

VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY

England & Wales · Charity number 1068104

Details

Other names	HACKNEY AGENCY FOR VOLUNTEERING, HACKNEY VOLUNTARY ACTION
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	03357999
Registered	1998-02-12
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Volunteer Centre Unit 12-13 Springfield House 5 Tyssen Street Hackney LONDON
Phone	02072414443
Email	info@vchackney.org
Website	www.vchackney.org

Activities

Objects: (1) to promote the benefit of the community principally but not exclusively in the London Borough of Hackney and environs by the promotion, support and development of voluntary services in the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness;(2) to do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

Activities: The objectives of the charity are to promote the benefit of the community in the London Borough of Hackney by the promotion, support and development of voluntary services in the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** HACKNEY, GREATER LONDON
- Hackney

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£1,197,612	£1,224,383	£229,476	23
2024-03-31	£1,136,629	£1,106,344	£256,247	23
2023-03-31	£926,931	£848,204	£225,962	19
2022-03-31	£890,602	£832,709	£147,235	22
2021-03-31	£564,491	£544,195	£89,342	12

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Philip Gray	Chair	2024-05-15
Jade Pei Shih Tan		2022-07-06
Olivia Fuller		2024-05-15
Omar Salih		2024-11-27

VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1068104

Accounts

Volunteer Centre Hackney

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 March 2025



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TRUSTEES

Philip Gray (appointed 15 May 2024) - Chair
Jade Tan
Olivia Fuller (appointed 15 May 2024)
Behrouz Bayat (appointed 15 May 2024)
Omar Salih (appointed 10 February 2025)
Jonathan Parr (resigned 15 May 2024)
Adelle Grisaffe (resigned 6 February 2025)
Michelle Lawrence (resigned 10 February 2025)
William Alego (resigned 22 April 2025)
Robert Sugden – Chair (resigned 2 October 2025)
Rachel Linn (resigned 2 October 2025)

COMPANY REGISTERED NUMBER

3357999

CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER

1068104

REGISTERED OFFICE

12-13 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street, London E8 2LY

KEY MANAGEMENT

Lauren Tobias

AUDITORS

Xeinadin Audit Limited, Statutory Auditor
8th Floor, Becket House, 36 Old Jewry, London, EC2R 8DD

BANKERS

HSBC, 283 Mare Street, London E8 1PJ
CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit their annual report and the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Hackney (VCH) for the year ended 31 March 2025. The trustees confirm that the annual report and the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the charity's governing documentation and the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

CONSTITUTION, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum of Association on 15 April 1997.

VCH is a local development agency governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. VCH's objects are "to promote the benefit of the community in the London Borough of Hackney by the promotion, support and development of voluntary services in the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness."

The directors, who are listed on page 1, act as trustees for the charitable activities of the company and exercise the powers of the company. The trustees may by power of attorney or otherwise appoint any person to be the agent of the company for such purposes and on such condition as they determine. They also may delegate any of their powers to any committee consisting of one or more trustees or other person.

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT OR ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The management of the company is the responsibility of the trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association. The number of trustees shall not be subject to any maximum but shall not be less than two. All trustees retire from office at the first Annual General Meeting subsequent to their appointment. One third of trustees is subject to retirement by rotation at the Annual General Meeting. In both instances retiring trustees, presuming they are eligible, will put themselves forward for re-appointment. Additionally, the Board may make appointments from time to time to fill vacancies. The Board usually meets every eight weeks. Additional meetings are held when the need arises.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF TRUSTEES

Joiners to the Board are provided with an induction pack which includes background information on the charity including the last set of accounts and the Charity Commission's publication on the legal responsibilities of charity trustees. As a provider of related training to external groups, the charity's trustees have access to a variety of sources of information to ensure that they are kept up to date on the changing regulations surrounding charities and trustees' responsibilities.

MANAGEMENT

The trustees agree the strategic direction of the charity, approve its budget, and receive progress reports in achieving organisational objectives from its Chief Executive Officer.

The charity employs staff, including a Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias, who carries out the day-to-day management of the company's work. There are line management structures linking all staff to the CEO, and through her, to the trustees.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

2024-25 was another successful year of delivery, as we continued to expand all our programmes to support Hackney's communities to volunteer and work together on community initiatives.

Building on its success, our patient engagement programme based at GP practices - Together Better - doubled in size, bringing the total numbers of GP practices engaged to 35.

We doubled the number of people with support needs placed into volunteering, while our Community Befriending programme grew considerably with over 140 volunteers matched to isolated Hackney residents. We also continued to grow our Community Health Champions, with over 200 residents and service providers coming on board to share vital health messaging with communities.

Over the year we enabled the following:

- **1,202** residents registered an interest in volunteering
- **596** people **started volunteering** across the borough
- **151** of those residents had **support needs** – double our annual target
- **73** residents with **mental health issues** were supported to volunteer
- **150 isolated residents** were supported by volunteer befrienders with regular companionship, who provided **over 7,000 hours** of one-to-one support for vulnerable isolated residents
- **203** Community Health Champions were supported to **share vital health messaging** to their communities speaking **43** different languages between them.
- **Over 100** patients - mostly with long term health conditions - **supported to volunteer** at local GP practices, and
- **700 patients** supported to participate in patient-led activities at GP practices.

Volunteer Recruitment and Guidance

We significantly surpassed our targets this year including exceeding our target of volunteer placements by one third, and doubling our target for the number of people with support needs who started to volunteer. This was despite there being a generally reported drop in volunteer numbers both nationally and regionally. And was due to a range of factors - more focussed outreach, more diverse outreach, improved communications, more 1:1 appointments with individuals interested in volunteering as well as better data collection and recording.

During the last year, we advertised 634 volunteer roles with 300 of these being completely new roles. We engaged with more than 800 community organisations, with 37 of those being new to VCH, via our brokerage service, regular newsletters and 1:1 support on a range of issues. Organisations supported vary from large well-known national charities with local branches, for example Oxfam, to smaller local charities, such as Made in Hackney and other non-profit entities such as the NHS.

What kinds of volunteering?

Volunteer Centre Hackney provides the opportunity for volunteers to find roles that meet their requirements in terms of the timing of the volunteering, location, its nature i.e. physical, outdoors, indoors, craft related, who it helps, demonstrating the flexible nature of volunteering. There were one-off opportunities, such as the roles at the Hackney Moves Festival, roles requiring a couple of hours whenever the volunteer is available, such as the foodbank role at Storehouse, and others looking for a longer-term commitment, for example volunteering to help adults read at Read Easy which prefers volunteers to commit for at least a year. All volunteering roles provide an opportunity to learn or refresh skills, but some also offer formal training which leads to qualifications as is the case with the National Childbirth Trust which provides volunteers with an OCN accredited qualification in peer support.

Best Practice Guidance

We increased our best practice offer to people supporting volunteers at charities across Hackney, providing bespoke guidance and training to over 30 organisations, through 1:1 meetings, group training sessions and networking events. Topics covered included:

- what should be included in a volunteering advert
- do we need to pay volunteer expenses
- can asylum seekers/refugees volunteer
- are DBS checks needed for specific volunteering roles
- how to diversify the volunteer base
- how to support volunteers with additional needs/requirements
- what volunteer policies need to be in place

"The conversation we had and [VCH's] support in navigating our decision making around whether we are able to recruit and support volunteers with convictions has been very helpful", Hackney Foodbank.

"The networking events have been a great opportunity to share experiences, know-how and to network", AMURT UK's London Feeding Programme.

We have also updated our free online toolkit which comprises a series of information sheets on a variety of topics relevant to the recruitment and management of volunteers.

Who volunteered and why?

Volunteering allows existing skills to be used, new skills to be acquired and, in each case, the sharing of those skills. Volunteering connects people with each other and with their local community, builds confidence and wellbeing, and leads to greater resilience. Organisations that rely on volunteers gain a much-needed resource to help deliver their services. The result is stronger and more cohesive local communities based on mutual support, with programmes that meet community needs.

Individuals of all ages and backgrounds volunteered, and there was a variety of motivations to do so. Some were looking to gain experience to add to their CV, others were retired and wanted to give something back to their local community and/or do something which enabled them to get out and meet people.

87.36% of volunteers surveyed reported that they had learned new skills from volunteering, including communication/listening skills, organisation skills, administrative and IT skills. Many respondents stated they had gained employability skills whilst volunteering.

"This experience has progressed my skills in communication, empathy, and the ability to create a supportive and positive environment for individuals from diverse backgrounds. These responsibilities have not only strengthened my ability to provide practical support but also the importance of listening, understanding, and addressing the unique needs of each individual."

A vital aspect of our mission is to ensure we are building stronger communities through bringing individuals together. Almost all of the individuals we surveyed strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that "volunteering has helped me to meet people/feel part of my community".

"Volunteering is one of the most worthwhile things to do, not only on a personal level, but in feeling connected to your community. You will meet new people, gain experience and make a difference in people's lives."

86.05% of individuals agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "volunteering has improved my wellbeing/mental health", a significant increase on the 71% from last year. One key aspect to wellbeing is an individual's level of confidence and 80.46% agreed or strongly agreed that "volunteering has helped me to feel more confident", again an increase on the 73% from last year.

"Definitely get involved, the value of being able to spend time with other people in my community has brought me so much joy!"

Diversity and Inclusion

We worked hard this year to address the issue of diversity across VCH, through multiple approaches – both internally and externally. We recruited many volunteers who speak different languages including Farsi, Gaelic, Spanish, Polish, Italian, Urdu, Mandarin, Cantonese, Afrikaans, Hindi, BSL, Ghari, Arabic and Catalan.

To increase the diversity of residents engaged in volunteering, we continued with our equalities-focused series of communication campaigns across the year, such as Mental Health Awareness Week, Pride Month, Black History Month, and Trans Awareness Day. For all these campaigns, we support residents to run activities relating to these themes such as during Black History Month, when residents held African and Caribbean-themed bring-and-share community meals.

We expanded our outreach activities to target people from specific demographics, including refugees and asylum seekers in particular those living in the migrant hotels, older people, people with learning disabilities and people learning English – working closer with community-based organisations, attending Job Fairs, libraries, New City College, Health and Wellbeing Events, giving presentations to groups including SEN and ESOL students; and working closer with organisations who can provide more support to volunteers with support needs such as Hackney Foodbank, Xenia and Hackney Doorways.

Internally, staff continued to commit to our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, taking time to examine our working practices, and to make recommendations where we could improve. This led to us delivering more bespoke training and continuing our recruitment process to offer guaranteed interviews to anyone from a Global Majority background or with a disability.

Looking at our data, we can see that from those that chose to disclose their ethnicity that 48.32% of our service users and 46.21% of VCH's volunteers are from black and global majority backgrounds. These figures are close to the 2022 census data for Hackney which states "around 47% of the population come from Black and Global Majority groups". Our data for service users who identify as 'Asian or Asian British' is 15.63% which is greater than the average for Hackney (10.4%), and the same can be said for those who identify as 'Mixed Background' with 14.1% of our service users selecting this category compared to the Hackney census data of 6.7%.

We are also close to or above the 2021 Census data for service users and volunteers with regards to those who consider themselves disabled. The Census reported that "Almost a fifth of the population of Hackney (19.1%) are disabled under the Equality Act 2010" and our data shows that 23.38% of service users and 18.29% of volunteers consider themselves disabled.

Community Befriending

Volunteers continued to be a lifeline for residents who are identified as socially isolated. Our service users who range in age from 21 to 103, may not have gone out of their home for several months, and may have no one other than clinicians for social support. **Over 150 matches** were supported this year, with our volunteers delivering **over 7,000** hours of one-to-one companionship and support.

On average, six new referrals were made by health professionals and Adult Social Care every week. **96%** of people referred over the year were for people living with mental health challenges including suicidal ideation, depression and/or anxiety – an increase on last year. This was often alongside two or more co-morbidities that reduce mobility or social contact such as COPD, hearing or sight impairment.

Over 30% of referrals did not have English as their first language, requiring recruitment of volunteers who speak multiple community languages such as Bengali, Sylheti, Polish and Turkish.

We saw an increase in referrals for people living with dementia or with memory issues, so we now train our volunteers in Dementia Awareness and Reminisce therapies to help them engage. Carers were also a focus for us this year so they could get some time to themselves, with us partnering with City and Hackney Carers Centre for cross-referrals.

Our volunteers deliver a personalised service making regular phone calls and/or meeting face-to-face, in the home, which is vital for the housebound, or taking people to community activities or for a walk, chatting over a coffee or light shopping trips. Forming a trusted bond, VCH Community Befrienders become aware of when there are subtle changes in someone's health condition, and alert us to when there are practical issues, for which we can provide support or signpost to appropriate services. This can include obtaining support with a Personal Independence Payment, preventing someone's eviction through housing advice, contacting the community mental health team when someone is not taking their medication while we have even helped contact crisis teams, when someone is undergoing an acute crisis including suicidal thoughts.

*"There's nobody like her.
She's brought sunshine back into my life."*

98% of people supported said that having a VCH Community Befriender had a **positive impact** on their physical and mental wellbeing, and **92%** have said that they now feel less isolated and lonely and more connected to the community they live in.

The programme also supports people described as frequent users of emergency services, which they are contacting repeatedly for non-clinical reasons. The majority of these frequent users once matched, and after a few weeks of regular contact, no longer called or visited A&E at all, and the rest have begun to use the service more appropriately.

"My service user is more like family now – we clicked as soon as we met and I'm so glad to have her in my life."

Support Needs – Mental Health, Physical Disabilities, Learning Disabilities

All our services help to support with both alleviating loneliness and reducing anxiety as our model is person-centred, with support provided through building trusted long-term relationships. Working in partnership with all the mental health services in Hackney, GP practices, Social Prescribers, Wellbeing Practitioners and Adult Social Care, we support people's recovery to help them identify their skills and take small steps towards personal goals. **151 people with support needs were supported to volunteer** this year, more than double our target, including **73 with mental health conditions**, of whom **21 were supported into paid employment**. They were placed with a variety of organisations including Crisis charity shops, Hackney Food Bank, Round Chapel, Tree Musketeers and the Canal & River Trust, all of whom have been able to provide the additional support that is required.

To help people re-engage with others, we also hosted multiple sessions in life coaching, wellbeing and self-confidence and monthly group volunteering taster sessions. These monthly sessions have been hosted by local organisations including the Stepney City Farm, Tower Theatre and Hackney Food Bank. We also sustained our weekly Job Club providing two hours of computer access and staff and peer support.

Additionally, we launched a new initiative supporting the North East London Forensics Service, specifically the John Howard Centre and Wolfson House low-medium secure units. We supported **21 individuals, all convicted of an offence and with complex mental health needs**, into volunteering, training and paid work.

*"Excellent support and confidence at a time when I most needed it. I'm now in two voluntary roles, loving both, doing well and progressing", **Step Up member***

*"Step Up has proven to be an essential resource in supporting service users at various stages of their recovery and discharge. Through personalised coaching, skills development, and integration into the community, Step Up has empowered service users to regain confidence, build meaningful connections, access paid employment and prepare for a successful transition into independent living", **Sidrah Babar, Deputy Head Occupational Therapist***

Community Development/ Social Action

Our Place and Together Better - we continued to support local residents to share their skills and start up their own activities and projects through our two place-based social action projects. Both are aimed at engaging local residents to come together and deliver their own solutions to issues they identify, to improve their local area and help local people. We help people recognise their strengths, build confidence, make connections, and help them to address challenges together.

A huge majority of residents present with mental health issues as well as social isolation and difficult life circumstances. Through forming connections and being given the support and encouragement to recognise and then realise their skills, people's confidence, resilience and social networks increase. We also support residents to link to appropriate statutory services including debt guidance, financial support, housing advice, food provision and social care, while the activities they deliver provide an increased range of activities for residents to enjoy.

Our Place was based at community venues on the New Kingshold and Stamford Hill estates, as well as for a 6-month trial period at Hindle House in Dalston, and was supported by Southern Housing Group and the National Lottery, with SHG generously allowing us use of one of their residential properties for the programme for the 9th year running, free of charge.

Over the three venues, we hosted 19 different activities throughout the year. Of these, 13 were led independently by residents, while the other six were activities we delivered to engage residents who needed one-to-one support as they weren't quite ready to lead.

The people we work with face a wide range of challenges, including mental health issues, disabilities, long-term health conditions, isolation, loneliness, and other life difficulties such as poverty and housing problems. Despite these challenges, the community came together to deliver 242 sessions this year—an average of five activities per week. These sessions reached over 140 community members and have been supported by 24 volunteers.

The activities were diverse, ranging from coffee mornings and walking groups to Chi Gong and Pilates, arts and crafts, women's mindfulness, sound meditation, sewing, jewellery making, food pantries, a singing group, book club and parchment making – all led by residents from many different backgrounds.

The Women's Mindfulness group was particularly successful, with more than 20 women attending each week, and the women leading the group have now registered it as a Community Interest Company (CIC).

We also saw a significant impact from the relocation of the food pantry to its permanent home, during summer 2024. This move inspired a new initiative: the creation of a food co-op, which residents set up in partnership with Cooperation Town and The Felix Project. This gives residents more choice about the food they obtain rather than relying on surplus items from food banks.

"I am very much a loner. I challenged myself to be around a large group of people but that has changed since I started coming to the coffee morning. I have met so many residents now, I look forward to coming every Friday".

"The work VCH is doing is tackling loneliness, poverty, and anti-social behaviour. They're giving the community a spirit and the volunteers a purpose in their communities".

"I don't know what I would do, if not for Verona encouraging me to come to these coffee mornings. All I would be doing is sitting on the couch eating biscuits all day and picking up my son from school. Coming to the coffee morning has given me a reason to get out, meet lovely people and make my mental health not feel so bad. Yeah! I am looking to do things again especially with a family walking group".

Together Better continued to grow and thrive, more than doubling to cover 38 GP surgeries across all eight Hackney Neighbourhoods with staff working together with GP practices to support patients to volunteer.

This is an innovative project launched together with the local NHS to establish communities at local surgeries, to empower patients to be more in control of their own health and wellbeing. This is enabled through supporting patients to recognise their skills, and to utilise these through volunteering at the practice. This could be helping patients to register online, to make reminder phone calls about appointments, or to set up their own projects such as a walking group, art club or a gardening project.

Each month, we support around 700 patients, primarily those living with long-term health conditions, who also experience isolation and/or difficult living circumstances, to connect with others through participating in and leading hugely varied co-designed activities.

Our work is hyper-local and deeply relational and embeds values of cultural expression, mutual care and resilience. We build long-term, trusting relationships with patients starting with open conversations at coffee mornings and local walks. These relationships are crucial to identifying needs, overcoming barriers to participation and encouraging continued involvement.

GPs refer patients who may be isolated, or suffering from anxiety or depression and, by attending our activities, they meet new friends, make supportive connections and have a reason to leave their homes. 80% patients surveyed said their health and wellbeing had improved through attending, while 92% of patients said they had made new connections since taking part.

"We are like a little family and always reach out to each other whether happy or sad. We have a good relationship and support team."

"Sharing stories & experiences has been such a learning journey & the support I have offered & received has made such an impact in my own life. Seeing the growth of others attending has been a joy to see!"

"I have built up my confidence and feel like I am part of something. I am also happier."

"Offers me a safe, welcoming space to be."

Many volunteers say that they have gained in confidence and learned new skills, and now feel more empowered to follow their goals. They have gained in confidence to address their health, and 77% of participants said that with additional support from the programme, they had been connected to other advice services to address other concerns such as financial and housing matters.

"Made me feel healthier and educated about the healthier foods we cook together. I have learned a new craft (crochet) and enjoyed yoga and chair exercises, along with meeting new people".

GPs and other medical staff said that they have found that the programme has been beneficial for patients' health, with over 60% saying they believe that they have seen patients book fewer GP appointments as a result; while others say that they have noticed an improved atmosphere at the surgeries.

"An incredible impact! My reason for referral is usually always to better their mental health which is very effective. It helps with socialisation, preventing isolation and developing skills." **Zoe Graham – Mental Health Nurse Practitioner**

"We have lots of feedback from the patients telling receptionists and the GPs that the classes really help them and improve their mental and physical health." **Hannah – Senior Administrator, Richmond Road**

Together Better has transformed our surgery. We are moving towards a place where local residents feel they are part of the practice rather than the practice just providing a service. It brings staff and patients closer together in a really positive way." **Kirsten Brown – Spring Hill GP**

Community Health Champions

44 more Community Champions were on-boarded this year, bringing our total number of Champions to **203** involved in the programme.

This is a partnership with City & Hackney Public Health and funded by national government to recruit, train and support people connected to and trusted by communities across the borough to share key public health messaging via translated and accessible media in ways that are likely to engage residents.

Champions are hosted by **90 voluntary and community organisations** representative of diverse communities across City & Hackney, speaking **43 different languages** between them.

This year, there was increased focus on building and maintaining a programme infrastructure for supporting "resident Champions" (i.e. those not hosted by voluntary and community organisations). Outreach activity to recruit more diverse Champions increased focus on specific under-represented demographics across the borough and those linked to chosen health priorities. These included Global Majority communities such as Black African, Black Caribbean, South & South East Asian, Charedi, Turkish, Kurdish & Cypriot people, as well as older people, and residents from the City of London.

Health topics covered included **mental health and wellbeing, bowel/breast/cervical cancer awareness and screening, cardiovascular health/blood pressure testing, physical activity, diet, nutrition and food poverty, vaccinations and immunisations and wider determinants of health, e.g. cost of living barriers and enablers**. Through monthly forums and peer support groups, Champions are enabled to share vital health messaging with their communities, and in turn, report back to health partners on barriers to engaging with health services leading to more bespoke, relevant service provision for City & Hackney's diverse communities.

Co-Production/Sharing Resident Insight

All our programmes are founded on actively supporting residents to co-produce their own personal journey, dependant on what they would like to achieve, while we facilitate the sharing of insight on their experiences with statutory services.

However, we were also funded during 24-25 to partner with City and Hackney Public Health team and the NHS to support residents to be able to share their experiences of health services and their ideas on how they could be improved. This included maternity services, cardiovascular support, weight management and also mental health support for young people. Residents were supported to join professional panels, to shape the design of new projects, and to attend and actively participate in neighbourhood forums and workshops.

Thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time over the year, to all our funders and to all those who continue to support our work.

Funders who supported us during 2024-25: Hackney Council, Public Health, Southern Housing Group, National Lottery, Greater London Authority, Bailey Thomas Charitable Fund, North London Forensic Collective, NEL ICB (NHS), Integrated Primary Care Networks (City and Hackney), individual GP practices, our business partner The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation, as well as other large corporate firms who kindly donated staff time and funds.

The trustees would also like to go on record in thanking all the staff at VCH for their tremendous efforts throughout the year. As always, their energy and efforts throughout were remarkable and led to many across the borough receiving vital support and connection.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The programmes and activities outlined above resulted in an increase in income from £1,136k to £1,197k. However, due to the challenges of rising costs, expenses increased from £1,106k to £1,224k resulting in a deficit of £27k (2024: surplus of £30k) for the year.

RESERVES POLICY

Reserves at the year end totalled £229,476 of which £127,310 were unrestricted funds. The trustees review the amount of funds VCH requires to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil our continuing obligations on a regular basis. VCH takes a cautious approach towards investment, adopting a short-term low-risk policy. The Board has agreed that while it will maintain reserves at a minimum of 15% of annual costs, it will work towards increasing this to 25% (three months' operating costs) going forward. The Board has agreed to take a measured response to local funding scarcity and rising service delivery costs while VCH cultivates a strategic plan to diversify income streams and reduce costs.

This figure has been arrived at considering:

- the risks associated with individual streams of income and expenditure differing from budget;
- planned activity levels and the major risk to organisational delivery of reducing spending further at this stage; and
- organisational commitments.

RISK MANAGEMENT

VCH's Board of Trustees has identified the major risks to which VCH is exposed and these have been reviewed and systems established to manage those risks. The Board takes a proactive approach to risk identification, reduction and mitigation, and reviews this regularly with senior staff. VCH's current cash flow situation is sound, and a new Business Plan has been adopted for the future.

FUNDRAISING

The trustees do not engage professional fundraisers, nor do they undertake public collections or cold calls. The charity is committed to the principals set out by the Fundraising Regulator in its Code of Fundraising Practice. When donors are approached, this is done with sensitivity and respect and with regard to their circumstances. The trustees are pleased to report that no complaints were received in the past twelve months in relation to its fundraising activities.

ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law), are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). 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 charitable company and of the profit or loss of the charitable company for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principals in the Charity SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of this information.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees acknowledge the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's published general and relevant sub-sector guidance on public benefit.

All activities undertaken by VCH are for the public benefit. With a focus on providing volunteering services, the organisation's operation is very much geared to providing benefit to the local community as is highlighted by the activities reported herein. This will also continue to be central to its future plans.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and was approved by the trustees on 15 December 2025 and signed on their behalf.



Chair, Philip Gray



Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF
VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Hackney (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 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 (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 March 2025 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.

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 Auditors' 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 twelve 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. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, 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 the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; 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; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with trustees and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the activities of the group. These included but were not limited to the Charities Act 2011; Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019); Companies Act 2006, Employment Law; Data Protection Legislation; The Code of Fundraising Practice; and Safeguarding Regulations as they affect the direct charitable activities of the group;

- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence where necessary.

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions;
- tested the appropriateness of journal entries;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

Under ISA 240 (UK) there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue. To address this risk, we obtained an understanding of the company's revenue recognition policies and compared these to the accounting standard, performed a walkthrough to confirm our understanding of the processes and controls through which the business initiates, records, processes and reports revenue transactions. We tested a sample of revenue transactions to supporting evidence and tested, on a sample basis, revenue related balances in the balance sheet.

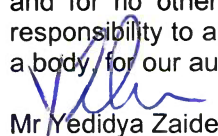
There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error.

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 Report of the Independent Auditors.

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 auditors' 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.


Mr Yedidya Zaiden FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of
Xeinadin Audit Limited
8th Floor Becket House
36 Old Jewry
London
EC2R 8DD

 2025

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Company No 3357999

Statement of Financial Activities (including the Income and Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Income					
Incoming resources from charitable activities:					
Grants receivable	2	-	1,179,726	1,179,726	1,113,460
Other income	2	17,886	-	17,886	23,169
Total income		17,886	1,179,726	1,197,612	1,136,629
Expenditure					
Charitable activities					
		4,345	1,220,038	1,224,383	1,106,344
Total expenditure	3	4,345	1,220,038	1,224,383	1,106,344
Net movement in funds		13,541	(40,312)	(26,771)	30,285
Total funds brought forward		113,769	142,478	256,247	225,962
Total funds carried forward	10	127,310	102,166	229,476	256,247

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The net incoming resources for the year arise from the Charity's continuing operations.

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Company No 3357999

Balance Sheet at 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Current Assets					
Debtors	7	-	115,249	115,249	142,254
Cash at bank and in hand		133,910	114,271	248,181	281,106
		<u>133,910</u>	<u>229,520</u>	<u>363,430</u>	<u>423,360</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	8	(6,600)	(127,354)	(133,954)	(167,113)
		<u>127,310</u>	<u>102,166</u>	<u>229,476</u>	<u>256,247</u>
Net Current Assets					
		<u>127,310</u>	<u>102,166</u>	<u>229,476</u>	<u>256,247</u>
Total Net Assets	10	<u>127,310</u>	<u>102,166</u>	<u>229,476</u>	<u>256,247</u>
Funds					
Unrestricted funds	9			127,310	113,769
Restricted funds	9			102,166	142,478
				<u>229,476</u>	<u>256,247</u>
Total Funds				<u>229,476</u>	<u>256,247</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 15 December 2025.



Chair, Philip Gray

The notes on pages 18 to 24 form part of these financial statements

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Statement of Cash Flows
at 31 March 2025

Company No 3357999

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net (decreasing)/increasing resources	(26,771)	30,285
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	27,005	(90,477)
Decrease in creditors	<u>(33,159)</u>	<u>(265,621)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	(32,925)	(325,813)
 Cash at beginning of the year	 281,106	 606,919
 Cash at the end of the year	 <u><u>248,181</u></u>	 <u><u>281,106</u></u>

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 BASIS OF COMPLIANCE

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 BASIS OF PREPARATION

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.
The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).
The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.3 ASSESSMENT OF GOING CONCERN

The trustees, having made appropriate enquiries, consider that adequate resources exist for the charity to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and that, therefore, it is appropriate to adopt going concern basis in preparing the financial statements as at and for the period ended 31 March 2025. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

The trustees have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet the liabilities as they fall due.

1.4 COMPANY STATUS

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

1.5 MATERIAL PRIOR YEAR ERRORS

No material prior year errors have been identified in the reporting period.

1.6 FUND ACCOUNTING

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.7 INCOME

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Where income has related expenditure (as with fundraising or contract income), the income and related expenditure are reported gross in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Donations, grants and gifts are recognised when receivable. In the event that a donation is subject to fulfilling performance conditions before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period. Income from Gift Aid tax reclaims is recognised for any donations with relevant Gift Aid certificates recognised in income for the year. Any amounts of Gift Aid not received by the year-end are accounted for in income and accrued income in debtors.

For legacies, entitlement is taken on a case-by-case basis as the earlier of the date on which: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate.

Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. If the legacy is in the form of an asset other than cash or an asset listed on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the asset being able to be reliably measured and title to the asset has passed to the charity. Where legacies have been notified to the or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance for a future fundraising event or for a grant received relating to the following year are deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1.8 DONATED GOODS AND SERVICES

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably.

Donated professional services and facilities are included in income at the estimated value of the gift to the charity when received, based on the amount that the charity would have been prepared to pay for these services or facilities had it been required to purchase them, with a corresponding entry in the appropriate expenditure heading for the same amount. Donated fixed assets are similarly taken to income at the value to the charity with the other entry being capitalised in fixed assets.

1.9 EXPENDITURE

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

1.10 TAXATION

The company is considered to pass the tests set out in Sch. 6, para. 1 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Pt. 11, Ch. 3 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or s. 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

1.11 DEBTORS

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Debtors more than one year are included in the accounts at their carrying value.

1.12 CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.13 CREDITORS AND PROVISION

Creditors are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of settlement can be estimated reliably.

1.14 PENSION COSTS AND OTHER POST-RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the company's pension scheme are charged to profit or loss in the period to which they relate.

1.15 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value except for bank loans which are subsequently measured at the carrying value plus accrued interest less repayments. The financing charge to expenditure is at a constant rate calculated using the effective interest method.

1.16 OPERATING LEASES

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged against profits on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.17 VOLUNTEER HELP

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2025

Company No 3357999

2 INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Grants	-	1,179,726	1,179,726	1,113,460
Donations	1,363	-	1,363	78
Interest income	8,169	-	8,169	10,021
Other	8,354	-	8,354	13,070
	17,886	1,179,726	1,197,612	1,136,629

Of the £1,136,629 income in 2024, £1,113,460 was restricted funds and £23,169 unrestricted funds.

3 EXPENDITURE

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries & wages	981,899	903,029
Other staff and project costs	101,552	61,008
Staff training & travel	8,413	6,702
Occupancy costs	42,911	47,630
Insurance	1,855	1,773
Office costs including PPS	5,162	6,077
Telephone	1,503	3,763
Accounting and Payroll	33,568	30,403
Audit/independent Review	6,600	6,600
IT	18,934	16,976
Database	7,160	2,160
Website costs	3,588	10,795
Miscellaneous	11,238	9,428
	1,224,383	1,106,344

Of the total expenditure in the year, £1,220,038 (2024: £1,099,905) was charged to restricted funds and £4,345 (2024: £6,439) to unrestricted funds.

4 NET EXPENDITURE

	2025 £	2024 £
This is stated after charging:		
Audit fee	6,600	6,600
Operating lease rentals - land and buildings	33,585	33,000
Operating lease rentals - other	-	2,309

5 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

During the year, no Trustee received any remuneration (2024: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any benefits in kind (2024: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any reimbursement of expenses (2024: £Nil).

6 STAFF COSTS

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	849,116	789,453
Social security costs	72,170	64,086
Pension costs	60,613	49,490
	<u>981,899</u>	<u>903,029</u>

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees was:

	2025 No	2024 No
Charitable Activities	23	23

One employee received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) amounting to between £70,000 and £75,000 (2024: one between £60,000 and £65,000).

The charity considers its key personnel comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employment benefits (including social security costs) paid to the key management personnel were £73,232 (2024: £64,749).

7 DEBTORS

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	89,928	96,443
Prepayments	9,240	9,729
Accrued income	10,549	30,042
Other debtors	5,532	6,040
	<u>115,249</u>	<u>142,254</u>

8 CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	4,969	6,929
Social security and other taxes	17,085	23,446
Other creditors	330	330
Accruals and deferred income	111,570	136,408
	<u>133,954</u>	<u>167,113</u>

9 STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expend- iture £	At 31 March 2025 £
Unrestricted Funds:				
General funds	113,769	17,886	4,345	127,310
Total Unrestricted Funds	<u>113,769</u>	<u>17,886</u>	<u>4,345</u>	<u>127,310</u>
Restricted Funds:				
Grants and sponsorships to promote, support, and encourage the use and involvement of volunteers in the London Borough of Hackney	142,478	1,179,726	1,220,038	102,166
Total Restricted Funds	<u>142,478</u>	<u>1,179,726</u>	<u>1,220,038</u>	<u>102,166</u>
Total Funds	<u>256,247</u>	<u>1,197,612</u>	<u>1,224,383</u>	<u>229,476</u>

10 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Current assets	133,910	229,520	363,430	423,360
Creditors	(6,600)	(127,354)	(133,954)	(167,113)
	<u>127,310</u>	<u>102,166</u>	<u>229,476</u>	<u>256,247</u>

11	COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES	2025		2024	
		Land & Buildings £	Other £	Land & Buildings £	Other £
	At 31 March the charity was committed to total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:				
	Not later than one year	-	-	28,390	-
	Later than one year and not later than 5 years	-	-	-	-
		-	-	28,390	-

12 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

Amounts contracted for, but not provided in the accounts, amount to £nil (2024: £nil).

13 PENSION COMMITMENTS

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. Payments during the year amounted to £60,613 (2024: £49,490).

14 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions or balances during the year to 31 March 2025.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1068104

Accounts

Volunteer Centre Hackney

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 March 2024



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Notes forming part of the financial statements	18

TRUSTEES

Robert Sugden - Chair
Rachel Linn
William Alego
Adelle Grisaffe
Michelle Lawrence
Jade Tan
Olivia Fuller (appointed 15 May 2024)
Philip Gray (appointed 15 May 2024)
Behrouz Bayat (appointed 15 May 2024)
Andreas Michaelides (resigned 2 August 2023)
Jonathan Parr (resigned 15 May 2024)

COMPANY REGISTERED NUMBER

3357999

CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER

1068104

REGISTERED OFFICE

12-13 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street, London E8 2LY

KEY MANAGEMENT

Lauren Tobias

AUDITORS

Raffingers LLP, Statutory Auditor
19-20 Bourne Court, Southend Road, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 8HD

BANKERS

HSBC, 283 Mare Street, London E8 1PJ
CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit their annual report and the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Hackney (VCH) for the year ended 31 March 2024. The trustees confirm that the annual report and the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the charity's governing documentation and the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

CONSTITUTION, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum of Association on 15 April 1997.

VCH is a local development agency governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. VCH's objects are "to promote the benefit of the community in the London Borough of Hackney by the promotion, support and development of voluntary services in the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness."

The directors, who are listed on page 1, act as trustees for the charitable activities of the company and exercise the powers of the company. The trustees may by power of attorney or otherwise appoint any person to be the agent of the company for such purposes and on such condition as they determine. They also may delegate any of their powers to any committee consisting of one or more trustees or other person.

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT OR ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The management of the company is the responsibility of the trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association. The number of trustees shall not be subject to any maximum but shall not be less than two. All trustees retire from office at the first Annual General Meeting subsequent to their appointment. One third of trustees is subject to retirement by rotation at the Annual General Meeting. In both instances retiring trustees, presuming they are eligible, will put themselves forward for re-appointment. Additionally, the Board may make appointments from time to time to fill vacancies. The Board usually meets every eight weeks. Additional meetings are held when the need arises.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF TRUSTEES

Joiners to the Board are provided with an induction pack which includes background information on the charity including the last set of accounts and the Charity Commission's publication on the legal responsibilities of charity trustees. As a provider of related training to external groups, the charity's trustees have access to a variety of sources of information to ensure that they are kept up to date on the changing regulations surrounding charities and trustees' responsibilities.

MANAGEMENT

The trustees agree the strategic direction of the charity, approve its budget, and receive progress reports in achieving organisational objectives from its Chief Executive Officer.

The charity employs staff, including a Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias, who carries out the day-to-day management of the company's work. There are line management structures linking all staff to the CEO, and through her, to the trustees.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

2023-24 was a year of transition and growth, as we continued to expand all our programmes to support Hackney's communities to volunteer and work together on community initiatives.

We have hugely increased our focus on supporting residents to work together with neighbours, health partners and the local authority to co-design and deliver services as volunteering takes many forms, partnering successfully with the NHS and Public Health.

Building on its success, our patient engagement programme based at GP practices - Together Better - doubled in size, going onto deliver at eight more surgeries across the borough, bringing the total numbers of GP practices engaged to 16.

We doubled the number of people with support needs placed into volunteering, while our Community Befriending programme grew considerably with over 140 volunteers matched to isolated Hackney residents. We also continued to grow our Community Health Champions, with over 200 residents and service providers coming on board to share vital health messaging with communities.

Over the year we enabled the following:

- **1,066** residents registered an interest in volunteering
- **689** people **started volunteering** across the borough – more than 1.5 times last year's total
- **126** of those residents had **support needs** – **double** the number from last year
- **58** residents with **mental health issues** supported to volunteer
- **150 isolated residents** were supported by volunteer befrienders with regular companionship, who provided **over 6,500 hours** of one-to-one support for vulnerable isolated residents
- **267** Community Health Champions were supported to **share vital health messaging** to their communities speaking **40** different languages between them.
- **121** patients - mostly with long term health conditions - **supported to volunteer** at local GP practices, and
- **over 1000 patients** supported to participate in patient-led activities at GP practices.

Volunteer Recruitment and Guidance

We hugely surpassed our targets this year, due to a range of factors - more focussed outreach, more diverse outreach, improved communications, more 1:1 appointments with individuals interested in volunteering as well as better data collection and recording.

During the last year, we advertised 535 volunteer roles with 275 of these being completely new roles. We engaged with more than 800 community organisations, with 58 of those being new to VCH, via our brokerage service, regular newsletters and 1:1 support on a range of issues. Organisations supported vary from large well-known national charities with local branches, for example British Heart Foundation, to small local charities, for example Carib Eats, and other non-profit entities such as the NHS.

What kinds of volunteering?

Volunteer Centre Hackney provides the opportunity for volunteers to find roles that meet their requirements in terms of the timing of the volunteering, location, its nature i.e., physical, outdoors, indoors, craft related, who it helps, demonstrating the flexible nature of volunteering. There were one-off opportunities, such as the Christmas day driving role for The Food Chain, roles requiring just one hour a week, such as Befriending, and others needing more commitment such as the Administration and Reception role at Hoxton Health. Many roles provide an opportunity to learn or refresh skills, with in-house training like the Made in Hackney Cookery Class Assistant which includes training in Safeguarding and a Level 2 Food Safety in Catering and Plant Based Nutrition.

Best Practice Guidance

We provided bespoke volunteer management support to 19 organisations including Storehouse Foodbank/Soup Kitchen, Care4Calais, Hackney Doorways (Night Shelter) and Oxfam. We advised on the recruitment, retention and management of volunteers, assisted with the drafting of volunteer role descriptions, advised on strategies to diversify their volunteering base, and how to acknowledge and reward volunteers. We hosted a number of networking events when organisations across Hackney could meet others, but also seek advice and support from Volunteer Centre Hackney regarding any issue concerning volunteering. KEEN London, Contact and Family Action Social Prescribing were among the organisations that attended.

"VCH really helps the community who are struggling with mental and physical health and is a great starting point for volunteering and the staff are absolutely excellent!"

"The service was so quick, friendly and overall helpful. Within the same day I found a perfect volunteering opportunity for me based on my personality and preferences".

Who volunteered and why?

Volunteering allows existing skills to be used, new skills to be acquired and, in each case, the sharing of those skills. Volunteering connects people with each other and with their local community, builds confidence and wellbeing, and leads to greater resilience. Organisations that rely on volunteers gain a much-needed resource to help deliver their services. The result is stronger and more cohesive local communities based on mutual support, with programmes that meet community needs, and so are "a part of the solution".

78.43% of volunteers surveyed reported that they had learned new skills from volunteering, including communication/listening skills, organisation skills, administrative and IT skills, and developing an understanding of how certain organisations operate, including foodbanks and theatres. One individual said that volunteering had enabled them to "improve the skill of adapting to a new social/working situation. Many respondents stated they had gained employability skills whilst volunteering.

"I have learned retail skills such as customer service and operating the till. Also, I have learned kitchen skills and barista skills."

A vital aspect of our mission is to ensure we are building stronger communities through bringing individuals together. Almost 90% - 88.24% - of individuals strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that "volunteering has helped me to meet people/feel part of my community".

"It has simply been a wonderful experience and provided me with a new friend".

71% of individuals agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that 'volunteering has improved my wellbeing/mental health', with 33 % of people agreeing that volunteering has helped improve their physical health'. One key aspect to wellbeing is an individual's level of confidence and 73% agreed or strongly agreed that "volunteering has helped me to feel more confident".

"Due to volunteering my confidence has improved and makes me feel that I'm worth something".

Community Befriending

Volunteers continued to be a lifeline for residents who are identified as socially isolated. On average, three new referrals are made by health professionals every week and **over 150 matches** were supported this year, with volunteers delivering **over 6,500** hours of one-to-one companionship and support. **96%** of people referred over the year were for people living with mental health challenges including suicidal ideation, depression or anxiety – an increase on last year. This was often alongside two or more co-morbidities that reduce mobility or social contact such as COPD or hearing or sight impairment.

Our service users ranging in age from 23 to 102, may not have gone out of their home for several months, and may have no one other than clinicians for social support. We saw a 50% increase in referrals for people living with dementia or with memory issues, while 30% of referrals did not have English as their first language, requiring recruitment of volunteers who speak multiple languages.

Volunteers either make twice-weekly phone calls or meet face-to-face, taking people to community activities or for a walk, coffee or shopping. They become aware of when there are subtle changes in someone's health condition, and alert us to when there are practical issues, for which we can provide support. This can include obtaining support with a Personal Independence Payment, preventing someone's eviction through housing advice, contacting the community mental health team when someone is not taking their medication and have even helped contact crisis teams, when someone is undergoing an acute crisis including suicidal thoughts.

94% of people supported, said that having a volunteer befriender had a **positive impact** on their physical and mental wellbeing, and **89%** have said that they now feel less isolated and lonely and more connected.

"Talking to her has benefitted me in so many ways; as well as company I feel so much more understood and supported."

The programme also supports people described as frequent users of emergency services, which they are contacting repeatedly for non-clinical reasons. One volunteer was matched to someone who, after three months of regular contact, no longer called A&E at all.

"A really wonderful service – my Befriender is lovely and after losing so many friends it's been nice to find a new one."

Support Needs – Mental Health, Physical Disabilities, Learning Disabilities

All our services help to support with both alleviating loneliness and reducing anxiety as our model is person-centred, with support provided through building trusted long-term relationships. Working in partnership with all the mental health services in Hackney, GP practices, Social Prescribers, Wellbeing Practitioners and Adult Social Care, we support people's recovery to help them identify their skills and take small steps towards personal goals. **126 people with support needs were supported to volunteer** this year, more than double the number we supported last year, including **83 with mental health conditions**, of whom **21 were supported into paid employment**. They were placed with a variety of organisations including Crisis charity shops, St Joseph's Hospice, Round Chapel, Peter Bedford Housing Association and the Canal & River Trust, all of whom have been able to provide the additional support that is required.

To help people re-engage with others, we also hosted multiple sessions in life coaching, wellbeing and self-confidence and monthly group volunteering taster sessions. These monthly sessions have been hosted by local organisations including the Hackney Night Shelter, Hackney Playbus and Edible Landscapes Community Garden. We also started a weekly Job Club providing two hours of computer access and staff and peer support. Additionally, we launched a new initiative supporting the North East London Forensics Service, specifically the John Howard Centre and Wolfson House low-medium secure units. We have supported 14 individuals, all convicted of an offence and with complex mental health needs, into volunteering, training and paid work.

L is a gentleman of 57 who recognised his mental health would benefit from keeping busy. He has a learning disability, lives in supported accommodation, and is unable to read or write. He does not use a mobile phone. L's mood was low due to being unoccupied and dissatisfaction with his housing situation and was spending his day travelling on the buses to keep occupied. Through one-to-one support, a group volunteering taster session, help with applications, interviews and accompanying him on initial shifts, he is now volunteering 4 days/week at Second Chance Café, St Mary's Living and Giving Shop, and two weekly lunch clubs.

"Step Up has been supportive and understanding of my current position. I have my confidence back which has helped my mental health. I have gained so much from Step Up. I achieved my goal of finding a new job by the end of year. I am proud of the challenges I have overcome to apply for jobs and attend interviews. I am so glad to be part of the Step Up project".

Community Development/ Social Action

Our Place and Together Better - we continued to support local residents to share their skills and start up their own activities and projects through our two place-based social action projects. Both are aimed at engaging local residents to come together and deliver their own solutions to issues they identify, to improve their local area and help local people. We help people recognise their strengths, build confidence, make connections, and help them to address challenges together.

A huge majority of residents present with mental health issues as well as social isolation and difficult life circumstances. Through forming connections and being given the support and encouragement to recognise and then realise their skills, people's confidence, resilience and social networks increase. We also support residents to link to appropriate statutory services including debt guidance, financial support, housing advice, food provision and social care, while the activities they deliver provide an increased range of activities for residents to enjoy.

Our Place is based at community venues on the New Kingshold and Stamford Hill estates, with support from Southern Housing Group and National Lottery. We have held many community events over the past year including:

- a teddy bears' picnic
- tabletop residents' sale (at both hubs)
- Christmas parties
- and a summer tea party.

Across the two locations, we saw around 150 residents attending the programme, of whom 35 became volunteers, delivering over 60 free activities each month, starting 25 new activities throughout the year. Activities delivered include: a children's martial arts and football club led by local dads; a Food Bank, football club, kids' cooking club, a winter coat swap, a stay and play group for children with SEN, and a walking group.

Single mother aged 34yrs with four children, B is neurodivergent and has a number of health issues. B was attending the coffee morning, and expressed how she wanted to do more with herself now her youngest of her children had started full-time nursery. As a result, B was recruited as a volunteer with the Hackney Community Food Bank at Alpine Grove. "It's so nice to be giving back to the community. I am so happy the foodbank is at Alpine Grove because it's close to my house and it helps me to use my time constructively".

"The best thing that happened to me was this place. I never thought I had anything to contribute to anyone. Thank you for allowing me to volunteer and feel good about myself".

The work VCH is doing is tackling loneliness, poverty, and anti-social behaviour. They're giving the community a spirit and the volunteers a purpose in their communities.'

"I loved it! I enjoyed doing the STEM art with the children. I learned a lot about myself, and I think I would like to volunteer again".

Together Better continued to grow and thrive, doubling to 16 GP surgeries across eight Hackney Neighbourhoods with staff working together with GP practices to support patients to volunteer. This is an innovative project launched together with the local NHS to establish communities at local surgeries, to empower patients to be more in control of their own health and wellbeing. This is enabled through supporting patients to recognise their skills, and to utilise these through volunteering at the practice. This could be helping patients to register online, to make reminder phone calls about appointments, or to set up their own projects such as a walking group, art club or a gardening project.

Over the year, we have engaged almost 500 patients every month, of whom over 100 residents are regular volunteers. Most have mental health issues and long-term physical health conditions - to enjoy activities including yoga, walking, gardening, arts and crafts, box fitness, swing dance, a mother and baby stay and play, martial arts and mental health peer support groups - all led by patients themselves.

GPs refer patients who may be isolated, or suffering from anxiety or depression and, by attending our activities, they meet new friends, make supportive connections and have a reason to leave their homes. 80% patients surveyed said their health and wellbeing had improved through attending, while over 90% of patients said they feel less isolated since taking part.

"I've made friends with lovely people. I would be stuck indoors otherwise and feeling trapped, but when I come here, I feel free like a weight's been lifted off me, a feeling of relief".

"I attended the coffee morning at Somerford Grove a few times and I really enjoyed it. I came to the Christmas party and I cooked a curry for everyone. Being able to provide food for others makes me really happy. I'm excited for the spring as Somerford Grove are starting to grow vegetables at their new gardening club. I'm hoping to use some of the produce in my cooking to then share with the group. I feel like I've met lots of lovely new people and I now feel more settled in Hackney".

Many volunteers say that they have gained in confidence and learned new skills, and now feel more empowered to follow their goals. They have gained in confidence to address their health, and with additional support from the programme, have been connected to other advice services to address financial and housing matters.

"It's made me much more aware of my own capabilities, given me confidence and created a path of realising that I am responsible for my own health with support".

"I enjoy spending time with local people. I have learned new skills by teaching others, and learned new skills from them. I have also learned things from meeting people with diverse heritages".

GPs and other medical staff said that they found that the programme has been beneficial for patients' health, reducing complaints and improving the atmosphere at the practice.

"You have really helped the whole practice. We have many positive patients talk about your service. Our practice manager and all of us are really happy with Together Better".

"I feel a broader community spirit and pride begin part of a special volunteering service which gives people a second chance in life, like myself, to rebuild my life skills and fulfil my potential".

Community Health Champions

56 more Community Champions were on-boarded this year, bringing our total number of Champions to **267** involved in the programme. Champions are hosted by **90 voluntary and community** organisations representative of diverse communities across Hackney, speaking **40** different languages between them.

This is a partnership with Public Health and funded by national government to recruit, train and support people connected to communities across the borough to share key public health messaging via translated and accessible media in ways that are likely to engage residents. Topics covered include **mental health and wellbeing, bowel/breast cancer awareness & screening, MMR, cardiovascular health, polio, heatwave, health literacy, physical activity, healthy eating, childhood obesity, sexual health, smoking/vaping cessation**. Through monthly forums, fortnightly peer support groups and regular co-produced training sessions, Champions are supported to share valuable insights with health partners on community health barriers and methods of increasing health prevention leading to more bespoke, relevant service provision for City & Hackney's diverse communities.

Peer Research (City of London)

During 2023, we completed our delivery of our first City of London programme, engaging residents on behalf of Public Health, to co-produce their Health and Wellbeing Strategy, by recruiting and training residents to conduct surveys with their peers. Residents covered a wide range of demographics and communities, while we worked closely with a range of community groups across the City such as Portsoken Community Centre, Age UK, East London Mosque and Golden Lanes Community Centre. With training and support, residents managed to complete surveys with over 180 neighbours, friends and peers, to identify health and wellbeing priorities. Some volunteers went onto to help co-produce the actual strategy and action plans as well as tailoring the survey wording to be more appropriate to residents.

This was another example of how we worked closely with residents in partnership with statutory services to establish what the issues are facing local communities and what solutions are best to tackle these.

Diversity and Inclusion

We worked hard this year to address the issue of diversity across VCH, through multiple approaches – both internally and externally. To increase the diversity of residents engaged in volunteering, we continued with our equalities focused series of communication campaigns across the year, such as Mental Health Awareness Week, Pride Month, Black History Month, and Trans Awareness Day. For all these campaigns, we support residents to run activities relating to these themes such as during Black History Month, when residents held African and Caribbean themed bring and share community meals. We expanded our outreach activities to target people from specific demographics, including older people, people with learning disabilities and people from Turkish and South Asian communities – working closer with community-based organisations, attending Job Fairs, libraries, New City College, the Hackney Moves Festival, Health and Wellbeing Events, giving presentations to groups including SEN and ESOL students; and working closer with organisations who can provide more support to volunteers with support needs such as Hackney Foodbank, Xenia and Hackney Doorways. We also completely rebuilt and rebranded our website, to ensure it is more engaging, as well as following guidelines for people who are visually impaired and who have dyslexia. Internally, staff continued to commit to our Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, taking time to examine our working practices, and to make recommendations where we could improve. This led to us delivering more bespoke training and expanding our recruitment process to offer guaranteed interviews to anyone from a Global Majority background or with a disability.

Thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time over the year, to all our funders and to all those who continue to support our work.

Funders who supported us during 2023-24: Hackney Council, Public Health, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, National Lottery Community Fund, Southern Housing Group, City of London Corporation, NEL ICB (NHS), Office of the Primary Care Networks (City and Hackney), and our business partner The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation.

The trustees would also like to go on record in thanking all the staff at VCH for their tremendous efforts over the past year. Their passion for the work of VCH continues to inspire, as highlighted by the impressive growth in our volunteering numbers and collaborations over the past 12 months.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The programmes and activities outlined above resulted in an increase in income **from £927k to £1,136k** with a corresponding increase in expenses from **£848k to £1,106k**. The charity achieved a surplus of **£30k** for the year.

RESERVES POLICY

The trustees review the amount of funds VCH requires to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil our continuing obligations on a regular basis. VCH takes a cautious approach towards investment, adopting a short-term low-risk policy. The Board has agreed that while it will maintain reserves at a minimum of 15% of annual costs, it will work towards increasing this to 25% (three months' operating costs) going forward.

This figure has been arrived at considering:

- the risks associated with individual streams of income and expenditure differing from budget;
- the additional risks associated with the dependence of VCH on a small number of donors;
- planned activity levels and the major risk to organisational delivery of reducing spending further at this stage; and
- organisational commitments.

RISK MANAGEMENT

VCH's Board of Trustees has identified the major risks to which VCH is exposed and these have been reviewed and systems established to manage those risks. The Board takes a proactive approach to risk identification, reduction and mitigation, and reviews this regularly with senior staff. VCH's current cash flow situation is sound and a new Business Plan has been adopted for the future.

ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees 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 have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). 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 charitable company and of the profit or loss of the charitable company for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees acknowledge the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's published general and relevant sub-sector guidance on public benefit.

All activities undertaken by VCH are for the public benefit. With a focus on providing volunteering services, the organisation's operation is very much geared to providing benefit to the local community as is highlighted by the activities reported herein. This will also continue to be central to its future plans.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and was approved by the trustees on 27th November 2024 and signed on their behalf.



Chair, Robert Sugden



Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF
VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Hackney (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 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 (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 March 2024 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.

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 Auditors' 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 twelve 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. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, 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 the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Other matter

In the previous accounting period, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) of the charity took advantage of audit exemption under s477 of the Companies Act. Therefore, the prior period financial statements were not subject to audit.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; 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; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with trustees and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the activities of the group. These included but were not limited to the Charities Act

2011; Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019); Companies Act 2006, Employment Law; Data Protection Legislation; The Code of Fundraising Practice; and Safeguarding Regulations as they affect the direct charitable activities of the group;

- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence where necessary.

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions;
- tested the appropriateness of journal entries;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

Under ISA 240 (UK) there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue. To address this risk, we obtained an understanding of the company's revenue recognition policies and compared these to the accounting standard, performed a walkthrough to confirm our understanding of the processes and controls through which the business initiates, records, processes and reports revenue transactions. We tested a sample of revenue transactions to supporting evidence and tested, on a sample basis, revenue related balances in the balance sheet.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error.

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 Report of the Independent Auditors.

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 auditors' 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.

Raffingers LLP

Raffingers LLP, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Certified Accountants
19-20 Bourne Court
Southend Road
Woodford Green
Essex
IG8 8HD

27th November 2024

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2024

Company No 3357999

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income					
Incoming resources from charitable activities:					
Grants receivable	2	-	1,113,460	1,113,460	905,238
Other income	2	23,169	-	23,169	21,693
Total income		23,169	1,113,460	1,136,629	926,931
Expenditure					
Charitable activities					
		6,439	1,099,905	1,106,344	848,204
Total expenditure	3	6,439	1,099,905	1,106,344	848,204
Net movement in funds		16,730	13,555	30,285	78,727
Total funds brought forward		97,039	128,923	225,962	89,342
Total funds carried forward	10	113,769	142,478	256,247	225,962

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The net incoming resources for the year arise from the Charity's continuing operations.

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Balance Sheet
at 31 March 2024

Company No 3357999

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Current Assets					
Debtors	7		142,254	142,254	51,777
Cash at bank and in hand		120,369	160,737	281,106	606,919
		120,369	302,991	423,360	658,696
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	8	(6,600)	(160,513)	(167,113)	(432,734)
Net Current Assets		113,769	142,478	256,247	225,962
Total Net Assets	10	113,769	142,478	256,247	225,962
Funds					
Unrestricted funds	9			113,769	97,039
Restricted funds	9			142,478	128,923
Total Funds				256,247	225,962

The financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 27th November 2024.



Chair, Robert Sugden

The notes on pages 18 to 24 form part of these financial statements.

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Statement of Cash Flows
at 31 March 2024

Company No 3357999

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net increasing resources	30,285	78,727
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(90,477)	101,805
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	<u>(265,621)</u>	<u>36,638</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	(325,813)	217,170
 Cash at beginning of the year	 606,919	 389,749
 Cash at the end of the year	 <u><u>281,106</u></u>	 <u><u>606,919</u></u>

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 BASIS OF COMPLIANCE

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 BASIS OF PREPARATION

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.
The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).
The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.3 ASSESSMENT OF GOING CONCERN

The trustees, having made appropriate enquiries, consider that adequate resources exist for the charity to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and that, therefore, it is appropriate to adopt going concern basis in preparing the financial statements as at and for the period ended 31 March 2024. The trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

The trustees have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet the liabilities as they fall due.

1.4 COMPANY STATUS

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

1.5 MATERIAL PRIOR YEAR ERRORS

No material prior year errors have been identified in the reporting period.

1.6 FUND ACCOUNTING

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.7 INCOME

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Where income has related expenditure (as with fundraising or contract income), the income and related expenditure are reported gross in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Donations, grants and gifts are recognised when receivable. In the event that a donation is subject to fulfilling performance conditions before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period. Income from Gift Aid tax reclaims is recognised for any donations with relevant Gift Aid certificates recognised in income for the year. Any amounts of Gift Aid not received by the year-end are accounted for in income and accrued income in debtors.

For legacies, entitlement is taken on a case-by-case basis as the earlier of the date on which: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate.

Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. If the legacy is in the form of an asset other than cash or an asset listed on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the asset being able to be reliably measured and title to the asset has passed to the charity. Where legacies have been notified to the or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance for a future fundraising event or for a grant received relating to the following year are deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1.8 DONATED GOODS AND SERVICES

Donated services or facilities are recognised when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably.

Donated professional services and facilities are included in income at the estimated value of the gift to the charity when received, based on the amount that the charity would have been prepared to pay for these services or facilities had it been required to purchase them, with a corresponding entry in the appropriate expenditure heading for the same amount. Donated fixed assets are similarly taken to income at the value to the charity with the other entry being capitalised in fixed assets.

1.9 EXPENDITURE

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

1.10 TAXATION

The company is considered to pass the tests set out in Sch. 6, para. 1 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Pt. 11, Ch. 3 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or s. 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

1.11 DEBTORS

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Debtors more than one year are included in the accounts at their carrying value.

1.12 CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.13 CREDITORS AND PROVISION

Creditors are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of settlement can be estimated reliably.

1.14 PENSION COSTS AND OTHER POST-RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the company's pension scheme are charged to profit or loss in the period to which they relate.

1.15 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value except for bank loans which are subsequently measured at the carrying value plus accrued interest less repayments. The financing charge to expenditure is at a constant rate calculated using the effective interest method.

1.16 OPERATING LEASES

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged against profits on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.17 VOLUNTEER HELP

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Company No 3357999

2 INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Grants	-	1,113,460	1,113,460	905,238
Donations	78	-	78	1,139
Interest income	10,021	-	10,021	
Other	13,070	-	13,070	20,554
	23,169	1,113,460	1,136,629	926,931

Of the £926,931 income in 2023, £905,238 was restricted funds and £21,693 unrestricted funds.

3 EXPENDITURE

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries & wages	903,029	640,587
Other staff and project costs	61,008	101,690
Staff training & travel	6,702	6,130
Occupancy costs	47,630	40,852
Insurance	1,773	1,612
Office costs including PPS	6,077	5,574
Telephone	3,763	3,537
Accounting and Payroll	30,403	27,531
Audit/independent Review	6,600	1,020
IT	16,976	10,893
Database	2,160	2,160
Website costs	10,795	-
Miscellaneous	9,428	6,618
	1,106,344	848,204

Of the total expenditure in the year, £1,099,905 (2023: £837,237) was charged to restricted funds and £6,439 (2023: £10,967) to unrestricted funds.

4 NET EXPENDITURE

	2024 £	2023 £
This is stated after charging:		
Audit fee/Independent examiner's fee	6,600	1,020
Operating lease rentals - land and buildings	33,000	33,000
Operating lease rentals - other	2,309	2,261

5 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

During the year, no Trustee received any remuneration (2023: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any benefits in kind (2023: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any reimbursement of expenses (2023: £Nil).

6 STAFF COSTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	789,453	558,399
Social security costs	64,086	44,961
Pension costs	49,490	37,227
	903,029	640,587

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees was:

	2024 No	2023 No
Charitable Activities	23	19

One employee received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) amounting to between £60,000 and £65,000 (2023: one).

The charity considers its key personnel comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employment benefits (including social security costs) paid to the key management personnel were £64,749 (2023: £62,452).

7 DEBTORS

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	96,443	5,035
Prepayments	9,729	12,873
Accrued income	30,042	24,333
Other debtors	6,040	9,536
	142,254	51,777

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Company No 3357999

8 CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	6,929	8,084
Social security and other taxes	23,446	13,005
Other creditors	330	320
Accruals and deferred income	136,408	411,325
	<u>167,113</u>	<u>432,734</u>

9 STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expend- iture £	At 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted Funds:				
General funds	97,039	23,169	6,439	113,769
Total Unrestricted Funds	<u>97,039</u>	<u>23,169</u>	<u>6,439</u>	<u>113,769</u>
Restricted Funds:				
Grants and sponsorships to promote, support, and encourage the use and involvement of volunteers in the London Borough of Hackney	128,923	1,113,460	1,099,905	142,478
Total Restricted Funds	<u>128,923</u>	<u>1,113,460</u>	<u>1,099,905</u>	<u>142,478</u>
Total Funds	<u>225,962</u>	<u>1,136,629</u>	<u>1,106,344</u>	<u>256,247</u>

10 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Current assets	120,369	302,991	423,360	658,696
Creditors	(6,600)	(160,513)	(167,113)	(432,734)
	<u>113,769</u>	<u>142,478</u>	<u>256,247</u>	<u>225,962</u>

11	COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES	2024		2023	
		Land & Buildings £	Other £	Land & Buildings £	Other £
	At 31 March the charity was committed to total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:				
	Not later than one year	28,390	-	33,000	1,696
	Later than one year and not later than 5 years	-	-	28,390	-
		28,390	-	61,390	1,696

12 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

Amounts contracted for, but not provided in the accounts, amount to £nil (2023: £nil).

13 PENSION COMMITMENTS

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. Payments during the year, amounted to £49,490 (2023: £37,227).

14 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There was no related party transactions or balances during the year to 31 March 2024.

15 AUDITOR LIABILITY LIMITATION AGREEMENT

The charity has entered into a liability limitation agreement with Raffingers, the statutory auditor, in respect of the statutory audit for the year ended 31 March 2024. The proportionate liability agreement follows the standard terms in Appendix B to the Financial Reporting Council's June 2008 Guidance on Auditor Liability Agreements and was signed by the trustees on 25 April 2023.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1068104

Accounts

Volunteer Centre Hackney

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 March 2023



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TRUSTEES

Robert Sugden - Chair
Jonathan Parr
Rachel Linn
William Alego
Adelle Grisaffe
Michelle Lawrence
Jade Tan (appointed 6 July 2022)
Andreas Michaelides (resigned 2 August 2023)

COMPANY REGISTERED NUMBER

3357999

CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER

1068104

REGISTERED OFFICE

12-13 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street, London E8 2LY

KEY MANAGEMENT

Lauren Tobias

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Justin Cowan FCA for Albeck Ltd Chartered Accountants, 49 Mowbray Road, Edgware, Middx HA8 8JL

BANKERS

HSBC, 283 Mare Street, London E8 1PJ
CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit their annual report and the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Hackney (VCH) for the year ended 31 March 2023. The trustees confirm that the annual report and the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the charity's governing documentation and the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

CONSTITUTION, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum of Association on 15 April 1997.

VCH is a local development agency governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. VCH's objects are "to promote the benefit of the community in the London Borough of Hackney by the promotion, support and development of voluntary services in the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness."

The directors, who are listed on page 1, act as trustees for the charitable activities of the company and exercise the powers of the company. The trustees may by power of attorney or otherwise appoint any person to be the agent of the company for such purposes and on such condition as they determine. They also may delegate any of their powers to any committee consisting of one or more trustees or other person.

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT OR ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The management of the company is the responsibility of the trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association. The number of trustees shall not be subject to any maximum but shall not be less than two. All trustees retire from office at the first Annual General Meeting subsequent to their appointment. One third of trustees is subject to retirement by rotation at the Annual General Meeting. In both instances retiring trustees, presuming they are eligible, will put themselves forward for re-appointment. Additionally, the Board may make appointments from time to time to fill vacancies. The Board usually meets every eight weeks. Additional meetings are held when the need arises.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF TRUSTEES

Joiners to the Board are provided with an induction pack which includes background information on the charity including the last set of accounts and the Charity Commission's publication on the legal responsibilities of charity trustees. As a provider of related training to external groups, the charity's trustees have access to a variety of sources of information to ensure that they are kept up to date on the changing regulations surrounding charities and trustees' responsibilities.

MANAGEMENT

The trustees agree the strategic direction of the charity, approve its budget, and receive progress reports in achieving organisational objectives from its Chief Executive Officer.

The charity employs staff, including a Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias, who carries out the day-to-day management of the company's work. There are line management structures linking all staff to the CEO, and through her, to the trustees.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

2022-23 was a year of transition and growth, as we came out of COVID, embedded and expanded all our programmes. We still continued with our COVID relief efforts however, as we continued to provide hundreds of volunteers for the Hackney vaccine sites and continued to support multiple Community Champions to spread positive vaccine messaging.

As the year progressed, our in-person activities increased and our resident engagement programmes – Together Better and Our Place - grew and thrived, engaging many more residents to deliver hundreds of new activities. In recognition of our success, the Together Better programme will receive funding from April 2023, to double in size and deliver at eight more surgeries across the borough.

Our Community Champions programme grew beyond COVID to address wider health issues such as hypertension and diabetes, and we delivered our first-ever volunteering programme in the City – a peer research project for City of London Public Health.

Over the year we enabled the following:

- 1,004 residents registered an interest in volunteering
- 423 people started volunteering across the borough
- 62 of those residents had support needs
- 120 isolated residents were matched to volunteer befrienders for regular companionship
- 35 Community Champions were trained to share vital COVID messaging to communities
- 120 patients - mostly with long term health conditions - supported to volunteer at local GP practices, and
- 563 patients supported to participate in patient-led activities
- 51 residents with mental health issues were supported to volunteer

Volunteer Recruitment and Guidance

Over the course of the year, we advertised 310 volunteer roles and engaged with more than 600 community organisations via our brokerage service, regular newsletters and outreach activities. The roles we advertised were for different types of non-profit organisations: large well-established national charities with local branches like Oxfam, small local charities, for example Children with Voices, and other non-profit entities, including the NHS – Homerton Hospital – which offers a range of volunteering opportunities.

What kinds of volunteering?

Roles varied hugely in size, frequency and skills and time commitment required, demonstrating the flexible nature of volunteering. There were one-off opportunities, such as the Christmas day driving role for The Food Chain, roles requiring just one hour a week, such as Befriending, and others needing more commitment such as the Administration and Reception role at Hoxton Health. Many roles provide an opportunity to learn or refresh skills, with in-house training like the Made in Hackney Cookery Class Assistant which includes training in Safeguarding and a Level 2 Food Safety in Catering and Plant Based Nutrition.

Best Practice Guidance

Our bespoke management support was given to 60 organisations including Hackney Chinese Association, Shepherd Fold Ministry, Young Hackney, St Joseph's Hospice, Shoreditch Trust and London Air Ambulance.

This included advising on the development and drafting of roles so that they are accurate and interesting; how to recruit volunteers; strategies for increasing diversity; volunteer management including dispute resolution; and assisting with the drafting of key volunteer policies such as volunteer agreements and consent forms. We also hosted our first post- COVID in person Volunteer Fair at Dalston Library which was hugely successful.

"You help us a great deal with getting volunteers, and for that we are very grateful."

"The staff at the Volunteer Centre Hackney were incredibly helpful and supportive to our small, new, local organisation. They helped us to think through our volunteer support needs and to draft effective volunteer role descriptions and adverts. They successfully found us our first wonderful volunteer. We will definitely work with the Volunteer Centre again as we grow and secure new funding. Thank you to the whole team!"

Who volunteered and why?

Volunteering is the first step for many individuals, whether that's a path into work, towards better mental health, out of social isolation or to learning a new set of skills. 76% of volunteers reported that they had learned new skills from volunteering, including new IT skills, advice on immigration law and housing, research skills and how meetings are run. Many respondents stated they had gained employability skills, like communication and teamwork, whilst volunteering.

"I have learned how to manage a class. I communicate better. I have learned to budget."

A vital aspect of our mission is to ensure we are building stronger communities through bringing individuals together. Just over 89% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that 'volunteering has helped me to meet people/feel part of my community'.

"I have gained great joy in meeting others who all have their own stories and struggles, being able to share and provide a little comfort with discussion has been invaluable to me. I hope I have been a support to people feeling isolated or alone, the happiness this has brought me is something that has helped me in many ways".

75.5% agreed or strongly agreed that 'volunteering has helped me have a more positive outlook/improve my mental health', while over 30% stated that volunteering had helped them to improve their physical health.

"I have improved my listening skills. I have learned how to make space for other people to talk about difficult feelings. I have learned how to take better care of my own mental health."

Community Befriending

Volunteers continued to be a lifeline for residents who are identified as socially isolated. On average, three new referrals are made by health professionals every week and over 120 matches were supported this year. 89% of people referred over the year were for people living with mental health challenges including suicidal ideation, depression or anxiety. This was often alongside two or more co-morbidities that reduce mobility or social contact such as COPD or hearing or sight impairment. Often people, ranging in age from 18-92, also have very serious life circumstances including housing and financial problems, experiencing domestic abuse and/or hoarding. They may not have gone out of their home for several months and may have no one other than clinicians for social support. 12% of referrals we received were also for people living with dementia or have memory issues, and 30% of referrals do not have English as their first language, requiring recruitment of volunteers who speak multiple languages.

Volunteers either make twice-weekly phone calls or meet face-to-face, taking people to community activities or for a walk, coffee or shopping. They become aware of when there are subtle changes in someone's health condition, and alert us to when there are practical issues, for which we can provide support. This can include obtaining support with a Personal Independence Payment, preventing someone's eviction through housing advice, contacting the community mental health team when someone is not taking their medication and have even helped contact crisis teams, when someone is undergoing an acute crisis including suicidal thoughts.

"I always have someone to talk to now with M and we can talk about anything good or bad. I really appreciate M's support – she is a star!"

The programme also supports people described as frequent users of emergency services, which they are contacting repeatedly for non-clinical reasons. One volunteer was matched to someone who after three months of regular contact, no longer called A&E at all.

"Seeing the difference in ES's behaviour really means a lot – he is always ready to chat and tell me what is going on with him. I feel like I'm really helping someone and that makes me feel good."
Community Befriender.

Winter Warm Hub

With the cost of living having become a crisis for many over the year in particular with the spike in energy bills, there was a real concern over the winter about residents not putting on their heating and exacerbating mental and physical health problems. With funding from both Southern Housing Group and Hackney Council, we opened up our community centre at Stamford Hill every Friday, to become a "welcome space" to around 30-40 people every week, offering conversation, board games, breakfast and lunch. We talked to residents about their interests, signposted them to appropriate services, invited advice agencies to give talks, and supported residents to lead their own activities including a book swap, crochet corner and seated exercise, as well as giving away vouchers and free donated food.

Support Needs – Mental Health, Physical Disabilities, Learning Disabilities

All our services help to support with both alleviating loneliness and reducing anxiety as our model is person-centred, with support provided through building trusted long-term relationships. Working in partnership with all the mental health services in Hackney, GP practices, Social Prescribers, Wellbeing Practitioners and Adult Social Care, we support people's recovery to help them identify their skills and take small steps towards personal goals. 62 people with support needs were supported to volunteer this year, including 51 with mental health conditions, of whom nine were supported into paid employment. They were placed with a variety of organisations including Crisis charity shops, St Joseph's Hospice, Round Chapel, Peter Bedford Housing Association and the Canal & River Trust, all of whom have been able to provide the additional support that is required. To help people re-engage with others, we also hosted multiple sessions in life coaching, wellbeing and self-confidence and group volunteering sessions. We also hosted a Community Connector who worked alongside the Neighbourhood Mental Health Team in Hackney Marsh to support people with severe and enduring mental health issues to engage with activities in the community.

'I have felt supported when I felt like I didn't have anyone else. They have given me hope when I couldn't see any, and when I was feeling completely helpless. They have helped me to have self-belief, which is massive for me as I suffer with CPTSD. Even though I still find things scary I have enough courage to step out of my comfort zone now giving me new found freedom and a new lease of life'.

Community Development/ Social Action

Our Place and Together Better - we continued to support local residents to share their skills and start up their own activities and projects through our two place-based social action projects. Both are aimed at engaging local residents to come together and deliver their own solutions to issues they identify, to improve their local area and help local people.

Our Place is based at community venues on the New Kingshold and Stamford Hill estates, with support from Southern Housing Group and National Lottery. Projects delivered over the year by residents include: a children's martial arts and football club led by local dads; See Me On the Page - a book project for children to see more diverse characters in books; a children's breakfast club providing much needed food before school; a Food Pantry for parents with children with Special Educational Needs and Bridge the Gap – a project to provide digital devices to families in need.

Together Better continued to grow and thrive, expanding to eight GP surgeries across eight Hackney Neighbourhoods with staff working together with GP practices to support patients to volunteer. This is an innovative project launched together with the local NHS to establish communities at local surgeries, to empower patients to be more in control of their own health and wellbeing. This is enabled through supporting patients to recognise their skills, and to utilise these through volunteering at the practice. This could be helping patients to register online, to make reminder phone calls about appointments, or to set up their own projects such as a walking group, art club or a gardening project.

Over the year, we engaged almost 1,000 patients – most of whom have mental health issues and long-term physical health conditions - to enjoy activities including yoga, walking, gardening, arts and crafts, box fitness, swing dance, a mother and baby stay and play, martial arts and mental health peer support groups - all led by patients themselves.

GPs refer patients who may be isolated, or suffering from anxiety or depression and, by attending our activities, they meet new friends, make supportive connections and have a reason to leave their homes. Nearly all patients engaged have said their health and wellbeing has improved through attending, while over 80% of patients surveyed said they feel less isolated since taking part. 100% of GP practice staff surveyed said the programme has benefitted patients and they would recommend it to other practices.

"Since starting this project I have lost weight, my knees are stronger, from walking all the time. I volunteer at the coffee morning and I really love the people I've met".

"Great programme - so nice to have groups of patients coming in for a coffee and a chat - taking part in activities and volunteering to help the practice, absolutely recommend this to all practices."

"I love getting out and about meeting and chatting with new people. This has helped reduce my anxiety. My mental health has improved, my confidence has grown and I've even lost weight!"

"So pleased to be involved in many activities as part of this project, which has greatly improved my well-being and happiness. I've enjoyed getting to know people supporting and working with the local community."

Community Champions

35 more Community Champions were on-boarded this year, bringing our total number of Champions to 170 involved in the programme. Champions are hosted by 81 community organisations representative of diverse communities across Hackney, speaking 32 different languages between them.

This is a partnership with Public Health and funded by national government to recruit, train and support people connected to communities across the borough to share key public health messaging via translated and accessible media in ways that are likely to engage residents. Topics covered include cardiovascular health, diabetes prevention and management and mental health support. Through monthly forums, peer support groups and regular training sessions, Champions are supported to share valuable insight with Public Health on community health barriers and methods of increasing health prevention.

Vaccine Volunteering

We continued to support with the deployment of volunteers at the two Hackney vaccine sites until they closed at the end of the summer. As we did since December 2020, VCH recruited and deployed hundreds of volunteers to help with meeting and greeting patients, managing the registration process, and supporting with logistics, with volunteers working 3-hour shifts, from 8am through to 8pm, 7 days a week, at two main sites as well as pharmacies and local pop-up clinics. Volunteers were said to be the essence of what made people's experience receiving the vaccine a joy, as well as reassuring and safe.

"I had lost my job, lost my way in life, was on the happy pills - all due to COVID, and Hackney Volunteers, with its lovely fellow staff, was the first ray of sunshine in months for me. I still volunteer, from time to time and I wear my badge and orange jumper with pride..."

Peer Research (City of London)

This year saw us deliver a programme with the City of London for the first time, engaging residents on behalf of Public Health, to **co-produce** the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, by recruiting and training residents to conduct surveys with their peers. Residents covered a wide range of demographics and communities, while we worked closely with a range of community groups across the City such as Portsoken Community Centre, Age UK, East London Mosque and Golden Lanes Community Centre. With training and support, residents managed to complete surveys with over 180 neighbours, friends and peers, to identify health and wellbeing priorities. Some volunteers went onto to help co-produce the actual strategy and action plans as well as tailoring the survey wording to be more appropriate to residents.

This was another example of how we worked closely with residents in partnership with statutory services to establish what the issues are facing local communities and what solutions are best to tackle these.

Diversity and Inclusion

We worked hard this year to increase the diversity of residents engaged in volunteering through multiple approaches. Externally – we planned a series of communication campaigns across the year, to tie in with key nationwide campaigns such as Mental Health Awareness Week, Pride Month, Black History Month, and Trans Awareness Day. For all these campaigns, we support residents to run activities relating to these themes such as during Black History Month, when residents held African and Caribbean themed bring and share community meals. We rebranded all our marketing materials, to ensure we are following guidelines for people who are visually impaired and who have dyslexia. And we developed a stakeholder engagement campaign across the organisation, to increase our range of partnerships across communities. Internally – we have examined our recruitment processes to make it more accessible, undertaken a Disability Audit and arranged multiple training programmes for our staff on diverse topics.

Thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time over the year, to all our funders and to all those who continue to support our work.

Funders who supported us during 2022-23: Hackney Council, East London Foundation Trust, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, National Lottery Community Fund, Mercers Company, Southern Housing Group, City of London Corporation, NEL NHS (City and Hackney) and our business partner The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation.

The trustees would also like to go on record in thanking all of the staff at VCH for their tremendous efforts during the most difficult of years. Their energy and efforts throughout such an unprecedented period were remarkable and led to many across the borough receiving vital support and connection.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The programmes and activities outlined above resulted in an increase in income from £891k to £927k with a corresponding increase in expenses from £833k to £848k. The charity achieved a surplus of £79k for the year.

RESERVES POLICY

The trustees review the amount of funds VCH requires to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil our continuing obligations on a regular basis. VCH takes a cautious approach towards investment, adopting a short-term low-risk policy. The Board has agreed that while it will maintain reserves at a minimum of 15% of annual costs, it will work towards increasing this to 25% (three months' operating costs) going forward.

This figure has been arrived at considering:

- the risks associated with individual streams of income and expenditure differing from budget;
- the additional risks associated with the dependence of VCH on a small number of donors;
- planned activity levels and the major risk to organisational delivery of reducing spending further at this stage; and
- organisational commitments.

RISK MANAGEMENT

VCH's Board of Trustees has identified the major risks to which VCH is exposed and these have been reviewed and systems established to manage those risks. The Board takes a proactive approach to risk identification, reduction and mitigation, and reviews this regularly with senior staff. VCH's current cash flow situation is sound and a new Business Plan has been adopted for the future.

ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees 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 have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). 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 charitable company and of the profit or loss of the charitable company for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees acknowledge the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's published general and relevant sub-sector guidance on public benefit.

All activities undertaken by VCH are for the public benefit. With a focus on providing volunteering services, the organisation's operation is very much geared to providing benefit to the local community as is highlighted by the activities reported herein. This will also continue to be central to its future plans.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and was approved by the trustees on 20 December 2023 and signed on their behalf.



Chair, Robert Sugden



Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias

Volunteer Centre Hackney Charity No 1068104 Company No 3357999
**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees on the Unaudited Accounts of
Volunteer Centre Hackney for the year ended 31 March 2023**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are set out on pages 10 to 17.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act"). Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited for this year under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). In carrying out my examination, I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act).

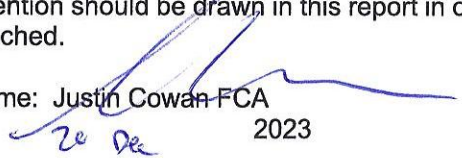
Independent examiner's statement

The company's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: Justin Cowan FCA

2023

Albeck Ltd
49 Mowbray Road,
Edgware, Middx HA8 8JL

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2023

Company No 3357999

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income					
Incoming resources from charitable activities:					
Grants receivable	2	-	905,238	905,238	883,148
Other income	2	21,693	-	21,693	7,454
Total income		21,693	905,238	926,931	890,602
Expenditure					
Charitable activities		10,967	837,237	848,204	832,709
Total expenditure	3	10,967	837,237	848,204	832,709
Net movement in funds		10,726	68,001	78,727	57,893
Total funds brought forward		86,313	60,922	147,235	89,342
Total funds carried forward	10	97,039	128,923	225,962	147,235

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The net incoming resources for the year arise from the Charity's continuing operations.

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Company No 3357999

Balance Sheet at 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Current Assets			
Debtors	7	51,777	153,582
Cash at bank and in hand		606,919	389,749
		<u>658,696</u>	<u>543,331</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	8	(432,734)	(396,096)
		<u>225,962</u>	<u>147,235</u>
Net Current Assets			
		225,962	147,235
Total Net Assets	10	<u>225,962</u>	<u>147,235</u>
Funds			
Unrestricted funds	9	97,039	86,313
Restricted funds	9	128,923	60,922
		<u>225,962</u>	<u>147,235</u>
Total Funds			
		225,962	147,235

For the year ended 31 March 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year under s476. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with FRS 102 SORP.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 20 December 2023.



Chair, Robert Sugden

The notes on pages 13 to 17 form part of these financial statements.

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Statement of Cash Flows
at 31 March 2023

Company No 3357999

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net increasing resources	78,727	57,893
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	101,805	(84,777)
Increase in creditors	36,638	150,099
Net cash provided by operating activities	217,170	123,215
 Cash at beginning of the year	 389,749	 266,534
Cash at the end of the year	606,919	389,749

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 BASIS OF COMPLIANCE

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 BASIS OF PREPARATION

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.
The financial statements are prepared in Sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.

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

1.3 COMPANY STATUS

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

1.4 MATERIAL PRIOR YEAR ERRORS

No material prior year errors have been identified in the reporting period.

1.5 FUND ACCOUNTING

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.6 INCOME

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the company is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance. Grants received prior to the year end but not recognised as income are carried forward within accruals and deferred income.

1.7 EXPENDITURE

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

1.8 OPERATING LEASES

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged against profits on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.9 VOLUNTEER HELP

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

2 INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Grants	-	905,238	905,238	883,148
Donations	1,139	-	1,139	5,494
Other	20,554	-	20,554	1,960
	21,693	905,238	926,931	890,602

Of the £890,602 income in 2022, £7,454 was unrestricted funds and £883,148 restricted funds.

3 EXPENDITURE

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries & wages	640,587	674,600
Other staff and project costs	101,690	67,822
Staff training & travel	6,130	1,006
Occupancy costs	40,852	42,486
Insurance	1,612	1,295
Office costs including PPS	5,574	2,279
Telephone	3,537	4,232
Bank charges	111	121
Volunteer expenses	198	223
Accounting and Payroll	27,531	27,230
Independent Review	1,020	1,020
IT	10,893	6,777
Database	2,160	2,160
Volunteer Week Awards	192	245
Miscellaneous	6,117	1,213
	848,204	832,709

Of the total expenditure in the year, £837,237 (2022: £831,674) was charged to restricted funds and £10,967 (2022: £1,035) to unrestricted funds.

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2023

Company No 3357999

4 NET EXPENDITURE

	2023 £	2022 £
This is stated after charging:		
Independent examiner's fee	1,020	1,020
Operating lease rentals - land and buildings	33,000	33,000
Operating lease rentals - other	2,261	2,261

5 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

During the year, no Trustee received any remuneration (2022: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any benefits in kind (2022: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any reimbursement of expenses (2022: £Nil).

6 STAFF COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	558,399	597,221
Social security costs	44,961	45,227
Pension costs	37,227	32,152
	640,587	674,600

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees was:

	2023 No	2022 No
Charitable Activities	19	22

One employee received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) amounting to between £60,000 and £65,000 (2022: one).

The charity considers its key personnel comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employment benefits (including social security costs) paid to the key management personnel were £62,452 (2022: £60,095).

7 DEBTORS

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	5,035	129,391
Prepayments	12,873	10,543
Accrued income	24,333	7,833
Other debtors	9,536	5,815
	51,777	153,582

8 CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	8,084	6,381
Social security and other taxes	13,005	11,650
Other creditors	320	416
Accruals and deferred income	411,325	377,649
	<u>432,734</u>	<u>396,096</u>

Creditors includes deferred income of £308,876 (2022: £332,617).

Deferred income brought forward	332,617	207,832
Released from prior years	(332,617)	(179,290)
Incoming resources deferred	308,876	304,075
	<u>308,876</u>	<u>332,617</u>

9 STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expend- iture £	At 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted Funds:				
General funds	86,313	21,693	10,968	97,039
Total Unrestricted Funds	<u>86,313</u>	<u>21,693</u>	<u>10,968</u>	<u>97,039</u>
Restricted Funds:				
Grants and sponsorships to promote, support, and encourage the use and involvement of volunteers in the London Borough of Hackney	60,922	905,238	837,237	128,923
Total Restricted Funds	<u>60,922</u>	<u>905,238</u>	<u>837,237</u>	<u>128,923</u>
Total Funds	<u>147,235</u>	<u>926,931</u>	<u>848,204</u>	<u>225,962</u>

10 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Current assets	97,039	561,657	658,696	543,331
Creditors	-	(432,734)	(432,734)	(396,096)
	97,039	128,923	225,962	147,235

11 COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

	2023		2022	
	Land & Buildings £	Other £	Land & Buildings £	Other £
At 31 March the charity was committed to total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:				
Not later than one year	33,000	1,696	33,000	2,261
Later than one year and not later than 5 years	28,390	-	61,390	1,696
	61,390	1,696	94,390	3,957

12 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

Amounts contracted for, but not provided in the accounts, amount to £nil (2022: £nil).

VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1068104

Accounts

Charity Registration No. 1068104
Company Registration No. 3357999

Volunteer Centre Hackney

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 March 2022



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TRUSTEES

Robert Sugden - Chair
Andreas Michaelides - Treasurer
Jonathan Parr
Rachel Linn
William Alego (appointed 8 December 2021)
Adelle Grisaffe (appointed 8 December 2021)
Michelle Lawrence (appointed 8 December 2021)
Jade Tan (appointed 6 July 2022)
Sarah Mitton (resigned 7 July 2021)
Ross Diamond (resigned 20 October 2021)

COMPANY REGISTERED NUMBER

3357999

CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER

1068104

REGISTERED OFFICE

12-13 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street, London E8 2LY

KEY MANAGEMENT

Lauren Tobias

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Justin Cowan FCA for Albeck Ltd Chartered Accountants, 49 Mowbray Road, Edgware, Middx HA8 8JL

BANKERS

HSBC, 283 Mare Street, London E8 1PJ
CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit their annual report and the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Hackney (VCH) for the year ended 31 March 2022. The trustees confirm that the annual report and the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the charity's governing documentation and the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

CONSTITUTION, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum of Association on 15 April 1997.

VCH is a local development agency governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. VCH's objects are "to promote the benefit of the community in the London Borough of Hackney by the promotion, support and development of voluntary services in the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness."

The directors, who are listed on page 1, act as trustees for the charitable activities of the company and exercise the powers of the company. The trustees may by power of attorney or otherwise appoint any person to be the agent of the company for such purposes and on such condition as they determine. They also may delegate any of their powers to any committee consisting of one or more trustees or other person.

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT OR ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The management of the company is the responsibility of the trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association. The number of trustees shall not be subject to any maximum but shall not be less than two. All trustees retire from office at the first Annual General Meeting subsequent to their appointment. One third of trustees is subject to retirement by rotation at the Annual General Meeting. In both instances retiring trustees, presuming they are eligible, will put themselves forward for re-appointment. Additionally, the Board may make appointments from time to time to fill vacancies. The Board usually meets every eight weeks. Additional meetings are held when the need arises.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF TRUSTEES

Joiners to the Board are provided with an induction pack which includes background information on the charity including the last set of accounts and the Charity Commission's publication on the legal responsibilities of charity trustees. As a provider of related training to external groups, the charity's trustees have access to a variety of sources of information to ensure that they are kept up to date on the changing regulations surrounding charities and trustees' responsibilities.

This year, the Board of Trustees reviewed their performance as a Board against the new Voluntary Organisations Good Governance Code from the Association of Chief Executives. We formulated and implemented an action plan to ensure our compliance with the six basic principles of good governance.

MANAGEMENT

The trustees agree the strategic direction of the charity, approve its budget, and receive progress reports in achieving organisational objectives from its Chief Executive Officer.

The charity employs staff, including a Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias, who carries out the day-to-day management of the company's work. There are line management structures linking all staff to the CEO, and through her, to the trustees.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

2021-22 saw our COVID relief efforts continue into their second year, with VCH continuing to play a key role in the pandemic support offer across the borough. This included providing volunteer drivers, supplying over 1,000 volunteers for the vaccine programme, delivering prescriptions and supporting hundreds of Community Champions to spread positive vaccine messaging.

Partnerships were crucial for us to deliver effectively, while we adapted and grew our programmes and services to meet needs. As the year progressed, our in-person activities increased, and our resident engagement programmes – Together Better and Our Place - grew and thrived. By the end of March 2022, we were delivering volunteering programmes at seven GP surgeries across the borough with over 80 resident-led activities being delivered, engaging over hundreds of patients with complex needs.

In recognition of the huge role that VCH and volunteers played throughout the year, in June 2021, Hackney Council awarded VCH with the Freedom of the Borough Award – the highest honour an organisation or individual can be awarded by a local authority.

Over the year we enabled the following:

- 890 people started volunteering across the borough
- 61 of those residents had support needs.
- 46 volunteers trained and matched as Volunteer Befrienders
- 87 Community Champions trained to share vital COVID messaging to communities
- 37 residents trained to become Health and Wellbeing peer research volunteers
- 35 patients supported to volunteer at local GP practices
- 32 residents with mental health issues supported to volunteer

A new way of working

With our organisation doubling in size since before COVID, it was clear that internal changes were needed, and we established six staff-led working groups to improve practices. These included a focus on equality and inclusion, staff wellbeing and development and volunteer support and progression. A new communications plan was launched that focussed on seven key "equalities" themes, while we implemented a new staff training plan, improved how we induct and recruit new staff and are creating a staff wellbeing strategy.

Volunteer Recruitment and Guidance

Over the year, we advertised 251 volunteer roles and engaged with 813 community organisations. Roles varied hugely in size, frequency and skills. We advertised opportunities for larger, long-standing charities such as Hackney Foodbank's 'Warehouse Volunteer' role. In contrast, we also provided the opportunity for new and small charities to find the volunteers they need, such as Nature Fix, a new social enterprise that provides walks and nature-based activities for community groups to help relieve stress, anxiety and depression. We helped them source their first volunteer.

"The staff at the Volunteer Centre Hackney were incredibly helpful and supportive to our small, new, local organisation. They helped us to think through our volunteer support needs and to draft effective volunteer role descriptions and adverts. They successfully found us our first wonderful volunteer. We will definitely work with the Volunteer Centre again as we grow and secure new funding. Thank you to the whole team!"

Such bespoke management support included creating and developing new roles, targeted volunteer recruitment to diversify applications, and guidance with volunteer management and support, including an online toolkit of best practice resources for charities to download as needed.

We provided this support to 51 organisations including other small grassroots charities such as Streets Kitchen, Wise Age, Children with Voices, HIP Hackney and Rise 365. We also hosted four Volunteer Managers Forums to bring people together for peer support.

"You help us a great deal with getting volunteers, and for that we are very grateful."

What kinds of volunteering?

Many roles include the opportunity to learn new skills and potentially lead to paid employment such as the IT Technician at Bridge the Gap, the Graphic Artist at Newington Green Alliance, and the Retail Lead at St Joseph's Hospice retail shop. With so few opportunities for under-18s, we helped charities develop roles such as the Woodberry Down Library Assistant for under 18s and supported the Walk the Walk's Moon Walk roles for under-16s. As 27% of our volunteers were employed we needed roles such as the evening Fitness Instructor for the Jewish men's exercise group and the Weekend Shelter Role for Hackney Doorways. There were roles that were home-based for those still not keen to leave their homes such as Bookmark's online Reading Volunteer for 5–8 year olds.

LGBTQIA+ volunteering

We were keen to expand on the number of roles focusing on LGBTQ+ causes as there had been very few. We reached out to ELOP and Queer Britain and were also able to advertise the 'Welcome Team Volunteer' role for the UK's first LGBTQ+ museum which celebrates queer culture and increased education. We advertised volunteer roles for HIV charity Positive East and are currently listing for a 'Peer Support Mentor' and a 'Database Volunteer'.

Volunteers responding to world events

We continued to coordinate and allocate volunteers to Hackney's two vaccination sites at a time when the need for volunteers to support the COVID-19 response was in high demand. Over the lifespan of the sites we brought on over 1,000 volunteers. In addition, we created the 'Travel Buddy' role to help refugee children who had recently arrived in the UK from Afghanistan to make their first journeys to their new school.

Who volunteered and why?

There has been a rise in the number of people wanting **flexible or informal volunteering**. This ties in with the increased flexibility that people were given in some areas of their lives during the pandemic - such as working from home, time saved commuting and a move to virtual meetings. When we surveyed the volunteers from 21-22, 49% said they'd like to volunteer again on an ad-hoc basis and 27% said they would like a longer-term volunteer role.

How do residents benefit from volunteering?

Volunteering is the first step for many individuals, whether that's a path into work, towards better mental health, out of social isolation or to learning a new set of skills. Throughout 2021-22, Volunteer Centre Hackney has provided individuals with the opportunity to start on that path through the work that has been done to promote volunteer opportunities and the skills that individuals can learn through the roles we advertise.

We spoke to people who took part in volunteering this past year and 73% believed that they had learned new skills from their time volunteering. The most common skills that individuals said they had developed through volunteering were interpersonal skills such as confidence or reliability. The volunteering that people do can also provide them with the opportunity to realise their personal goals and potentially gain employment, with 30% of respondents stating they had gained employability skills, like communication and teamwork, whilst volunteering.

A vital aspect of our mission is to ensure we are building stronger communities through bringing individuals together and helping to reduce social isolation through volunteering. 30% of volunteers said that meeting new people and making friends was one of the reasons they wanted to volunteer.

92% of those who volunteered this past year said that through their experience of volunteering they had got to know or been brought together with people from different communities. 65% said that meeting members of the community was in fact one of their favourite things about volunteering, and 54% enjoyed meeting other volunteers.

Befriending

Social isolation was a huge community issue through the year, both during and post lockdowns, with our Community Befriending programme receiving 211 referrals and matching over 90 volunteers to isolated residents. We managed to deliver a hybrid service, with volunteers either making twice-weekly phone calls or meeting face-to-face, taking people to activities that had resumed post COVID, or for a walk, coffee or shopping.

Referrals were received from GPs, mental health services, Adult Social Care, Occupational Health, local charities and families, seeing a huge increase in people with mental health issues as well as people with learning disabilities, suicidal ideation, severe depression, and/or experiencing domestic violence. And with more in person activity, it increased the visibility of need. Services had long waiting lists exacerbating people's poor mental health, while most services were not conducting home visits, which we did, uncovering huge homecare needs that had developed during the pandemic.

Volunteers continued to be a lifeline for residents whose mental and physical health had deteriorated. Many people were experiencing anxiety about leaving the home, some had suffered bereavements. Our volunteers alerted us to practical and emotional needs, for which we then contacted GPs, mental health services, Adult Social Care, or advice agencies, including emergency services when needed.

"I call a young autistic man who is 28 in the evenings, and we just have a chat about his week and about his day. I think he's really struggled because a lot of the services he normally accessed aren't available, and as someone with autism I think that disruption to his routines has really affected him, so I think our regular chats have really helped", *volunteer befriender*.

Mental Health Support

All our services help to support with both alleviating loneliness and reducing anxiety as our model is person-centred, with support provided through building trusted long-term relationships. Working in partnership with all the mental health services in Hackney, GP practices, Social Prescribers, Wellbeing Practitioners and Adult Social Care, we support people's recovery to help them identify their skills and take small steps towards personal goals. 32 people with mental health issues were supported to volunteer this year, but to help people re-engage with others, we also hosted three sessions in life coaching and six sessions in wellbeing and self-confidence as well as nine monthly coffee mornings. We also hosted a Community Connector who worked alongside the Neighbourhood Mental Health Team in Hackney Marsh to support people with severe and enduring mental health issues to engage with activities and services in their community.

Community Development/ Social Action

Our Place and Together Better - we continued to support local residents to share their skills and start up their own activities and projects through our two place-based social action projects. Both are aimed at engaging local residents to come together and deliver their own solutions to issues they identify, to improve their local area and help local people. Our Place is based on the New Kingshold estate and, from October in partnership with Southern Housing Group, in north Hackney at Stamford Hill Community Centre. Projects delivered over the year by residents included Community Closet with clothes and toys donated to hundreds of families, See Me On the Page - a book project for children to see more diverse characters in books, and a Food Pantry that over the year supported over 500 residents. We also saw residents deliver Sharing Table - a series of six self-development workshops for women.

These projects have had a massive impact, generating considerable mutual support through a period of time that has been very challenging for the community.

Together Better thrived during 2021-22, growing gradually to be at seven GP surgeries across seven Hackney Neighbourhoods with staff working together with practice staff to engage patients to volunteer. This is an innovative project launched together with the local NHS to establish a community at the surgery, to empower patients to be more in control of their own health and wellbeing which ultimately decreases pressure on services, such as helping patients to register online, to make reminder phone calls about appointments, or to set up their own projects such as a walking group, exercise class, art club or a gardening project.

Over the year, we engaged almost 1,000 patients to enjoy activities including yoga, walking, gardening, arts and crafts, box fitness, swing dance, a mother and baby stay and play, martial arts and mental health peer support groups - all led by patients themselves. GPs refer patients who may be isolated, or suffering from anxiety or depression and, by attending our activities, they meet new friends, make supportive connections and have a reason to leave their homes. Nearly all patients engaged have said their health and wellbeing has improved through attending.

The aim is to prioritise engaging with patients from particular communities where the GP practice staff feel there needs to be closer engagement eg young people and Turkish women, and for projects to be a combination of what will support the practice to achieve their objectives eg increasing immunisations uptake and harnessing the skills and interests of patients.

"These initiatives helped me to meet lots of people, reduce social isolation and therefore helped my depression."

"Great programme - so nice to have groups of patients coming in for a coffee and a chat - taking part in activities and volunteering to help the practice, absolutely recommend this to all practices."

"I love getting out and about meeting and chatting with new people. This has helped reduce my anxiety. My mental health has improved, my confidence has grown and I've even lost weight!"

"So pleased to be involved in many activities as part of this project. which has greatly improved my well-being and happiness. I've enjoyed getting to know people supporting and working with the local community."

Community Champions

248 Community Champions representative of typically underrepresented communities within City & Hackney, across more than 65 different community organisations, were recruited and/or supported to share communications, provide insights and encourage engagement with health systems around vital Covid 19 and wider public health topic messaging in pursuit of positive health outcomes.

With the essential need to disseminate key public health messaging around COVID vaccinations, via local communities and trusted connections, the Community Champions programme continued to thrive. This is a partnership with Hackney CVS and Public Health and funded by national government to recruit, train and support people connected to communities across the borough to share key COVID safety messaging via translated and accessible media in ways that are likely to engage residents. 201 Champions speaking multiple languages were recruited from very diverse communities and supported to share messages that were continually being updated and respond to concerns.

Vaccine Volunteering

As soon as the vaccination programme started, VCH was called upon to recruit volunteers to help with stewarding. Within a short time, we had recruited and deployed hundreds of volunteers to help with meeting and greeting patients, managing the registration process, and supporting with logistics through the sites. With volunteers working 3-hour shifts, from 8am through to 8pm, 7 days a week, at two main sites as well as pharmacies and local pop-up clinics, this year we deployed over 1,000 volunteers - who have been said to be the essence of what has made people's experience receiving the vaccine a joy, as well as reassuring and safe. We were also commissioned to work intensively with small frontline community groups to help them put on their own vaccine events for their own communities, helping them with publicity and promotion to ensure residents came forward.

'I had lost my job, lost my way in life, was on the happy pills - all due to Covid, and Hackney Volunteers, with its lovely fellow staff, was the first ray of sunshine in months for me. I still volunteer, from time to time and I wear my badge and orange jumper with pride...'

Peer Research

This year saw us trial an initiative to work with City and Hackney residents to **co-produce** the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Public Health, by recruiting and training 35 residents to conduct surveys with their peers. Residents covered a wide range of demographics and communities and in only three months, with training and support, managed to complete surveys with over 340 neighbours, friends and peers, to identify health and wellbeing priorities. Some volunteers went on to help co-produce the actual strategy and action plans as well as tailoring the survey wording to be more appropriate to residents.

This was another example of how we worked closely with residents in partnership with statutory services to establish what the issues are facing local communities and what solutions are best to tackle these.

Thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time over the year, to all our funders and to all those who continue to support our work.

Funders who supported us during 2021-22: Hackney Council, Public Health England, City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group, East London Foundation Trust, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, National Lottery Community Fund, Mercers Company, Southern Housing Group and our business partner The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation.

The trustees would also like to go on record in thanking all of the staff at VCH for their tremendous efforts during the most difficult of years. Their energy and efforts throughout such an unprecedented period were remarkable and led to many across the borough receiving vital support and connection.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The programmes and activities outlined above resulted in an increase in income from £564k to £891k with a corresponding increase in expenses from £544k to £833k, mainly as a result of the higher staff base. The charity achieved a surplus of £58k for the year. Funding secured for 2022-23 already exceeds £850k.

RISK MANAGEMENT

VCH's Board of Trustees has identified the major risks to which VCH is exposed and these have been reviewed and systems established to manage those risks. The Board takes a proactive approach to risk identification, reduction and mitigation, and reviews this regularly with senior staff. VCH's current cash flow situation is sound and a new Business Plan has been adopted for the future.

RESERVES POLICY

The trustees review the amount of funds VCH requires to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil our continuing obligations on a regular basis. VCH takes a cautious approach towards investment, adopting a short-term low-risk policy. The Board has agreed that while it will maintain reserves at a minimum of 15% of annual costs, it will work towards increasing this to 25% (three months' operating costs) going forward.

This figure has been arrived at considering:

- the risks associated with individual streams of income and expenditure differing from budget;
- the additional risks associated with the dependence of VCH on a small number of donors;
- planned activity levels and the major risk to organisational delivery of reducing spending further at this stage; and
- organisational commitments.

ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees 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 have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). 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 charitable company and of the profit or loss of the charitable company for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees acknowledge the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's published general and relevant sub-sector guidance on public benefit.

All activities undertaken by VCH are for the public benefit. With a focus on providing volunteering services, the organisation's operation is very much geared to providing benefit to the local community as is highlighted by the activities reported herein. This will also continue to be central to its future plans.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and was approved by the trustees on 21 December 2022 and signed on their behalf by:



Chair, Robert Sugden



Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias

Volunteer Centre Hackney Charity No 1068104 Company No 3357999
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees on the Unaudited Accounts of
Volunteer Centre Hackney for the year ended 31 March 2022

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2022 which are set out on pages 10 to 17.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act"). Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited for this year under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). In carrying out my examination, I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act).

Independent examiner's statement

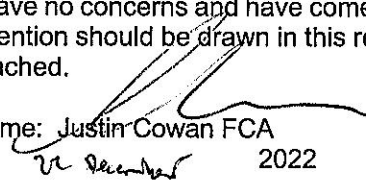
The company's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: Justin Cowan FCA



22 December

2022

Albeck Ltd
49 Mowbray Road,
Edgware, Middx HA8 8JL

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2022

Company No 3357999

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income					
Incoming resources from charitable activities:					
Grants receivable	2	-	883,148	883,148	553,643
Other income	2	7,454	-	7,454	10,848
Total income		7,454	883,148	890,602	564,491
Expenditure					
Charitable activities					
		1,035	831,674	832,709	544,195
Total expenditure	3	1,035	831,674	832,709	544,195
Net movement in funds		6,419	51,474	57,893	20,296
Total funds brought forward		79,894	9,448	89,342	69,046
Total funds carried forward	10	86,313	60,922	147,235	89,342

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The net incoming resources for the year arise from the Charity's continuing operations.

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Company No 3357999

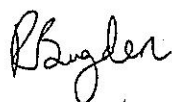
Balance Sheet at 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Current Assets			
Debtors	7	153,582	68,805
Cash at bank and in hand		389,749	266,534
		<u>543,331</u>	<u>335,339</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	8	<u>(396,096)</u>	<u>(245,997)</u>
Net Current Assets		<u>147,235</u>	<u>89,342</u>
Total Net Assets	10	<u>147,235</u>	<u>89,342</u>
Funds			
Unrestricted funds	9	86,313	79,894
Restricted funds	9	60,922	9,448
Total Funds		<u>147,235</u>	<u>89,342</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2022 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year under s476. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with FRS 102 SORP.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 21 December 2022.



Chair, Robert Sugden

The notes on pages 13 to 17 form part of these financial statements.

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Statement of Cash Flows
at 31 March 2022

Company No 3357999

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net increasing resources	57,893	20,296
Increase in debtors	(84,777)	(45,293)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	150,099	(16,159)
Net cash provided/(used) by operating activities	123,215	(41,156)
Cash at beginning of the year	266,534	307,690
Cash at the end of the year	389,749	266,534

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 BASIS OF COMPLIANCE

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 BASIS OF PREPARATION

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.
The financial statements are prepared in Sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.
The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.3 COMPANY STATUS

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

1.4 MATERIAL PRIOR YEAR ERRORS

No material prior year errors have been identified in the reporting period.

1.5 FUND ACCOUNTING

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.6 INCOME

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the company is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance. Grants received prior to the year end but not recognised as income are carried forward within accruals and deferred income.

1.7 EXPENDITURE

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

1.8 OPERATING LEASES

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged against profits on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.9 VOLUNTEER HELP

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

2 INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Grants	-	883,148	883,148	553,643
Donations	5,494	-	5,494	8,493
Other	1,960	-	1,960	2,355
	7,454	883,148	890,602	564,491

Of the £564,491 income in 2021, £10,848 was unrestricted funds and £553,643 restricted funds. Further analysis of the restricted grants can be found in note 9.

3 EXPENDITURE

	2022 £	2021 £
Salaries & wages	674,600	411,623
Other staff and project costs	67,822	52,779
Staff training & travel	1,006	1,113
Occupancy costs	42,486	41,354
Insurance	1,295	871
Printing, postage & stationery	2,279	2,101
Telephone	4,232	4,141
Bank charges	121	299
Volunteer expenses	223	96
Accounting and Payroll	27,230	22,059
Independent Review	1,020	1,020
IT	6,777	4,309
Database	2,160	2,160
Volunteer Week Awards	245	-
Miscellaneous	1,213	270
	832,709	544,195

Of the total expenditure in the year, £831,674 (2021: £544,195) was charged to restricted funds and £1,035 (2021: £Nil) to unrestricted funds.

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2022

Company No 3357999

4 NET EXPENDITURE

	2022 £	2021 £
This is stated after charging:		
Independent examiner's fee	1,020	1,020
Operating lease rentals - land and buildings	33,000	33,000
Operating lease rentals - other	2,261	2,261

5 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

During the year, no Trustee received any remuneration (2021: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any benefits in kind (2021: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any reimbursement of expenses (2021: £Nil).

6 STAFF COSTS

	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	597,221	374,688
Social security costs	45,227	21,780
Pension costs	32,152	15,155
	674,600	411,623

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees was:

	2022 No	2021 No
Charitable Activities	22	12

One employee received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) amounting to between £60,000 and £65,000 (2021: none).

The charity considers its key personnel comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employment benefits (including social security costs) paid to the key management personnel were £60,095 (2021: £58,900).

7 DEBTORS

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	129,391	17,091
Prepayments	10,543	11,141
Accrued income	7,833	35,073
Other debtors	5,815	5,500
	153,582	68,805

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 March 2022

Company No 3357999

8 CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	6,381	6,122
Social security and other taxes	11,650	5,794
Other creditors	416	1,518
Accruals and deferred income	377,649	232,563
	<u>396,096</u>	<u>245,997</u>

Creditors includes deferred income of £332,617 (2021: £207,832).

Deferred income brought forward	207,832	239,423
Released from prior years	(179,290)	(87,456)
Incoming resources deferred	304,075	55,865
	<u>332,617</u>	<u>207,832</u>

9 STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expend- iture £	At 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted Funds:				
General funds	79,894	7,454	1,035	86,313
Total Unrestricted Funds	<u>79,894</u>	<u>7,454</u>	<u>1,035</u>	<u>86,313</u>
Restricted Funds:				
Hackney Council Grant (Brokerage)	-	55,000	55,000	-
City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group "CCG" (Step Up)	-	92,540	92,540	-
Southern Housing Group, People's Health Trust, National Lottery, CCG, Hackney Council Grant (Our Place)	-	79,555	79,555	-
CCG, City of Hackney Carers Centre, Mercers Company, Hackney Council (Befriending)	-	61,598	61,598	-
Together Better	9,448	133,689	82,215	60,922
COVID (Vaccinations, prescription & food deliveries, community champions & connectors)	-	390,816	390,816	-
Other (MOLA, Peer Research, Best Practice)	-	69,950	69,950	-
Total Restricted Funds	<u>9,448</u>	<u>883,148</u>	<u>831,674</u>	<u>60,922</u>
Total Funds	<u>89,342</u>	<u>890,602</u>	<u>832,709</u>	<u>147,235</u>

Description, nature and purpose of the restricted funds

These all related to grants and sponsorships to promote, support, and encourage the use and involvement of volunteers in the London Borough of Hackney

10 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN

	Restricted Funds £	Un- restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Current assets	457,018	86,313	543,331	335,339
Creditors	(396,096)	-	(396,096)	(245,997)
	60,922	86,313	147,235	89,342

11 COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING
LEASES

	2022		2021	
	Land & Buildings £	Other £	Land & Buildings £	Other £
At 31 March the charity was committed to total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:				
Not later than one year	33,000	2,261	33,000	2,261
Later than one year and not later than 5 years	61,390	1,696	94,390	3,957
	94,390	3,957	127,390	6,218

12 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

Amounts contracted for, but not provided in the accounts, amount to £nil (2021: £nil).

VOLUNTEER CENTRE HACKNEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1068104

Accounts

Volunteer Centre Hackney

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended

31 March 2021



TRUSTEES

Robert Sugden - Chair
Andreas Michaelides - Treasurer
Jonathan Parr
Rachel Linn
Andrew Ryan (resigned 6 October 2020)
Sarah Mitton (resigned 7 July 2021)
Ross Diamond (resigned 20 October 2021)

COMPANY REGISTERED NUMBER

3357999

CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER

1068104

REGISTERED OFFICE

12-13 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street, London E8 2LY

KEY MANAGEMENT

Lauren Tobias

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Justin Cowan FCA for Albeck Ltd Chartered Accountants, 49 Mowbray Road, Edgware, Middx HA8 8JL

BANKERS

HSBC, 283 Mare Street, London E8 1PJ
CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit their annual report and the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Hackney (VCH) for the year ended 31 March 2021. The trustees confirm that the annual report and the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the charity's governing documentation and the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

CONSTITUTION, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum of Association on 15 April 1997.

VCH is a local development agency governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. VCH's objects are "to promote the benefit of the community in the London Borough of Hackney by the promotion, support and development of voluntary services in the advancement of education, the protection of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness."

The directors, who are listed on page 1, act as trustees for the charitable activities of the company and exercise the powers of the company. The trustees may by power of attorney or otherwise appoint any person to be the agent of the company for such purposes and on such condition as they determine. They also may delegate any of their powers to any committee consisting of one or more trustees or other person.

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT OR ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The management of the company is the responsibility of the trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association. The number of trustees shall not be subject to any maximum but shall not be less than two. All trustees retire from office at the first Annual General Meeting subsequent to their appointment. One third of trustees is subject to retirement by rotation at the Annual General Meeting. In both instances retiring trustees, presuming they are eligible, will put themselves forward for re-appointment. Additionally, the Board may make appointments from time to time to fill vacancies. The Board usually meets every eight weeks. Additional meetings are held when the need arises.

INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF TRUSTEES

Joiners to the Board are provided with an induction pack which includes background information on the charity including the last set of accounts and the Charity Commission's publication on the legal responsibilities of charity trustees. As a provider of related training to external groups, the charity's trustees have access to a variety of sources of information to ensure that they are kept up to date on the changing regulations surrounding charities and trustees' responsibilities.

This year, the Board of Trustees reviewed their performance as a Board against the new Voluntary Organisations Good Governance Code from the Association of Chief Executives. We formulated and implemented an action plan to ensure our compliance with the six basic principles of good governance.

MANAGEMENT

The trustees agree the strategic direction of the charity, approve its budget, and receive progress reports in achieving organisational objectives from its Chief Executive Officer.

The charity employs staff, including a Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias, who carries out the day-to-day management of the company's work. There are line management structures linking all staff to the CEO, and through her, to the trustees.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

2020-21 was the year of COVID, with our charity at the forefront of emergency support across Hackney. With over 2,000 residents signing up to volunteer in the first two weeks of April, this was the start of a year that saw volunteering play a key role in the pandemic support offered to residents.

And in recognition of the huge role that VCH and volunteers played throughout the year, in June 2021, Hackney Council awarded VCH with the **Freedom of the Borough Award** – the highest honour an organisation or individual can be awarded by a local authority.

Over the year we enabled the following:

- 1,400 people started volunteering across the borough.
- 659 parcels of food and other essentials delivered to people isolating across Hackney.
- 11,720 prescriptions delivered to vulnerable and shielding residents
- 222 volunteers trained and matched as telephone befrienders
- 201 Community Champions trained to share vital COVID messaging to communities
- 15,000 plus hours given by over 800 volunteer stewards at the Hackney vaccination sites

A new way of working

With all VCH staff re-deployed from the outset, we worked closely in partnership with Hackney Council and the City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group to set up a whole new Volunteer Hub that would enable volunteers to be recruited, trained and matched quickly and safely to roles where they were most needed. This required the drawing up of new procedures and processes and the quick development of new partnerships and agreements, continually adapting and responding as required. This included the founding of a new Emergency Volunteer Pool to have volunteers ready and available to provide emergency support.

We aimed where possible to match people locally according to postcode to try and foster a local connection between residents, and worked hard to support community groups, Mutual Aid groups and neighbourhood forums to link to volunteers, to develop a strong sense of community spirit.

Food Deliveries

For six months, we provided an emergency and weekend food service for Hackney residents, who were referred from the Hackney Council Helpline, recruiting and matching volunteers to collect and deliver almost 700 food parcels to local residents who were shielding or isolating.

Volunteer Matching

We also sourced an ongoing supply of volunteers for hundreds of charities and community groups including Food Banks, mosques, churches, digital support projects, schools and community centres, who were providing culturally specific food, and food to people in financial difficulties as well as IT and online activities. Volunteers were needed for deliveries, food preparation, logistics, volunteer management, developing processes and procedures and marketing. We sourced 30 volunteers for the charity Blind Aid amongst others.

Community organisation Newington Green Alliance recruited 100 of its 115 volunteers as a direct result of our support, enabling them to support volunteer-led social action projects; '[VCH has been] tremendously important for recruiting volunteers. We wouldn't be here if it weren't for VCH.'

Befriending

From the beginning of lockdown, the extent of social isolation was huge with an urgent need to adapt our Community Supporters befriending service to telephone befriending. We started delivering training to volunteers twice-weekly, eventually training and matching over 220 volunteers to isolated residents, many of whom were dealing with very serious issues. Volunteers from all walks of life made two half-hour calls a week to people, providing a crucial social lifeline as well as a check-in service to make sure people had food and other essential items. When lockdown lifted, this became a hybrid service with many people meeting face to face. However, with people's mental and physical health having deteriorated, the level of need remained high.

"I call a young autistic man who is 28 in the evenings, and we just have a chat about his week and about his day. I think he's really struggled because a lot of the services he normally accessed aren't available, and as someone with autism I think that disruption to his routines have really affected him, so I think our regular chats have really helped", volunteer befriender.

Mental Health Support

All our services helped to support both with alleviating loneliness and reducing anxiety, as in addition to specific services such as befriending, all volunteers who made deliveries - either food or prescriptions or other essential items - spent time talking to residents on their doorstep. We also called many of our service users on a regular basis, in particular all the people whom we support through our mental health volunteering and employment project Step Up, as well as all the residents we supported through our community projects.

We also provided volunteers who had an array of creative skills to deliver online activities to residents - singing sessions, exercise classes or art clubs and yoga - as well as musicians to deliver real life music sessions in the garden to residents living in supported housing at Anchor Hanover.

Prescriptions Delivery

From April 2020 until May 2021, we recruited and matched over 150 volunteers to deliver almost 12,000 prescriptions to vulnerable residents on behalf of 40 pharmacies across the borough, who were overwhelmed with delivery requests which they could not meet. Volunteers travelled around both City and Hackney on their bikes and on foot, delivering multiple prescriptions often two or three days a week for months in all types of inclement weather.

Community Development

Mutual Aid - these groups sprang up all over the borough to help deliver neighbourhood-based support to residents to deliver food and prescriptions. These were an amazing force of residents who demonstrated the immense enthusiasm and passion of people to support their neighbours in a time of crisis.

Together with Hackney Council we supported the groups with information and advice on volunteer management, health and safety and managing risk as well as linking them in with local groups and organisations. For example, we linked up Homerton Mutual Aid volunteers with the Morningside and Gascoyne Community Centre. Two volunteers supported the social enterprise group to design and code a website so the young people could sell their products online. Another volunteer delivered socially distanced exercise classes for the children.

Our Place and Together Better - we also continued to support local residents to share their skills and start up their own activities and projects through our two place-based social action projects. Both are aimed at engaging local residents to come together and deliver their own solutions to issues they identify, to improve their local area and help local people. Our Place is based on the New Kingshold estate and also

in Hoxton West. Projects started over the year by residents included a guerrilla gardening project, a Community Closet with clothes and toys donated to hundreds of families and AKKA - a project led by a young graduate to support and document the stories of South Asian women in the borough.

Together Better started during lockdown in September 2020, based at three GP surgeries - Somerford Grove, Elsdale and Spring Hill - working together with practice staff to engage patients to volunteer at their local surgery, such as to help patients to register online, to make reminder phone calls about appointments, or to set up their own projects such as a walking group, exercise class, art club or gardening project. This is an innovative two-year project launched together with the local NHS to establish a community at the surgery, to empower patients to be more in control of their own health and wellbeing which ultimately decreases pressure on services.

The aim is to prioritise engaging with patients from particular communities where the GP practice staff feel there needs to be closer engagement eg young people, Turkish women, and for projects to be a combination of what will support the practice to achieve their objectives eg increasing immunisations uptake, and harnessing the skills and interests of patients.

Despite initial difficulties, being launched during COVID, by the end of the year, they were all thriving, with practice staff saying that the project was improving relations with patients, reducing complaints and making staff and patients happier.

Community Champions

Recognising the essential need to disseminate public health messaging via local communities and trusted connections, the Community Champions programme was launched in August as a partnership between VCH, Hackney CVS and Public Health. This was funded by national government to recruit, train and support people connected to communities across the borough to share key COVID safety messaging via translated and accessible media in ways that were likely to engage residents.

201 champions speaking multiple languages were recruited from very diverse communities and supported to share messages that were continually being updated, and respond to concerns. These varied from regulations around isolating, test and trace, wearing masks, and then latterly from December, to clarify concerns around vaccines and encourage take-up.

Vaccine Volunteering

As soon as the vaccination programme started in December 2020, VCH were called upon to recruit volunteers to help with stewarding. Within a short time, we had recruited and deployed hundreds of volunteers to help with meeting and greeting patients, managing the registration process, and supporting with logistics through the sites. With volunteers working 3-hour shifts, from 8am through to 8pm, 7 days a week, since December, at two main sites as well as pharmacies and local pop-up clinics, we have deployed over 800 volunteers – who have been said to be the essence of what has made people's experience receiving the vaccine a joy, as well as reassuring and safe. This programme is still continuing across Hackney.

People's experience

We conducted a survey of volunteers and received just over 100 surveys back.

Of these, our findings were:

- 40% of people had never volunteered before.
- 48% of people would like to do ad hoc volunteering again, while another 42% of people would like to continue with regular volunteering.
- 93% of people said they had a good/very good experience, rating it on average 4.7 / 5.
- **Overwhelmingly, people wanted to do 'something positive' with their time or 'help other people' (both 83 – 84%).**
- 69% of people wanted to get involved with their community.

- Taking part helped people feel part of their community - 86% of people felt more connected as a result.
- Volunteering helped to lift people's spirits - 79% of people told us that taking part had given them a more positive outlook. 81% felt that taking part had improved their mental wellbeing.
- Taking part helped 44% of people to improve their skills or knowledge, mainly around getting to know Hackney and the local area.

"[I'm] glad I did it. My industry has suffered during lockdown and I may be financially poorer, but I've been richer for getting involved".

'The absence of human contact in the last year has been horrible. Being able to go out and meet people, albeit for a short time, has been amazing. People who are shielding are incredibly lonely, so being able to have a brief conversation with them at the door is important and I can see the benefit, not just for the shielding person but for me as well. It's been such a hard year for them and being able to feel like you're a small part of that is really lovely.'

"I have had a very good experience. I think volunteering is something we should be encouraging all our young people to take part in".

"Giving back and helping has filled my heart with joy... I want to look back on this time and know that I helped out".

Thank you to all the volunteers who gave their time over the year, to all our funders and to all those who continue to support our work.

Funders who supported us during 2020-21: Hackney Council, Public Health England, City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, National Lottery Community Fund, Mercers Company, Southern Housing Group, City and Hackney Carers Centre, Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest, Support When It Matters, Shoreditch Trust, Sanctuary Housing and our business partner The Depository Trust & Clearing Corporation.

The trustees would also like to go on record in thanking all the staff at VCH for their tremendous efforts during the most difficult of years. Their energy and efforts throughout such an unprecedented period were remarkable and led to many across the borough receiving vital support and connection.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The new programmes and activities outlined above which were initiated this year, many directly in response to COVID, resulted in an increase in income from £341k to 564k with a corresponding increase in expenses from £337k to £544k, mainly as a result of the higher staff base. The charity achieved a surplus of £20k for the year. Funding secured for 2021-22 already exceeds £800k.

RISK MANAGEMENT

VCH's Board of Trustees has identified the major risks to which VCH is exposed and these have been reviewed and systems established to manage those risks. The Board takes a proactive approach to risk identification, reduction and mitigation, and reviews this regularly with senior staff. VCH's current cash flow situation is sound and a new Business Plan has been adopted for the future.

RESERVES POLICY

The trustees review the amount of funds VCH requires to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil our continuing obligations on a regular basis. VCH takes a cautious approach towards investment, adopting a short-term low-risk policy. The Board has agreed that while it will maintain reserves at a minimum of 15% of annual costs, it will work towards increasing this to 25% (three months' operating costs) going forward.

This figure has been arrived at considering:

- the risks associated with individual streams of income and expenditure differing from budget;
- the additional risks associated with the dependence of VCH on a small number of donors;
- planned activity levels and the major risk to organisational delivery of reducing spending further at this stage; and
- organisational commitments.

ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees 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 have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). 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 charitable company and of the profit or loss of the charitable company for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company 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 charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees acknowledge the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's published general and relevant sub-sector guidance on public benefit.

All activities undertaken by VCH are for the public benefit. With a focus on providing volunteering services, the organisation's operation is very much geared to providing benefit to the local community as is highlighted by the activities reported herein. This will also continue to be central to its future plans.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and was approved by the trustees on 8 December 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



Chair, Robert Sugden



Chief Executive Officer, Lauren Tobias

Volunteer Centre Hackney Charity No 1068104 Company No 3357999
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees on the Unaudited Accounts of
Volunteer Centre Hackney for the year ended 31 March 2021

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021 which are set out on pages 10 to 17.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act"). Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited for this year under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). In carrying out my examination, I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act).

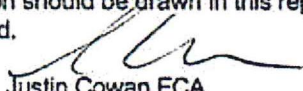
Independent examiner's statement

The company's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name:  Justin Cowan FCA
16 December 2021

Albeck Ltd
49 Mowbray Road,
Edgware, Middx HA8 8JL

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2021

Company No 3357999

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Income					
Incoming resources from charitable activities:					
Grants receivable	2	-	553,643	553,643	328,663
Other income	2	10,848	-	10,848	11,716
Total income		10,848	553,643	564,491	340,379
Expenditure					
Charitable activities					
		-	544,195	544,195	336,826
Total expenditure	3	-	544,195	544,195	336,826
Net movement in funds		10,848	9,448	20,296	3,553
Total funds brought forward		69,046	-	69,046	65,493
Total funds carried forward	10	79,894	9,448	89,342	69,046

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The net incoming resources for the year arise from the Charity's continuing operations.

Volunteer Centre Hackney

Company No 3357999

Balance Sheet
at 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Current Assets			
Debtors	7	68,805	23,512
Cash at bank and in hand		266,534	307,690
		<u>335,339</u>	<u>331,202</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	8	(245,997)	(262,156)
		<u>89,342</u>	<u>69,046</u>
Net Current Assets			
		<u>89,342</u>	<u>69,046</u>
Total Net Assets	10	<u>89,342</u>	<u>69,046</u>
Funds			
Unrestricted funds	9	79,894	69,046
Restricted funds	9	9,448	-
		<u>89,342</u>	<u>69,046</u>
Total Funds			
		<u>89,342</u>	<u>69,046</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2021 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year under s476. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with FRS 102 SORP.

The financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 8 December 2021.



Chair, Robert Sugden

The notes on pages 13 to 17 form part of these financial statements.

Volunteer Centre Hackney
Statement of Cash Flows
at 31 March 2021

Company No 3357999

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net increasing resources	20,296	3,553
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(45,293)	8,031
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	<u>(16,159)</u>	<u>206,528</u>
Net cash provided/(used) by operating activities	(41,156)	218,112
 Cash at beginning of the year	 307,690	 89,578
 Cash at the end of the year	 <u><u>266,534</u></u>	 <u><u>307,690</u></u>

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 BASIS OF COMPLIANCE

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 BASIS OF PREPARATION

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.
The financial statements are prepared in Sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.
The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.3 COMPANY STATUS

The company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the company.

1.4 MATERIAL PRIOR YEAR ERRORS

No material prior year errors have been identified in the reporting period.

1.5 FUND ACCOUNTING

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the company for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.6 INCOME

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the company is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance. Grants received prior to the year end but not recognised as income are carried forward within accruals and deferred income.

1.7 EXPENDITURE

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

1.8 OPERATING LEASES

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged against profits on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.9 VOLUNTEER HELP

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' report.

2 INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Grants	-	553,643	553,643	328,663
Donations	8,493	-	8,493	3,746
Other	2,355	-	2,355	7,970
	10,848	553,643	564,491	340,379

Of the £340,379 income in 2020, £11,716 was unrestricted funds and £328,663 restricted funds. Further analysis of the restricted grants can be found in note 9.

3 EXPENDITURE

	2021 £	2020 £
Salaries & wages	411,623	227,403
Other staff and project costs	52,779	31,005
Staff training & travel	1,113	977
Occupancy costs	41,354	39,113
Insurance	871	801
Printing, postage & stationery	2,101	2,516
Telephone	4,141	4,431
Bank charges	299	209
Membership & subscription costs	-	904
Volunteer expenses	96	1,103
Accounting and Payroll	22,059	16,863
Independent Review	1,020	1,020
Meetings	-	75
IT	4,309	4,682
Database	2,160	2,160
Volunteer Week Awards	-	645
Miscellaneous	270	2,919
	544,195	336,826

Of the total expenditure in the year, £544,195 (2020: £328,663) was charged to restricted funds and £Nil (2020: £8,163) to unrestricted funds.

4 NET EXPENDITURE

	2021 £	2020 £
This is stated after charging:		
Independent examiner's fee	1,020	1,020
Operating lease rentals - land and buildings	33,000	29,667
Operating lease rentals - other	2,261	2,261

5 TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

During the year, no Trustee received any remuneration (2020: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any benefits in kind (2020: £Nil).
During the year, no Trustee received any reimbursement of expenses (2020: £Nil).

6 STAFF COSTS

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	374,688	206,534
Social security costs	21,780	11,917
Pension costs	15,155	8,952
	411,623	227,403

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees was:

	2021 No	2020 No
Charitable Activities	12	7

No employee received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

The charity considers its key personnel comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive Officer. The total employment benefits (including social security costs) paid to the key management personnel were £58,900 (2020: £53,457).

7 DEBTORS

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	17,091	-
Prepayments	11,141	10,970
Accrued income	35,073	6,692
Other debtors	5,500	5,850
	68,805	23,512

8 CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	6,122	5,783
Social security and other taxes	5,794	4,249
Other creditors	1,518	2,205
Accruals and deferred income	232,563	249,919
	<u>245,997</u>	<u>262,156</u>

Creditors includes deferred income of £207,832' (2020: £239,423).

Deferred income brought forward	239,423	26,217
Released from prior years	(87,456)	(26,217)
Incoming resources deferred	55,865	239,423
	<u>207,832</u>	<u>239,423</u>

9 STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expend- iture £	At 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted Funds:				
General funds	69,046	10,848	-	79,894
Total Unrestricted Funds	<u>69,046</u>	<u>10,848</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>79,894</u>
Restricted Funds:				
Hackney Council Grant (Brokerage)	-	55,000	55,000	-
City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group "CCG" (Step Up)	-	91,975	91,975	-
Southern Housing Group, People's Health Trust, National Lottery, CCG, Hackney Council Grant (Our Place)	-	81,451	81,451	-
CCG, City of Hackney Carers Centre, Mercers Company, Hackney Council (Befriending)	-	75,766	75,766	-
Together Better	-	110,865	101,417	9,448
COVID (Vaccinations, prescription & food deliveries, community champions & connectors)	-	138,586	138,586	-
Total Restricted Funds	<u>-</u>	<u>553,643</u>	<u>544,195</u>	<u>9,448</u>
Total Funds	<u>69,046</u>	<u>564,491</u>	<u>544,195</u>	<u>89,342</u>

Description, nature and purpose of the restricted funds

These all related to grants and sponsorships to promote, support, and encourage the use and involvement of volunteers in the London Borough of Hackney

10 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN

	Restricted Funds £	Un- restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Current assets	9,448	325,891	335,339	331,202
Creditors	-	(245,997)	(245,997)	(262,156)
	9,448	79,894	89,342	69,046

11 COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING
LEASES

	2021		2020	
	Land & Buildings £	Other £	Land & Buildings £	Other £
At 31 March the charity was committed to total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:				
Not later than one year	33,000	2,261	33,000	2,261
Later than one year and not later than 5 years	94,390	3,957	127,390	6,218
	127,390	6,218	160,390	8,479

12 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

Amounts contracted for, but not provided in the accounts, amount to £nil (2020: £nil).

