



Champions' Annual Reports

2023-24



Lancashire County Council Champions' Annual Reports 2023 – 2024

Introduction

The Cabinet has appointed county councillors who are not a member of the Cabinet to serve as Champions for the following matters:

- Champion for Armed Forces and Veterans
- Champion for Disabled People
- Champion for Mental Health
- Champion for Older People
- Champion for Parishes
- Champion for Young People

Each of the county council Champions is allocated a sum of £10,000 per annum for use at their discretion to finance their activities including:

- Organising and attending meetings, seminars and conferences and other similar events;
- The payment of a grant or loan to individuals and outside bodies and organisations within the scope of their remit; and
- Other incidental costs necessary to enable them to fulfil their roles.

Any unspent balance up to a maximum of £2,500 can be carried over from one financial year to the next giving a maximum budget of £12,500.

The approval of expenditure to be incurred by a Champion has been delegated by the Leader of the Council to the Director of Law and Governance.



Champion for Armed Forces and Veterans County Councillor Alf Clempson



Lancashire has a large percentage of veterans compared to other counties. I am pleased to say that the veteran community in turn is well serviced by many charities, CICs, and small groups. These groups often bid for small amounts of funding from the Champion's Grant in order for them to carry out their vital role. I often visit these groups to see for myself how the grant is spent and often how I can help in other ways. The Champion's Grant is an extremely important funding stream for these groups.

Lancaster Military Heritage Group - £1,000.00

This bid was for Morecambe and Lancaster Armed Forces Day (AFD). Its purpose was to continue the tradition of celebrating the UK Armed Forces. Also, to create an event which promotes education within Science, Technology, Economics and Mathematics (STEM) to all ages through the STEM organisation. This event raised the profile of the whole Armed Forces Community including cadets, reservists, veterans and regular forces.

Poulton in Bloom - £500.00

This bid was submitted by Poulton in Bloom and involved 3 main projects of remembrance. Firstly, poppies were knitted, crocheted and made from various materials then joined and hung from the local church tower. Wreaths were put in shops in the town indicating the regiment and detailing the individual story. Lastly, an outstanding display with the stories of the local fallen was put up in Poulton library. All of these projects involved many people and brought the community together while ensuring that the sacrifice of the local fallen is remembered.

Dig In - £830.00

Dig In carries out workshops and community project work to enable veterans to learn woodworking skills in order to work effectively on community projects and to produce wooden items to sell to generate income for the charity. This grant went towards 2 extractors and a freestanding belt and disc sander.

DWS Lifeskills – Health and Wellbeing activities - £2,000

This bid is part of DWS's on-going goal to provide local community support and health and wellbeing events across Wyre and Fylde. They hold monthly coffee and chat sessions, quiz nights, and arrange day trips, kayaking, walking and physical fitness events. This improves health and wellbeing, as well as helping social inclusion and community integration across the local armed forces community. This group also carries out vital work to help veterans in need, often working with Social Services.



The Men's Shed, Fleetwood - £1,111

This group offers a free breakfast and refreshments for veterans every Wednesday morning. The money will help subsidise the cost of food and hire of the room for 1 year and ensure that this well attended (20-30 each week) service can continue to be provided.

The benefits of this project are that it is a great socialisation event for armed forces veterans to meet up and feel socially included and to converse with like-minded people. We offer help and advice from specialist community services mostly regarding men's mental health as well as signposting to relevant charities in the local Armed Forces Community.

Westfield Community Centre - £1,500.00

This grant went towards several projects at the Westfield War Memorial Village in Lancaster. These projects included a laptop computer situated at the Westfield Community Centre to aid residents to fill in online forms and carry out various computer tasks. The grant also helped with a shed to store garden equipment and gym equipment. The grant helped residents interact with each other and helped them with their general health and well-being.

Clarets in the Community - £1,000.00

This grant went towards a veteran's project taking 13 veterans and one civilian member of staff to participate in an international military veterans football tournament in Norway run by Burnley FC's Clarets in the Community. The veterans represented England in the competition and ultimately gained positive results for individual physical and mental wellbeing and the team which thrives on the ethos of their former military service of teamwork.

St Andrews Church, Cleveleys £795.00

At the back of the church is a war memorial garden (listing the names of those from Cleveleys who lost their lives in World War I) which has long been neglected and forgotten by the town, hidden behind a bush. With the help of local veterans, army cadets and church members, a memorial garden as a focus for the community to remember the sacrifice has been made.

PCC of Broughton £360.00

This grant paid for the marshalling of the required road closure, which, following their Service of Remembrance, enabled clergy, choir and congregation to process from the church along the A6 to the Broughton War Memorial, where a further short service of Remembrance and the laying of wreaths by representatives of the whole community took place. The road closure was essential for safety reasons and was managed by RSS Traffic. The Service of Remembrance is incredibly important as a continuing reminder to all generations of the sacrifice that men and women have made and continue to make.



Lytham St Anne's Informal Association of Wrens £1,700.00

This application was for £1,700 towards the cost of taking a group of 16 ex-service men and women on a three-day visit to the Sparrows Nest in Lowestoft. This encourages veterans to bond improve their health and well-being.

Total Spend - £10,796

County Councillor Alf Clempson
Champion for Armed Forces and Veterans
Lancashire County Council



**County Councillor Alf Clempson
Champion for Armed Forces and Veterans
Schedule of Expenditure for 2023/2024**

| Applicant | Amount of Grant |
|--|------------------------|
| Lancaster Military Heritage Group | £1,000.00 |
| Poulton in Bloom | £500.00 |
| Dig In | £830.00 |
| The Men's Shed, Fleetwood | £750.00 |
| Westfield Community Centre | £1,500.00 |
| DWS Lifeskills CIC | £2,000.00 |
| Clarets in the Community | £1,000.00 |
| St Andrews Church, Cleveleys | £795.00 |
| PCC of Broughton | £360.00 |
| The Men's Shed, Fleetwood | £361.00 |
| Lytham St Anne's Informal Association of Wrens | £1,700.00 |
| TOTAL SPENT | £10,796.00 |



Champion for Disabled People County Councillor Peter Britcliffe



In the time I have been acting as Champion for Disabled People, I have awarded two grants.

One was to Great Harwood Bowling Club for £1,900, towards an adapted bowling wheelchair and adapted ramp to enable and encourage disabled people to take part and make use of their facilities at the crown green bowling ground and pavilion.

The other grant of £2,500 was made to Belthorn Village Committee towards the cost to install a functioning disabled toilet in the Dog Inn community run pub where they hold regular meetings and various events throughout the year.

At the moment disabled people are excluded from most events the village committee organises as there is no disabled toilet access. The disabled toilet will help many people within the village.

Other grants were administered by my predecessor, Councillor Carole Haythornthwaite, and were awarded to:

- T.E.A.M.R.I.S.E towards new costumes and props and advertising costs for their annual pantomime.
- Certain Curtain Theatre Company towards an educational domestic abuse theatre performance of Lady in Red.
- Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Multiple Sclerosis Society towards their Christmas lunch.
- Sporting Challenge towards sporting activities for people with learning difficulties.
- Visually Impaired Children's Support towards their children's Christmas party.

Thank you,

County Councillor Peter Britcliffe
Champion for Disabled People
Lancashire County Council



**County Councillor Peter Britcliffe
Champion for Disabled People**

Schedule of Expenditure for 2023/2024

| Applicant | Amount of Grant |
|---|------------------------|
| T.E.A.M.R.I.S.E | £2,000.00 |
| Certain Curtain Theatre Company | £1,000.00 |
| Blackpool, Fylde, and Wyre Multiple Sclerosis Society | £500.00 |
| Sporting Challenge | £1,250.00 |
| Visually Impaired Children's Support | £550.00 |
| Great Harwood Bowling Club | £1,900.00 |
| Belthorn Village Hall Committee | £2,500.00 |
| Riston People's Centre | £200.00 |
| Motiv8-Lancs CIC | £800.00 |
| U Night Group CIC | £500.00 |
| TOTAL SPENT | £11,200.00 |



Champion for Mental Health County Councillor Stuart C Morris



The increase in mental health diagnoses in Lancashire and the UK has had significant implications across various sectors, including healthcare, education, employment, and social services. I want to explain my overview of some of the impacts from my experience as Mental Health Champion:

1. Healthcare System Strain:

- The rise in mental health diagnoses has put a strain on the healthcare system, increasing demand for mental health services such as counselling, therapy, and psychiatric care.
- Long waiting times for mental health assessments and treatment have become more common, leading to concerns about access to timely and adequate care.

2. Economic Impact:

- Mental health issues can significantly impact individuals' ability to work and contribute to the economy. Absenteeism, presenteeism (working while unwell), and disability claims related to mental health conditions can lead to productivity losses for businesses and increased welfare costs for the government.
- Employers may also face challenges in supporting employees with mental health issues, such as providing accommodation and implementing mental health policies.

3. Education and Social Services:

- Schools and social services are seeing an increase in the number of children and young people experiencing mental health problems. This places additional strain on resources for supporting students' emotional well-being and providing appropriate interventions.
- There is a growing recognition of the importance of mental health education and support within educational settings, leading to initiatives aimed at promoting mental health awareness and resilience among students.

4. Stigma and Discrimination:

- Despite efforts to reduce stigma surrounding mental health, negative attitudes and discrimination persist in society. The increase in diagnoses may contribute to greater awareness, but it can also lead to misconceptions and stereotypes about mental illness.



- Addressing stigma remains a critical aspect of promoting mental health and ensuring that individuals feel comfortable seeking help and accessing support services.

5. Policy and Funding Priorities:

- The increase in mental health diagnoses has prompted policymakers to prioritise mental health in healthcare reform and funding decisions.
- Initiatives aimed at improving access to mental health services, increasing workforce capacity, and integrating mental health into primary care have been launched.
- However, there are ongoing challenges in securing sufficient funding and resources to meet the growing demand for mental health support effectively.

6. Community Support and Advocacy:

- The rise in mental health diagnoses has spurred grassroots advocacy efforts and community support networks. Peer support groups, online forums, and community organisations play a crucial role in providing practical assistance, reducing isolation, and promoting recovery.
- Collaboration between service users, advocacy groups, and healthcare providers is essential for driving positive change and ensuring that mental health services meet the diverse needs of individuals.

Overall, the increase in mental health diagnoses in the UK underscores the importance of prioritising mental health awareness, de-stigmatisation, and access to quality care and support services. It highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses the complex interplay of biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors influencing mental well-being.

Reducing mental health issues in the UK requires a multifaceted approach that addresses various factors contributing to mental illness. Here I consider several strategies that can help mitigate mental health issues in Lancashire:

1. Promoting Mental Health Awareness:

- Implement widespread campaigns to raise awareness about mental health issues, reduce stigma, and encourage open conversations.
- Provide education and training on mental health literacy to equip individuals with the knowledge and skills to recognise early signs of mental health problems and seek appropriate support.

2. Improving Access to Mental Health Services:

- Invest in mental health services to ensure timely access to evidence-based treatments, including counselling, therapy, and psychiatric care.



- Expand community-based mental health services and crisis intervention teams to provide support to individuals in their own communities and reduce the burden on hospitals.

3. Integrating Mental Health into Primary Care:

- Integrate mental health services into primary care settings to facilitate early intervention and holistic healthcare delivery.
- Train primary care providers in mental health assessment and treatment to improve detection rates and provide initial support for individuals with mental health concerns.

4. Enhancing Support in Schools and Workplaces:

- Implement mental health education programs in schools to promote emotional well-being, resilience, and coping skills among students.
- Helping schools and workplaces to understand, recognise and identify mental health issues, avoiding both confusion with conditions like ADHD and overdiagnosis, recognising that things like anxiety and nerves are, for many people, everyday feelings that can be helped with good mental wellbeing support and practices (although recognising that for others they can be symptoms or early signs of mental health issues).
- Develop workplace mental health policies and programs that support employees' mental well-being, provide resources for stress management, and reduce stigma around mental health issues.

5. Addressing Social Determinants of Mental Health:

- Address social determinants of mental health, such as, unemployment, housing instability, and discrimination, through targeted interventions and social policies.
- Provide support services and resources to vulnerable populations, including homeless individuals, to address underlying social and economic factors contributing to mental health disparities.

6. Investing in Research and Innovation:

- Allocate resources for mental health research to better understand the causes, risk factors, and effective interventions for mental illness.
- Support innovation in mental health care delivery, such as telemedicine, digital mental health tools, and peer support networks, to increase access and engagement in mental health services.



7. Fostering Community Support and Resilience:

- Foster supportive communities that promote social connections, belonging, and resilience among individuals facing mental health challenges.
- Encourage community-led initiatives, peer support groups, and mutual aid networks to provide practical assistance, emotional support, and a sense of belonging for individuals with mental health issues.

8. Collaborative Approach and Policy Advocacy:

- Foster collaboration between government agencies, healthcare providers, community organisations, advocacy groups, and individuals with lived experience to develop comprehensive mental health strategies.
- Advocate for policy changes and increased funding to prioritise mental health in public health agendas, healthcare reform, and social welfare programs.

By implementing these strategies in a coordinated and sustained manner, Lancashire can work towards reducing the prevalence and impact of mental health issues and promoting the well-being of all its residents. Please note, 'mental well-being' affects all of us, but does not have any correlation to those who are clinically depressed or suicidal. Patients clinically diagnosed need our utmost care and support. Our mental wellbeing is a totally different matter, and I thought it necessary to distinguish between the two as this is more too often mis-diagnosed.

During the past twelve months we, the County Council, have supported a number of worthy groups to enhance and improve the equipment, environment and availability of their services to their local community.

I fully appreciate more needs to be done across the county, however, by targeting groups that I feel provide a holistic, sports and caring environment, enables these groups to grow and offer the community the support for those in need of help and advice with improved facilities.

Thank you,

County Councillor Stuart Morris
Champion for Mental Health
Lancashire County Council



**County Councillor Stuart Morris
Champion for Mental Health**

Schedule of Expenditure for 2023/2024

| Applicant | Amount of Grant |
|---|------------------------|
| Lancaster Boxing Club | £1,549.93 |
| Lower House Sensory Farm Community Interest Company | £591.00 |
| Carousel Music and Movement CIC | £1,320.00 |
| Sporting Challenge | £1,320.00 |
| About the Town CIC | £1,000.00 |
| Bay Veteran's Association | £1,030.00 |
| Bay Buddies | £1,000.00 |
| TOTAL SPENT | £7,810.93 |



Champion for Older People County Councillor Joan Burrows



This is my seventh year in the role of Lancashire County Council's Champion for Older People, a role that has provided me with the privileged opportunity to get close to, and work closely with, Older People in their communities across Lancashire.

Older People, that's people over the age of 55 years, are a valuable part of Lancashire's economy whether that be through their ongoing employment, their work as volunteers, or as carers within family units and they deserve credit for this.

My aim, once again this year, was to promote a positive image of ageing. Following retirement many people seek to continue, and invest more time, in their hobbies and interest groups whilst others are looking for interests and the opportunities to develop new skills and make new friends. Thankfully, in Lancashire, there are numerous groups providing activities to people over 55 years. The groups that I have visited during the year total 61 and have included Luncheon Clubs, Sheltered Housing Social Groups, Friendship Clubs, Bowling Clubs, Carers Groups, Exercise Classes, Coffee Mornings, Dementia Support Groups and Over 50's Forums across the County.

I have attended three Age of Inspiration events held in West Lancashire, Ribble Valley and Preston, online I have attended the North West Pensioners Association and Carers Forum meetings and, facilitated by UCLAN, a conference and a discussion group to discuss Healthy Ageing and Dementia respectively. I continue to support the Postcards for Kindness and the Festive Cards for the Holiday Season initiatives which are now in their sixth year. The latter has more than 100 Care Homes signed up to take part, a wonderful initiative encouraging community spirit through the simple act of writing and sending a card.

As Champion for Older People, I am allocated a sum of £10,000 per annum, for use at my discretion, within the guidelines as set out by the Authority. The Champion grant fund is an extremely easy and popular way of providing small amounts of funding, to a wide range of groups, who need financial support via a simple process. As a result of press releases and my efforts to promote the fund twenty-five groups have received grants this year totalling £10,522.

I cannot emphasise enough just how important this fund is to Older People, across the County, for whom just a little bit of money (the average grant was £400) can make a major difference to the work that they want to do and the lives of the people that they support. This year grants have paid for items of equipment, room hire costs, speaker expenses, promotional leaflets, small repairs, gift hampers and support for friendship gatherings.

I regularly brief the Leader and Cabinet Members, in particular the members for Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing, alongside the Directors of these departments, upon what I have seen and heard whilst I am out and about. I do hope that these



findings contribute to the allocation of funding and the shaping of services, for Older People in Lancashire, in the future.

The position of Older People's Champion for Lancashire is a high-profile role and demanding. I take it very seriously. It is vital that I go out and about, meeting and talking to people across the County.

I can safely report that I have done just that, I have travelled many miles this year, and the appreciation and feedback has been positive and gratefully received. There is still much to do. I look forward to continuing in this role in the months ahead.

County Councillor Joan Burrows
Champion for Older People
Lancashire County Council



**County Councillor Joan Burrows
Champion for Older People**

Schedule of Expenditure for 2023/2024

| Applicant | Amount of Grant |
|--|------------------------|
| The Friends of Winckley Square | £500.00 |
| Lunch and Laughter Group | £300.00 |
| St Stephens in the Banks | £400.00 |
| Hesketh Bank and Tarleton Helpers | £500.00 |
| Barton Ladies Social Club | £200.00 |
| Sing4Fun | £350.00 |
| Fylde Coast Men's Shed | £500.00 |
| Hilldale Community Association | £350.00 |
| Preston and District Carers Support Group | £300.00 |
| Church and Oswaldtwistle Rotary Club | £360.00 |
| Community Network and Outreach Service CIC | £487.50 |
| The A59 Club | £400.00 |
| St Mary Magdalene and St Teresa's | £500.00 |
| Rotary Club of Ormskirk Clocktower | £302.00 |
| TOFFS | £400.00 |
| St Paul's Bowling Club | £500.00 |
| Certain Curtain Theatre Company | £1,000.00 |
| Elevenes Coffee Morning | £301.00 |
| Preston & District 50+ Forum | £200.00 |
| 5th Penwortham Guide Unit | £500.00 |
| Just Good Friends (North West) Ltd | £600.00 |
| League of Friends of Clifton Hospital | £700.00 |
| Residents Association of Farrington & Thirlmere (RAFT) | £250.00 |
| The Glees | £300.00 |
| Guardians of Nature - Company Interest Company | £321.50 |
| TOTAL SPENT | £10,522.00 |



Champion for Parishes County Councillor Paul Rigby



The Cabinet have once again offered their full support to my role as Parish Champion, and I have also enjoyed the support of Lancashire County Council officers whose invaluable advice and guidance has been very welcome.

Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC) provides a really cost effective and accessible service to Parish Councils and in most instances is rather like insurance not needed until something goes wrong when you are most grateful for it! So, I would like to say a big thank you to all the officer team – Alison Wilkins, Laura Worden and Janet Nuttall – for their support to me personally keeping me on the straight and narrow, but also all the work they do for all parish councils across Lancashire.

There was just one parish conference this year. It was, as always, fully supported by the Cabinet; the Leader of the Council came to update on the proposed Devolution Deal for Lancashire. Following the lunch break and time for networking, Lancashire Association of Local Councils held their Annual General Meeting which as always gave the Parish Councillors an opportunity to feed back their views and any concerns directly to Lancashire Association of Local Councils officers which was appreciated by all attendees.

I have awarded a number of grants this year. The grant scheme brought some Christmas cheer and Parishes that had never afforded Christmas trees before filled in the grant application form and received funding. The grants also supported brilliant parties for older folk in some areas where some residents might never be invited out as well as other small projects in some parishes.

Thanks to all.

Paul Rigby
Champion for Parishes
Lancashire County Council



**County Councillor Paul Rigby
Champion for Parishes**

Schedule of Expenditure for 2023/2024

| Applicant | Amount of Grant |
|---|------------------------|
| Hilldale Parish Council | £1,000.00 |
| Habergham Eaves Parish Council | £500.00 |
| Old Laund Booth Parish Council | £500.00 |
| Catterall Parish Council | £600.00 |
| Up Holland Parish Council | £300.00 |
| Winmarleigh Parish Council | £120.00 |
| Treales, Roseacre & Wharles Parish Council | £400.00 |
| Scarisbrick Parish Council | £800.00 |
| Newburgh Parish Council | £330.00 |
| Old Laund Booth Parish Council | £500.00 |
| Habergham Eaves Parish Council | £200.00 |
| Hoghton Parish Council | £600.00 |
| Wilpshire Parish Council | £100.00 |
| Salesbury Parish Council | £100.00 |
| Little Ecclestone with Larbreck Parish Council | £653.16 |
| PCC of Longton St Andrew | £1,000.00 |
| Coppull Parish Council | £400.00 |
| Salesbury Parish Council | £500.00 |
| Freckleton Parish Council | £250.00 |
| Bolton by Bowland, Sawley and Gisburn Forest Parish Council | £1,000.00 |
| TOTAL SPENT | £9,853.16 |



Champion for Young People County Councillor Loraine Cox



I began my role as Lancashire's Champion for Young People on the 19 September 2023, taking over from Councillor Ash Sutcliffe. This meant that I was only partially responsible for this financial year.

Supporting youth engagement and supplying funds to ensure this can be achieved is something I feel strongly about. I have granted 11 applications for funding during my tenure of this portion of the financial year with grants totalling just over £10,800 supporting organisations enabling them to continue this amazing work in our communities.

These were given to Community Network and Outreach Centre, Trinitas Day Choir, Rotary Club of Leyland South Ribble and Preston South, Residents Association of Farrington and Thirlmere (RAFT), Colne Youth Action Group, Accrington Stanley Community Trust, Friends of Lancashire County Ensembles, Hoole Village Hall Bowling Club, Girl Guiding Ashton Park District, Friends of Coupe Green, Durose Studios.

County Councillor Loraine Cox
Champion for Young People
Lancashire County Council



**County Councillor Loraine Cox
Champion for Young People
Schedule of Expenditure for 2023/2024**

| Applicant | Amount of Grant |
|---|------------------------|
| The Fairfield Association | £3,000.00 |
| The Rotary Clubs U12's Football | £500.00 |
| Community Network and Outreach Service CIC | £1,000.00 |
| Beanstalk Business Centre CIC | £579.00 |
| Crusaders Morris Dancers | £1,000.00 |
| Saint Catherine's Community Centre | £649.00 |
| Trinitas Day Choir | £300.00 |
| Rotary Clubs of Leyland, South Ribble and Preston South | £600.00 |
| Residents Association of Farrington & Thirlmere (RAFT) | £250.00 |
| Colne Youth Action Group | £729.56 |
| Friends of the Lancashire County Ensembles (FLCE) | £500.00 |
| Accrington Stanley Community Trust | £500.00 |
| Hoole Village Hall Bowling Club | £300.00 |
| Girlguiding - Ashton Park District | £300.00 |
| Friends of Coupe Green | £400.00 |
| Durose Studios CIC | £800.00 |
| TOTAL SPENT | £11,407.56 |

