



Empowering The Community

Annual Report
2022Apr-2023Mar



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ABOUT US

Our Mission

At Bless Community Services (BCS), we are committed to enriching our society by providing essential services to youths, seniors, and the community. Our mission is to unlock the potential of individuals, strengthen families, and foster communal bond that uplift our entire community.

BCS focuses its services on 3 main areas: The elderly (Seniors Connect), youths (Youth Connect) and community (Community Connect) in our neighbourhood.



Our Core Values

• INTEGRITY

We desire to serve with integrity, valuing honesty and developing trust, holding on to firm principles for wholesome living.

• RESPECT

We uphold the importance of treating every individual with respect and dignity, recognizing his/ her worth.

• COMPASSION

We are committed to serve with love, desiring to encourage and build up, for a positive contribution to society

• RESPONSIBILITY

We will uphold what is good and right, and will fulfil our mission with accountability.

• EXCELLENCE

We strive to serve with excellence.

OVERVIEW OF CHARITY

Charity

Registration Info

Bless Community Services was registered as a society on 5 June 2008 and as a charity under the Charities Act (Chapter 37) since 1 December 2008.

IPC Status

Bless Community Services has been accorded IPC (Institution of A Public Character) status from 22 February 2019 to 21 November 2023.

Unique Entity Number (UEN)

T08SS0032L

Registered Address

242 Yio Chu Kang Road,
Yio Chu Kang Chapel,
Singapore 545671

AUDITOR

HLB Atrede LLP

Banker

DBS Bank Ltd



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

2022 saw the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions - we could shift gears from the frequent need to adapt to the changing restrictions, to resuming our programmes and services face-to-face and moving ahead with our plans for more programmes to benefit the community around us. Through it all, the well-being of seniors, youths and rough sleepers remained our focus.

We were excited to bring back the Friends & Neighbours' Dinner in November 2022, which had been on hiatus since 2020. It was a special time as we not only got to meet our friends from the community again, but we also got a chance to hand out bursary awards to the recipients. We could also thank in person our partners whom we work closely with to serve our shelter guests. As our programmes and services resumed onsite, we were able to do more - the seniors enjoyed learning Chinese calligraphy and the youths who wanted to a quiet place to prepare for their exams could do so at Bless Wellness Centre.

We also expanded our work with the rough sleepers through partnerships with Gospel Light Christian Church and Inspire Community Services. We started off with serving 13 shelter guests in 2019 within the premises of Yio Chu Kang Chapel, and in 2022, we provided shelter to a total of 83 individuals from diverse backgrounds and demographics at three premises. Our efforts were recognized when our organisation received the "Star Partner Award" of the Public Sector Transformation Awards in July 2022.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the generous donors who have supported us through the years. Your faithful support has enabled us to stay the course and encouraged us to continue exploring more and new ways of supporting the well-being of seniors, youths, neighbourhood residents and our shelter guests. All praise and glory to God.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shi Pau Soon', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Shi Pau Soon
Chairman

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

1 APRIL 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023

475

SERVICE
USERS



4040

HOUSEHOLDS
VISITED



288

VOLUNTEERS
MOBILIZED



15

UNIQUE
PROGRAMMES
& INITIATIVES



S

SENIOR CONNECT

- ZOOM EXERCISE
15 households
- LINE DANCE
38 dancers
- SLEC
45 seniors
- BEGINNER'S CHINESE
CALLIGRAPHY
23 participants

Y

YOUTH CONNECT

- BURSARY
10 recipients
- TUITION
8 students
- YOUTH EVENT
24 participants
- STUDY ROOM
6 study sessions

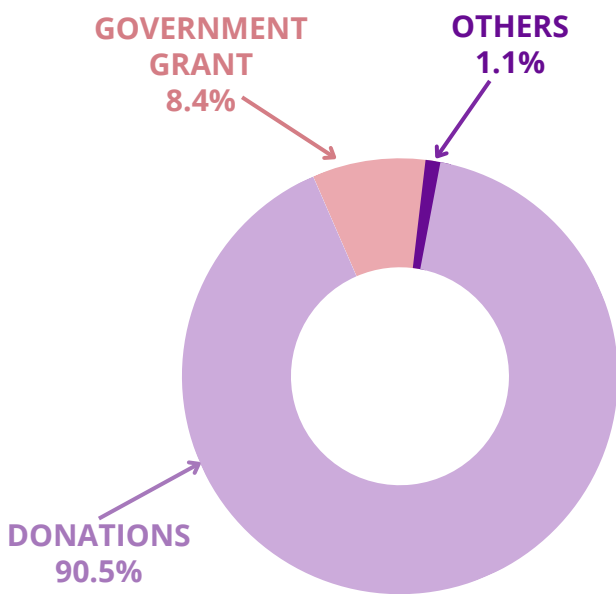
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COMMUNITY CONNECT

- LEGAL CLINIC
48 applicants
- COUNSELLING
10 clients
- S3P
83 clients
- FRIENDS & NEIGHBOURS
(F&N) DINNER
150 attendees
- NEIGHBOURHOOD
ASSISTANCE FUND
20 households
- FOOD SUPPORT INITIATIVE
16 households
- NEIGHBOURHOOD
VISITATION
4 visits
4040 households visited

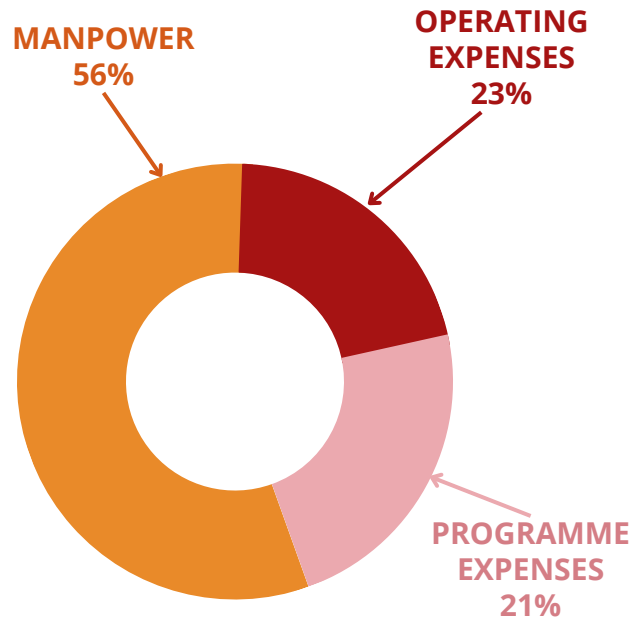
SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

FINANCIAL YEAR 1 APRIL 2022 - 31 MARCH 2023



Income

General Fund: \$287,121
Restricted Fund: \$20,844



Expenditure

General Fund: \$260,957
Restricted Fund: \$69,088

Summary of Financial Performance

Total Income increased by \$94,895 year-on-year mainly due to a donation appeal made to members of two churches (Yio Chu Kang Chapel and Yio Chu Kang Gospel Hall) during the year.

Total Expenditure increased by \$34,734 year-on-year, as operation costs increased when service and programme activities picked up as Singapore treated Covid-19 as endemic.

Major Financial Transactions

During the year 56% of the Society's total operating expenditure had been spent on manpower costs to run the services and programmes of the Society. All expenditure was spent within budget as approved by the Board.

Charitable Assets Held

The Society does not hold much fixed assets. It had a license to use premises at 242 Yio Chu Kang Rd, Singapore 545671 for the purpose of office and meeting rooms to conduct its community talks, legal clinic, counselling and tuition programme.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

1ST APRIL 2022 TO 31ST MARCH 2023

SENIORS CONNECT

One's silver years is as important as any other period in their lives. It is important for seniors to maintain their physical, mental and emotional health while navigating this season of their lives. Due to the government's Covid-19 restrictions under Phase 2 (Heightened Alert) in 2021, our active ageing activities and programmes were suspended for nearly a year. In April 2022, we were able to resume our activities/programmes.

• Senior Care : Saint Luke's Eldercare (SLEC)

Saint Luke's Eldercare (SLEC) resumed on-site physical activities on 5 May 2022. However, due to Safety Management Measures (SMM), only a maximum of 10 masked volunteers (including 9 volunteers and 1 staff) were allowed on-site during each visit. Our staff and volunteers visited the senior citizens on the first, second, and third Thursday of each month, organizing a variety of activities such as light stretching exercises, handicraft work, bingo games, singing, and guessing games. On December 15, 2022, we organized an early Christmas lunch for SLEC senior citizens and staff members.

"We are very happy and look forward to seeing your volunteers on Thursdays. Playing Bingo is so exciting!"

Seniors citizens, SLEC



45 seniors served
17 volunteers



SENIORS CONNECT

• Active Ageing: Zoom Stretching Exercise

Our Friday weekly stretching exercise continues to be a popular activity among our senior citizen participants. Some of the participants were over 80 years old and lived as far away as Katong and Clementi. We held 50 sessions in the year, and on average, 12 households joined the Zoom exercise each week. Despite the challenges posed by distance and technology, we were glad to be able to provide a safe and convenient way for our seniors to stay active and engaged.



**50 sessions held
15 households**

"Every Friday morning, I try to wake up early and tune in to the zoom exercise. I enjoy and look forward to the zoom exercise each week."

Julie Clark, participant



• Active Ageing: Line Dance Class

We were thrilled to welcome back 28 enthusiastic participants when the line dance class officially resumed on 20 April 2022. We conducted a total of 46 lessons on Wednesday mornings and were pleased to see more people signing up and joining the fun.

On 16 December 2022, we held a mini-Christmas celebration for the participants, which was a great opportunity for our staff to build rapport with the attendees. The event was a huge success and added to the already vibrant and supportive atmosphere of the class.



**38 participants
1 volunteer
46 sessions**

I love line dance. The timing of the class suits my schedule, and the instructor is good and dedicated.

Margaret Chong, participant



SENIORS CONNECT

• Active Ageing: Chinese Calligraphy Class

The first batch of Beginner's Chinese Calligraphy Class commenced on 10 November 2022. Twelve students signed up for the 12-session class, which ended on 22 February 2023. The majority of students enjoyed the lessons so much that they chose to continue with the intermediate class, which began on 2 March 2023.

The beginner's class continued to garner interest and saw 11 new students signing up. Both the beginner's and intermediate classes are held concurrently on Thursday afternoons.

"I signed up for the Beginner's Chinese Calligraphy Class out of personal interest which helps me to develop the right mental fortitude to look at things. Being English educated, it also helps me to learn more Chinese words."

*Lim Wee Thiam,
participant*



**23 students
3 volunteers**



YOUTH CONNECT

The transition from childhood to adolescence is made up of other smaller transitions whether within the individual or adapting to a new environment, coupled with the challenges of academic life. We aim to support our youths through providing a conducive environment for them to grow and flourish mentally and emotionally.

• Academic Support : Tuition

Our tuition programme was started to provide academic support to primary and secondary school students at an affordable rate. Our dedicated team of four volunteers offered tutoring in subjects such as Mathematics and English. This year, we have received a higher number of applications, reflecting the growing need for such services in the community. We served eight students this year, six were of primary school age and two of secondary school age. A total of 196 sessions were conducted.

"I like my English and Math teachers. The tuition is very helpful for me! The lessons are fun!"

Nayli, tuition student



8 students
4 volunteers
196 sessions



• Academic Support : Bursary

The bursary award provides support to students from low-income to lower-middle-income families for their educational expenses, such as textbooks, workbooks, stationery, and uniforms. The objective of the award is to encourage students to continue their hard work and efforts in their studies.

This year we were able to support ten students – three primary school students and seven secondary school students, an increase from the previous year.

YOUTH CONNECT



10 students

• Social Bonding : Youth Social Activities

To celebrate Youth Day, we organized an exciting party for the youths. The afternoon kicked off with an intense game of laser tag, where the participants battled it out to be the winning team. Following that, the youths were able to unleash their creativity by painting. To satisfy their hunger after the laser tag, we ended the evening with a delicious barbecue dinner. The event was well-attended by 24 youths and 8 volunteers.

In addition to the Youth Day Party, we also organized other activities with a focus on mental wellness, such as a Jamming and Lyric Writing workshop at the end of the year.

"The Youth Day Party was thoroughly enjoyable and exciting for us all. I hope more people will participate in such events!"

Zherui, participant



24 participants
8 volunteers



YOUTH CONNECT

• Academic Support : Study Room

We have opened the Bless Wellness Centre in September to provide a conducive space for students to study alone or with their friends on weekdays. The Centre is equipped with power plugs, air conditioning, and refreshments, creating a comfortable environment for studying.

Throughout the year, we held a total of 6 study sessions, with an average of 5 youths attending each session. After exams ended, 4 youths continued to utilize the room as a youth hangout space. We hope to continue providing a supportive space for students to focus on their studies and connect with their peers.



6 study sessions
8 volunteers

COMMUNITY CONNECT

• Community Support : Food Support Initiative

The aim of the Food Support Initiative is to provide assistance to needy individuals and families residing in Serangoon. This involved the distribution of dry food rations, including items such as instant noodles, canned food, Milo, coffee and tea, oats, and biscuits.

To kick off the initiative, we received generous contributions from donors in the public. The funds received were utilized to purchase food supplies for the beneficiaries. Our dedicated staff and volunteers were responsible for monthly doorstep deliveries to the recipients, ensuring they received the essential provisions they required.

Throughout the year, we have been able to support a total of 16 individuals and families living in Serangoon through the Food Support Initiative. Their well-being and nutritional needs have been our priority, and we are grateful for the support and contributions that have made this initiative possible.



32 distribution rounds
16 individuals and families
5 volunteers



It is a good gesture that BCS has done this project. It has helped the senior citizens through their hardships. When they cannot buy luxury products, at least they are able to get the items that BCS gives. It really helps people in need. God bless the people who donate.

Resident from Blk 147

• Community Support : Neighborhood Assistance Fund (NAF)

The Neighborhood Assistance Fund (NAF) was established to support residents in Serangoon North and Hougang who faced income challenges due to the pandemic. The fund provides financial assistance to those in need, including rough sleepers, elderly individuals living alone, single-parent families, and individuals affected by illness.

As the COVID-19 situation has improved, it is observed that the presenting issues for families requiring financial support may not be directly related to the pandemic. However, the vision of the fund remains unchanged and we continue to offer emergency relief or short-term assistance to individuals and families facing unexpected hardships that significantly impact their household income. This assistance covers essential needs such as food, groceries, transportation, and daily expenses.

COMMUNITY CONNECT

The Emergency Relief Assistance focuses on meeting immediate basic necessities, while the Short-Term Relief Assistance aims to provide temporary support until longer-term assistance is approved by a Social Service Office or another relevant agency. Assistance was also given to persons who walked in who required urgent, one-time needs and serves as an initial assessment for those who may require further assistance through the Neighborhood Assistance Fund.



37 beneficiaries supported

BCS has helped to ease my burden in the meantime and gave me encouragement to go on living.

Norsidah, NAF recipient



• Specialised Services : Legal Clinic

Since March 2015, our free legal clinic has been providing services primarily to residents in Serangoon, Hougang, and neighbouring towns. Each session, we attend to an average of 4 to 5 applicants seeking legal consultations.

Starting from January 2023, our legal clinic consultations have transited from virtual mode to an on-site clinic setup. We are proud to be a part of the Pro Bono SG Community Legal Clinics network since May 2022.

3 Most Common Case Types

Divorce
Probate/estate
Civil claims

"The information given by the lawyer was useful and the volunteer was friendly."

"The lawyer was sincere and focused on my problem."

Legal clinic applicants



**48 applicants
17 volunteers**



COMMUNITY CONNECT

• Community Outreach : Neighbourhood Visitation

Neighbourhood Visitation is a program initiated by Bless Community Services with the aim of building stronger connections with the residents of Serangoon North Ave 1 & 2 and Hougang Ave 8 & 9. Since the Covid-19 situation has eased, our volunteers have managed to visit residents from over 40 blocks as planned. The volunteers made four visits to the neighbourhood during the year.

During each visit, our volunteers engage with residents, sharing information about our programmes and services. We also aim to befriend them and provide a listening ear for any concerns or issues they may have. Our goal is to establish a bridge of communication and trust between the residents and Bless Community Services, promoting community building and solidarity.

Visit in April/May 2022:

To promote mental wellness and family bonding, Paint-By-Number kits were distributed to residents, allowing them to destress through painting. Positive feedback was received, indicating that it was a fun family activity. The distribution resulted in:



2279 households reached
207 volunteers involved



Visit in October 2022:

During visitations, residents were invited to the upcoming Friends & Neighbours Dinner on 26 November 2022. In preparation for the rainy season, umbrellas were also provided to the community, which proved useful for the residents.



2020 households reached
254 volunteers involved



COMMUNITY CONNECT

Visit in December 2022:

4,083 calendars were successfully distributed to residents across all 40 blocks. Some bursary recipients assisted in the distribution during the school holidays. The calendars served as a tribute to volunteers, featuring their selflessness, kindness, and generosity. A total of 23 volunteers were involved, including some residents living in the area.



23 volunteers

Visit in January 2023:

Volunteers visited residents during Lunar New Year, offering two mandarin oranges and well wishes for good health and peace to each household. This visitation provided an opportunity for volunteers to learn more about the residents and discover their strengths. Notably, one resident in Serangoon North was found to have a talent for making "kueh" (traditional cakes). The visitation involved 239 volunteers and the distribution of 4,200 oranges to the neighborhood.



239 volunteers

Hear from our volunteers:

"NV is a meaningful activity as it allows us to interact and engage with the residents in the neighbourhood. We have become a familiar presence and the residents are always happy to see us."

Yuan Sheng (visits Blk 111)



"One of the things I look forward to on our NV are familiar faces opening the doors and greeting us with a warm smile. Two families in particular warms my heart:

- One is a family with two primary school kids who are very polite and cheerful. Grandma knows about 'Bless' programmes and the weekly exercise programme.
- Another family also receives the gifts & brochures warmly though they are rather shy.

My hope is they will join 'Bless' programmes regularly."

Lai Han (visits Blk 157)

COMMUNITY CONNECT

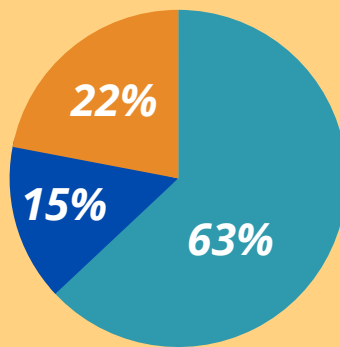
• Specialised Services : Safe Sound Sleeping Places (S3P)

The Safe Sound Sleeping Place (S3P) is a temporary shelter that provides a safe and secure place for rough sleepers to stay while they work on achieving their long-term housing goals. Our first shelter, S3P@YCKC, was established in November 2019, and since then, we have expanded our operations to include two more shelters, increasing our total capacity to 27. From April 2022 to March 2023, we have provided shelter for 83 individuals. Working closely with social workers, we successfully helped 62 of them transit to longer-term housing. Out of these, 45 were from YCKC, 7 from Inspire, and 10 from GLCC.

S3P AT A GLANCE

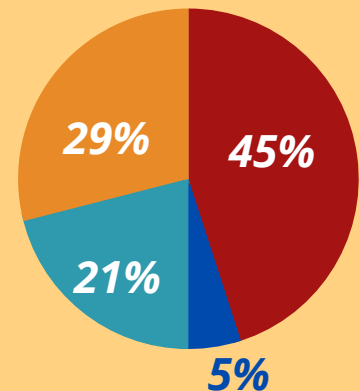
- We manage 3 S3Ps
 - S3P@YCKC
 - S3P@GLCC
 - S3P@Inspire
- Total capacity: 27
 - 21 for males
 - 6 for females

Breakdown by Age



- 18-35
- 36-50
- 51-71

Breakdown by Ethnicity



- Chinese
- Malay
- Indian
- Others

In much of our work, we collaborate with other partners and stakeholders involved in assisting the shelter guest. One such shelter guest was Mr T. We collaborated extensively with social workers and medical professionals to find a suitable place for Mr. T. After a year of exploration, he was finally admitted to a group senior home.

In addition to providing a safe place to sleep, we celebrate festive holidays like Christmas and Lunar New Year with our guests. We organize special events, such as a visit to Madam Tussaud's Wax Museum, for past and present shelter guests. To address health needs, we have set up a sick bay for individuals requiring daytime rest.

For our efforts in supporting the homeless and rough sleepers, Bless Community Services was presented with the Star Partner Award of the Public Sector Transformation (PST) Awards in July 2022. The PST Awards commends public officers and agencies for excellence in their work and organisational practices.



COMMUNITY CONNECT



83 stayers
19 volunteers



"I am very happy that all the staff and the church have helped me these few years."

Mr T, S3P stayer

"Sometimes our actions and words may seem mundane, but they may spur someone on. Keep up the good work!"

Mr Pang, volunteer

• Specialised Services : Counselling

The counselling service, initiated in March 2015, offers assistance to individuals and families seeking support for various concerns. Staffed by a dedicated team of volunteer counsellors, most sessions are conducted in person, with virtual options available as needed.

Despite COVID-19 being treated as an endemic disease, the counselling team continues to address the lasting effects it has on clients' lives, including anxiety and family conflict issues.



Top 3 case types:
stress, anxiety,
family relationships
54 Sessions
10 Clients
6 Volunteers



"Thank you for helping to arrange the counselling sessions. Thanks and God bless!"

Mr O

"A big thanks to everyone at BCS. I had a great experience learning and serving here. Thank you."

Ms L, counselling intern

COMMUNITY CONNECT

• Community Cohesion : Friends & Neighbours (F&N) Dinner

After the COVID-19 Safe Management Measures were lifted, we eagerly seized the opportunity to organize the Friends & Neighbours Dinner, which had been on hiatus since 2020. The evening was filled with laughter and excitement as our talented emcees skillfully engaged the captivated crowd. Residents from both our community and S3P program enthusiastically attended the dinner.

Embracing the theme of "Good Old Days", the dinner allowed guests to indulge in nostalgic memories of beloved songs and games like capteh and paper ball. To add to the delightful experience, we set up a special ice cream station where everyone could relish delicious treats alongside the sumptuous buffet dinner.

The event served as a platform to celebrate the achievements of our beneficiaries, as we presented our Bursary Awards to deserving recipients. It was an opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated volunteers and partners. In recognition of their exceptional efforts in supporting rough sleepers, our S3P partners from MSF PEERS Office, Gospel Light Christian Church, and Inspire Community Services were presented with plaques as tokens of appreciation.

The F&N Dinner attracted a total of 150 guests in attendance. It was a joyous and memorable occasion that brought together our community, residents, volunteers, and partners.



150 guests



LEADERSHIP

BOARD MEMBERS



Shi Pau Soon
Chairman



Chen Xiyan
Board Member



Toh Tze Keong
Vice-Chairman Acting CEO



Ng Kay Chong
Board Member



Teo Hee Peng
Honorary Treasurer



Ronald Wong Jian Jie
Board Member



Ng Ai Zhen
Honorary Secretary



Soh Tee Peng William
Board Member



Khong Wan Yi, Eunice
Board Member

LEADERSHIP

BOARD AND MANAGEMENT

The administration of the Society is entrusted to a Board consisting of nine members. The term of office of the Board is two (2) years. The Board members are to be elected at alternate Annual General Meetings. All office-bearers of the Board shall hold office for a term of two (2) years upon election and shall be eligible for re-election to the same or related post for consecutive terms, except the Honorary Treasurer who may not be re-elected to the same or related post for more than two (2) consecutive terms of office.

The current Board comprises the following:

Name	Position	Date of Last Appointment as Board Member	Date Assumed	Board Director Since	Attendance / over No. of Board Meetings in FY 22/23	Qualification & Experience
Mr Shi Pau Soon (Age: 68)	Chairman	30 Jun 2022	24 Jun 2018	Jun 2017	6/6	Retiree; Past Experience: Senior Advisor Service Business Group Fujitec Singapore Corporation Ltd (12 years)
Mr Toh Tze Keong (Age: 51)	Vice-Chairman Acting CEO	30 Jun 2022	24 Jun 2018 08 Apr 2019	Jan 2014	3/6	Lead Pastor, Yio Chu Kang Chapel Board of Directors, Yio Chu Kang Chapel
Ms Ng Ai Zhen (Age: 31)	Honorary Secretary	30 Jun 2022	26 Jul 2020	Jun 2016	6/6	Social Worker, Catholic Welfare Services
Mr Teo Hee Peng (Age:65)	Honorary Treasurer	27 Jun 2021	27 Jun 2021	26 Jul 2020	5/6	Retiree; Past Experience: Senior Executive, Singapore Anglican Community Services (7 years)
Ms Khong Wan Yi, Eunice (Age: 37)	Board Member	27 Jun 2021	27 Jun 2021	27 Jun 2021	3/6	Liquidity Product Manager, HSBC Holdings PLC

LEADERSHIP

Name	Position	Date of Last Appointment as Board Member	Date Assumed	Board Director Since	Attendance / over No. of Board Meetings in FY 22/23	Qualification & Experience
Mr Chen Xiyun (Age: 33)	Board Member	27 Jun 2021	27 Jun 2021	27 Jun 2021	2/6	Market Risk Analyst, PetroChina Company Limited
Mr Ng Kay Chong (Age: 67)	Board Member	27 Jun 2021	27 Jun 2021	27 Jun 2021	4/6	Retiree; Past Experience: Consultant, ST Engineering (47 years)
Mr Ronald Wong Jian Jie (Age: 36)	Board Member	30 Jun 2022	24 Jun 2018	24 Jun 2018	5/6	Director, Covenant Chambers LLC
Mr Soh Tee Peng William (Age: 48)	Board Member	11 Aug 2022	26 Jul 2020	26 Jul 2020	3/6	Programme Head (Organisational Development), Singapore After-Care Association

BOARD MEETINGS

The Board met six (6) times during the financial year 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 on the following dates:

1. 19 Apr 2022 (64th Board Meeting)
2. 14 Jun 2022 (65th Board Meeting)
3. 02 Aug 2022 (66th Board Meeting)
4. 04 Oct 2022 (67th Board Meeting)
5. 13 Dec 2022 (68th Board Meeting)
6. 07 Feb 2023 (69th Board Meeting)

There were two (2) Extraordinary Meetings (EGMs) held:

1. 11 Aug 2022
2. 26 Mar 2023

LEADERSHIP

Sub-Committees

Sub-committees are established to assist the Board in making better decisions and improve its oversight over management and its accountability to stakeholders. All sub-committees have written Terms of Reference (TOR) which were approved by the Board.

<p>Finance Committee</p>	<p>Chairman Teo Hee Peng, Thomas</p> <p>Members: Lum Weng Kiong Amy Lam</p>	<p>The Finance Committee works with the financial team to monitor the finances of the organization, guided by our Financial Policies. The Board Treasurer chairs the committee. The Committee meets at least once every year and as needed.</p> <p>The Committee's responsibilities include the following:</p> <p>Works with different stake holders to prepare annual budget for Board's approval.</p> <p>Ensure regular and accurate monitoring and accountability for funds and report to the Board on any financial irregularities and concerns.</p> <p>Monitors BCS's financial status regularly to ensure fiscal discipline and report on BCS's balance sheet at every Board meeting.</p> <p>Ensure the organization has sufficient cash reserves and investments necessary for long-term success.</p>
<p>Personnel Committee</p>	<p>Chairman Shi Pau Soon</p> <p>Members: Toh Tze Keong, Rick</p>	<p>The Personnel Committee facilitates the organisation on Board renewal; staff recruitment, remuneration, and welfare policies. The Board Chairman chairs the committee. The committee meets once every year and as needed.</p> <p>The Committee's responsibilities include the following:</p> <p>Reviews the composition of the Board annually to ensure that the Board has an appropriate balance of independent Board members and to ensure an appropriate balance of expertise, skills, attributes and ability among the Board members.</p>

LEADERSHIP

		<p>Identifies potential board member candidates and explores their interest and availability for board service;</p> <p>Nominates board members for election as board officers.</p> <p>Oversees the process of board orientation for new board members.</p> <p>Draft staff personnel and welfare policies and revising it periodically to keep them up-to-date and comparable with the social service industry.</p> <p>Guides development, review and authorisation of HR policies and procedures.</p> <p>Establishes a salary structure, and annually reviewing staff salaries.</p> <p>Acts as a grievance Board to address employee complaints.</p>
<p>Audit Committee</p>	<p>Chairman Chen Xi Yan</p> <p>Members: Ng Ai Zhen Teo Hee Peng, Thomas</p>	<p>The BCS Audit Committee facilitates the external and internal audit of the organisation for the Board to obtain independent information about the organisation's activities. The Committee shall comprise of at least one Board member and the Board Treasurer will be part of this Committee. The Committee meets at least once every year and as needed.</p> <p>The Committee's responsibilities include the following:</p> <p>To analyse and address the risks that are associated with the key processes (to refer to BCS Risk Management Policy and BCS PDPA Policy).</p> <p>To conduct periodic internal checks on key processes to ensure compliance with the established procedures, and report to the Board on the findings and recommendations for improvements.</p> <p>To oversee regulatory compliance (to refer to Government Evaluation Checklist) and whistle-blower guidelines (to refer to BCS Whistleblowing Policy).</p>

GOVERNANCE

Role of the Governing Board

The Board's role is to provide strategic direction and oversight of BCS's programmes and objectives and to steer the charity towards fulfilling its vision and mission through good governance. As part of its role, the following matters require Board's approval:

- Approve budget for the financial year and monitor expenditure against budget;
- Regularly monitor the progress of the charity's programmes;
- Review and evaluate the achievement of the programmes' intended purpose;
- Regularly, and at least annually, review the amount of reserves that are required to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil the charity's continuing obligations;
- Annually assess and manage risk(s).

Disclosure Related to Board and Executive Management

1. The Board assumes the overall responsibility for setting the direction and strategy of the Society to ensure proper stewardship and the fulfilment of its vision and mission.
2. The Vice-Chairman holds a dual role as a Board member and Acting CEO. He does not chair the Board meeting.
3. The Board did not receive any remuneration from the Society during the Financial Year. As such, no Board member is involved in setting his or her own remuneration.
4. The Acting CEO did not receive any remuneration from the Society during the Financial Year.
5. There are no staff (employees) who are close members of the family of a Board member or the CEO.
6. The Board meets regularly with a quorum of at least more than half (1/2) for its proceedings to be valid.
7. Staff members are not permitted to chair Board meetings.
8. All Board members are appointed in Society's General Meetings. They served a two year term and may be re-appointed.
9. The Treasurer has a term limit of four (4) consecutive years, as stipulated in the Society's Constitution.
10. In the Financial Year 2022/2023, no Board members have served for more than ten (10) consecutive years, as was outlined in the Society's Constitution. All Board members have served for less than nine (9) consecutive years.
11. A total of six (6) board meetings were held in the Financial Year 2022/2023 (this excludes the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 27 June 2021).
12. All Board members are inducted via an induction programme and the Board Code of Conduct, which outlines the Responsibilities and Ethical Guidelines of the Board.

Human Resource Management

1. The Society employs paid staff (employees).
2. No staff is involved in setting his or her own remuneration.
3. There are no staff (employees) who are close members of the family of a Board Member or the CEO.
4. There are processes for regular supervision, appraisal and professional development.
5. None of the Society's staff has received more than \$100,000 in annual remuneration each.

Volunteer Management

1. Volunteers (individuals) are key partners in our service delivery and fulfilment of the programme requirements.
2. New volunteers are introduced to the Volunteers Handbook and required to abide by a Code of Conduct to maintain confidentiality and comply with our PDPA Policy.
3. Trainings are conducted for volunteers to ensure that they are able to contribute effectively and ensure the wellbeing and safety of our beneficiaries and also our volunteers.

Management of Conflict of Interest

1. There are documented policies for Board members and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts of interests to the Board.
2. Board members make annual declarations of actual or potential conflicts of interests to the Board during the first Board meeting after the AGM.
3. Board Members abstain and do not vote or participate in decision-making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.

Risk Management

1. The Board annually identifies, evaluates and manages risks to reduce the adverse scenarios associated with our Society's strategies, programmes and services.
2. The Board has a risk management policy in place to evaluate the adequacy and effectiveness of the Society's risk management and internal control systems, including financial, compliance, technology, operational, communication and media.

Whistle-Blowing Policy

The Society endeavours to have a high standard of accountability, transparency and compliance. The Whistle-blowing Policy aims to provide an avenue for staff, volunteers and external parties (e.g., clients, contractors, members of the public) to confidentially whistle-blow and raise concerns about possible wrongdoing or improprieties in matters within the Society, without fear of reprisals or victimisation.

For more information: <https://www.bless.org.sg/whistle-blowingpolicy/>

PDPA Policy

The Society endeavours to fulfil her responsibilities under the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (the "PDPA"). The Society's PDPA policy provides information on how BCS ("we", "us", "our") collect, manage, use and disclose personal data. This policy applies to personal data collected from all individuals who are our clients, beneficiaries, members of the families of our clients or beneficiaries, employees, volunteers, donors, participants in our events, and anyone whose personal data we have possession of.

For more information: <https://www.bless.org.sg/pdpa/>

Reserves Policy

The Society has a reserve policy for long-term stability of the operations and it ensures that there are sufficient resources to support the charity in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Reserves refer to that part of the income funds (excluding endowment funds and restricted funds and designated funds) that is freely available for its operating purposes not subject to commitment. The charity shall keep a minimum \$50,000 or at least 30% of the current year's operating expenditure budget, whichever is higher, in the bank current accounts and/or fixed deposits as reserves for contingency use in the event that donations are insufficient to meet both the operating expenses and the capital expenditure of the charity. This is to ensure that the charity has sufficient funds that can be made available for its operating purposes in case of emergency or temporary budget shortfall, especially during a prolonged severe economic downturn.

We intend to use the reserves in the following manner:

1. Pay all staff salaries;
2. Settle all outstanding liabilities;
3. Ensure all outstanding operations are kept running for up to 3 months and with the view to either wind down operations or raise further financial support beyond that time.

GOVERNANCE EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The Governance Evaluation Checklist (GEC) covers the key guidelines in the Code of Governance for Charities and IPCs (“the Code”). Below is Bless Community Services’ GEC (Intermediate Tier) for FY2022.

S/N	Code guideline	Code ID	Response
	Board Governance		
1	Induction and orientation are provided to incoming governing board members upon joining the Board.	1.1.2	Complied
	Are there governing board members holding staff appointments? (skip items 2 and 3 if “No”)		Yes
2	Staff does not chair the Board and does not comprise more than one third of the Board.	1.1.3	Complied
3	There are written job descriptions for the staff’s executive functions and operational duties, which are distinct from the staff’s Board role.	1.1.5	Complied
4	The Treasurer of the charity (or any person holding an equivalent position in the charity, e.g. Finance Committee Chairman or a governing board member responsible for overseeing the finances of the charity) can only serve a maximum of 4 consecutive years . If the charity has not appointed any governing board member to oversee its finances, it will be presumed that the Chairman oversees the finances of the charity.	1.1.7	Complied
5	All governing board members must submit themselves for re-nomination and re-appointment , at least once every 3 years.	1.1.8	Complied
6	There are documented terms of reference for the Board and each of its committees.	1.2.1	Complied
	Conflict of Interest		
7	There are documented terms of reference for the Board and each of its committees.	2.1	Complied
8	Governing board members do not vote or participate in decision making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.	2.4	Complied
	Strategic Planning		
9	The Board periodically reviews and approves the strategic plan for the charity to ensure that the charity’s activities are in line with the charity’s objectives.	3.2.2	Complied

GOVERNANCE EVALUATION CHECKLIST

S/N	Code guideline	Code ID	Response
	Strategic Planning		
9	The Board periodically reviews and approves the strategic plan for the charity to ensure that the charity's activities are in line with the charity's objectives.	3.2.2	Complied
	Human Resource and Volunteer Management		
10	The Board approves documented human resource policies for staff.	5.1	Complied
11	There is a documented Code of Conduct for governing board members, staff and volunteers (where applicable) which is approved by the Board.	5.3	Complied
12	There are processes for regular supervision, appraisal and professional development of staff.	5.5	Complied
	Financial Management and Internal Controls		
13	There is a documented policy to seek the Board's approval for any loans, donations, grants or financial assistance provided by the charity which are not part of the charity's core charitable programmes.	6.1.1	Complied
14	The Board ensures that internal controls for financial matters in key areas are in place with documented procedures .	6.1.2	Complied
15	The Board ensures that reviews on the charity's internal controls, processes, key programmes and events are regularly conducted.	6.1.3	Complied
16	The Board ensures that there is a process to identify, and regularly monitor and review the charity's key risks .	6.1.3	Complied
17	The Board approves an annual budget for the charity's plans and regularly monitors the charity's expenditure.	6.2.1	Complied
	Does the charity invest its reserves (e.g. in fixed deposits)? (skip item 18 if "No")		No
18	The charity has a documented investment policy approved by the Board.	6.4.3	Complied
	Fundraising Practices		
	Did the charity receive cash donations (solicited or unsolicited) during the financial year? (skip item 19 if "No")		Yes

GOVERNANCE EVALUATION CHECKLIST

S/N	Code guideline	Code ID	Response
19	All collections received (solicited or unsolicited) are properly accounted for and promptly deposited by the charity.	7.2.2	Complied
	Did the charity receive donations in kind during the financial year? (skip item 20 if "No")		Yes
20	All donations in kind received are properly recorded and accounted for by the charity.	7.2.3	Complied
	Disclosure and Transparency		
21	The charity discloses in its annual report — (a) the number of Board meetings in the financial year; and (b) the attendance of every governing board member at those meetings.	8.2	Complied
	Are governing board members remunerated for their services to the Board? (skip items 22 and 23 if "No")		No
22	No governing board member is involved in setting his own remuneration.	2.2	Complied
23	The charity discloses the exact remuneration and benefits received by each governing board member in its annual report. <u>OR</u> <u>The charity discloses that no governing board member is remunerated.</u>	8.3	Complied
	Does the charity employ paid staff? (skip items 24 and 25 if "No")		Yes
24	No staff is involved in setting his own remuneration.	2.2	Complied
25	The charity discloses in its annual report — (a) the total annual remuneration for each of its 3 highest paid staff who each has received remuneration (including remuneration received from the charity's subsidiaries) exceeding \$100,000 during the financial year; and (b) whether any of the 3 highest paid staff also serves as a governing board member of the charity. The information relating to the remuneration of the staff must be presented in bands of \$100,000. <u>OR</u> <u>The charity discloses that none of its paid staff receives more than \$100,000 each in annual remuneration.</u>	8.4	Complied

THE YEAR AHEAD

Dear supporters of BCS,

I am glad to share with you some exciting plans BCS has in FY2023/2024 to empower our community. We want to do more through providing more platforms to Empower and Engage.

Empowering Our Youths: Launching GRIT Club

Today's youth are said to be one of the most stressed-out generations. They not only deal with the pressures of producing academic results, but they also have to deal with both physical and digital peer pressures. In response, BCS' Youth Connect wishes to pay attention to the mental and emotional well-being of youths in the community. We are launching a GRIT Club to provide a safe space for youths to come together to develop positive self-image, cultivate relationships and make an impact on the communities around them. GRIT stands for Gratitude, Resilience, Impact and Tenacity.

Empowering Our Seniors: Launching SWEE! Club

One of Singapore's biggest challenges is the demographic trend of an increasing ageing population. A local study done in 2019 found that 34 percent who are aged 60 and older perceived themselves as lonely. BCS Senior Connect will launch SWEE! club to promote Senior Wellness, Senior Engagement and Senior Empowerment. We wish to empower seniors to connect with the community and engage them with meaningful activities to help them remain active and productive in their silver years.

Empowering Our Rough Sleepers: Expanding our S3P (Night Shelters) Work

Since September 2022, BCS has been managing three S3Ps to provide care for the homeless and rough sleepers. In 2023, we hope to expand this work by managing two to three more S3Ps. We have partners who are looking for our expertise to help manage their facilities and convert them into S3Ps. We also wish to deepen this work by offering pro-bono professional counselling to the stayers to help them process through their challenges in hope that that they can move forward in life.

Engaging the Community: Setting up Bless Café at our Bless Wellness Centre

We will be renovating our Bless Wellness Centre to feature a mini café (Bless Café), offering convenient beverages and snacks. The café aims to encourage social bonding among members of the SWEE! and GRIT clubs.

We look forward to your continual partnership with us in establishing the above-mentioned initiatives. Thank you!



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Toh'.

Rick Toh
Acting CEO/Vice Chairman