



Charity and voluntary organisations in Lancashire

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Charity and voluntary organisations in Lancashire

Introduction

This short article highlights the number of charities operating in the Lancashire-14 area, and links through to the list of Lancashire organisations that have been awarded the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The thousands of charities that operate within the county form a very disparate group of organisations. A number look to provide relief for those in poverty, whilst others may be local sporting/community groups, provide education grants or tuition, employment support or heritage organisations etc. They range from major regional, national and international organisations with substantial turnovers to small-scale scout groups that are operated on much smaller budgets.

They provide a source of employment, enhance community spirit and generally improve the quality of life of local residents who may either benefit from their services or gain satisfaction from supporting one or more charities with giving their time or financial help.

The Charity Commission

The [Charity Commission](#) registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. The commission keeps the register of charities, and clicking on the advanced search option, and then choosing 'specific areas', users can identify charities operating in the Lancashire County Council area, or in Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool unitary authority areas. If users just put one local authority area in the 'selected areas' option, they will get the full list of charities operating in the area. More than one authority will significantly reduce the number because any charity would have to operate across the larger combined area. The results for each charity include financial summaries of income and spending over the past few financial years.

In December 2020, the Charity Commission website listed a substantial total of 3,451 charities operating in the Lancashire County Council area, with a further 329 listed under Blackburn with Darwen and 254 in the Blackpool area. This number emphasises the significant requirement for volunteer time and financial resources to help run this number of charities. The list covers a wide variety of organisations, large and small, local and national. They range from individual scout and guide groups, national charities such as AGE UK, religious organisations, sports and music clubs, mental and physical care groups, plus toddler play groups etc. Besides the geographic search option, the website allows users to identify particular charities by what they offer, which group they target, such as the elderly,

and how the charity operates, for example by making grants or providing services. Users interested in a particular charity can click on the individual entry to access recent yearly income and spending figures, which indicate the financial significance of the organisation.

Charity shops

The [Charity Retail Association](#) represents the interests of charity retailers. The website has a 'find a charity shop' facility that can be searched by place name or postcode therefore shops in Lancashire can be identified down to the local level.

Charity shops can trade in brought-in goods, but must sell mainly donated second-hand items in order to retain their charitable purpose status. The number of charity shops has grown over the years as charities seek to increase revenues. Nowadays, their permanent presence on the high-street can reduce the number of vacant premises and they also help to avoid items being discarded and sent to landfill.

Giving to charities and national personal debt statistics

The HM Revenue and Customs website has details of [charities and giving to charity](#). It details how individuals and businesses can give to charities in a tax-efficient way.

National figures emphasise the [very substantial amount of income](#) that is collectively generated by charities, and the fact that a relatively small number are responsible for a large proportion of total income. The charity commission website lists the [largest charities by a range of criteria](#) including spending, investments, employees and volunteers.

The Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service

The Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon voluntary groups. This prestigious honour recognises the exceptional contributions made to local communities by groups voluntarily devoting their time for the benefit of others.

The most recent awards for 2020 include eight Lancashire winners, namely Affordable Counselling and Caring Emotional Support Services, [Belvedere and Caldervale Sports Club](#), [Blackpool Heritage Tram Tours](#), [Fulledge Colts](#), [Halton Community Association](#), [Maundy Relief](#), [Parbold Douglas Music Society](#) and [Parbold Picture House](#).

Please click here to view the [Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service article](#) (PDF 761 KB).