3,013,749
Investment Income		599,509	-	599,509
Investment Income - Other		40,749	-	40,749
Grants		-	165,379	165,379
Other Income	2 (a)	406,338	-	406,338
		1,046,596	165,379	1,211,975
Total Income		3,624,408	601,317	4,225,724
Expenditure				
Expenditure on raising funds				
Resourcing				
Fundraising	5	983,016	-	983,016
Investment Management fees		124,268	-	124,268
		1,107,284	-	1,107,284
Expenditure on charitable activities				
Security				
Membership Services - Welfare	6	2,590,820	561,316	3,152,136
Identity				
Membership Services - Activities	7	629,420	132,609	762,029
Connectivity				
Awareness and Representation	8	377,626	-	377,626
National Volunteer Office	9	-	-	-
		3,597,867	693,925	4,291,792
Total Expenditure		4,705,151	693,925	5,399,076
Operating surplus/(loss)		(1,080,743)	(92,608)	(1,173,351)
Net gain/(loss) on investments	12	3,437,478	-	3,437,478
Net income		2,356,735	(92,608)	2,264,127
Transfers between funds		-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		2,356,735	(92,608)	2,264,127
Balances brought forward				
01 January 2021	17/18	41,378,785	786,527	42,165,312
Balances carried forward 31 December 2021		43,735,520	693,919	44,429,439

21. COMPARATIVE NOTES 2021 (continued)
(b) Comparative Unrestricted Funds

	01 January 2021	Income	Expenditure	Investment Gain (loss)	Transfers	31 Dec 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund	38,077,856	3,624,408	(4,705,151)	3,437,478	159,928	40,594,520
Investment Properties	879,228	-	-	-	(22,078)	857,150
Intangible Fixed Assets	123,769	-	-	-	(57,674)	66,095
Fixed Asset Fund	2,297,932	-	-	-	(80,175)	2,217,756
	41,378,785	3,624,408	(4,705,151)	3,437,478	(0)	43,735,520

The Trustees have designated a Fixed Asset Fund in order to represent funds for depreciating assets in the Charity.

(c) Restricted Funds

	01 January 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	31 Dec 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
All restricted funds are held as part of balances at bank and in hand.					
Welfare:					
Geographic specific	392,360	249,858	(173,430)	-	468,788
Residential Fees	97,229	-	(15,000)	-	82,229
Specific restrictions - various individuals	-	304,981	(302,115)	-	2,867
Wives and Widows	197,552	-	(87,205)	-	110,347
Libor Funds	68,463	602	(61,883)	-	7,182
General Welfare	-	45,876	(45,876)	-	-
	755,604	601,317	(685,509)	-	671,412
Prosthetic Aids	2	-	(2)	-	-
Research	8,823	-	(5,000)	-	3,823
Chiropody Fund	9,242	-	(1,157)	-	8,085
Branch specific	12,857	-	(2,257)	-	10,600
	786,526	601,317	(693,925)	-	693,919

The Residential Fees fund is restricted to resettled residents of our former Blackpool Home.

The Wives and Widows fund is restricted to wives and widows of Blesma's Members.

The Libor Fund is restricted to Blesma's Outreach Programme and one Support Officer (BSO) in Wales.

(d) Comparative Net Assets 2021

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2021 £
The net assets of the Charity are summarised below:			
Fixed Assets	2,217,756	-	2,217,756
Intangible Fixed Assets	66,095	-	66,095
Investment Properties	857,150	-	857,150
Investments	36,661,070	-	36,661,070
Current Assets	4,347,869	693,919	5,041,788
Creditors	(414,420)	-	(414,420)
	43,735,519	693,919	44,429,439



A MEMBER'S STORY

John Phillips

John was a Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal Officer in the Falklands War when his left arm was amputated after a bomb he was defusing exploded

“On Sunday 23 May 1982 I was tasked to HMS Antelope. The ship had been damaged by two bombs which, although they hadn’t exploded, had ripped through the communications and controls units. We approached the first bomb, but when we fired the means to disrupt the bomb, it didn’t work. We tried again, nothing. After the third time, it exploded as we went to inspect it.

“I remember a bang and a blast, the ship shook and, suddenly, I was flying through the air like in a cartoon.

“My colleague, Jim Prescott, and I were hit by one of the hatchway doors as it was blown off. It killed Jim instantly and severed my left arm. Another six inches to the left and I’d have gone as well. I started to look for Jim through all the fire and smoke. That was when one of the crew put his hand on my shoulder, told me that Jim was dead and said to follow him. Just as bluntly as that.”



“I remember a bang
and a blast. The ship
shook, and I was flying
through the air”

JOHN PHILLIPS



How You Can Help Blesma

We need to raise at least £2.7m in 2023 in order to continue all our vital work. At present, Blesma looks after more than 2,600 Members and Widow beneficiaries and provides support to their families. Our elderly membership continues to increase and all Members face uncertainty over the provision of adequate care. Serving personnel and veterans also continue to suffer accidents and injuries.

Your support means we can ensure that our oldest Members can continue to live a dignified life and that our youngest Members can face the challenge of a lifetime dealing with disability. All those we support know that they can reach out to others in similar circumstances. Limb loss is for life, so Blesma is too.

Our Members have been busy supporting each other throughout this difficult year by volunteering, fundraising, sharing their experiences and looking out for each other. Our welfare services continue to advise and assist our Members from Head Office, through our regional Support and Outreach Officers and our Branch and Volunteer networks. None of this would be possible without your on-going support and donations.

If you would like to help or make a donation, please contact our Fundraising Team by telephone on 020 8548 7089, by email on fundraising@blesma.org, through our website on www.blesma.org or write to us at the address below:

Fundraising Team
Blesma, The Limbless Veterans
115 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0QT

Your contribution towards Blesma will make a real difference to the lives of our disabled servicemen and women who have given so much.



Blesma is helping Vinod

Vinod Budhathoki served in 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles. He was injured in Afghanistan in 2010. "I was clearing a path for my patrol and we had to cross a canal. Just before I stepped in the water there was a huge bang. There was dust everywhere and my legs felt as if they were burning," says Vinod. "I could see that my right leg was missing. My left leg was still there, but it was so damaged I knew it would have to come off. I kept thinking of my wife because she was pregnant, and I worried how she would be if I died."



Blesma

THE LIMBLESS VETERANS



Trustees' Annual and Strategic Report and Financial Statements 2022

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans
British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association

Charity Number 1084189 Company Limited by Guarantee No. 4102768
Registered in Scotland SC010315

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