VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

England & Wales · Charity number 1076392

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	03725459
Registered	1999-07-05
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	1 Thorpe Close London W10 5XL
Phone	02089603722
Email	Michael.Ashe@vckc.org.uk
Website	www.voluntarywork.org.uk

Activities

Objects: A) TO PROMOTE THE VALUE AND IMPACT THAT VOLUNTEERING AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT CAN HAVE ON RESPONDING TO AND SUPPORTING THE NEEDS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION, AND TO UNDERTAKE AND ARRANGE VOLUNTARY WORK IN EDUCATION, SOCIAL SERVICES AND SIMILAR CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AMONGST THOSE IN NEED THEREOF IN THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA AND OTHER PARTS OF LONDON IN GENERAL (HEREINAFTER CALLED THE AREA OF BENEFIT)

Activities: The Volunteer Centre aims to support and facilitate the development of quality community services through the promotion of voluntary action throughout Kensington and Chelsea. -Raising the profile and impact of volunteering-Provision of volunteer recruitment programmes-Provision of volunteer advice, information and support service-Promotion of good practice in the deployment of volunteers

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Disability, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** GREATER LONDON, KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA
- Kensington And Chelsea

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£630,466	£644,274	£322,790	14
2024-03-31	£640,145	£574,792	£336,598	13
2023-03-31	£533,752	£483,100	£271,245	9
2022-03-31	£491,840	£506,669	-	-
2021-03-31	£543,732	£495,584	£235,422	12

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Ruth Leonard	Chair	2025-07-14
Anne-Helene Biosse Duplan		2014-03-20
JOSEPH CARIM		
Karen Boecker		2025-01-27
Kishma Ann-Marie Smithurst		2025-11-24
MUSKAAN KHURANA		2019-02-06
Maria-Iuliana Dinu		2020-07-20
Nkechi Mary-Viola Obi		2022-11-28
Rossana Rocchini		2020-09-28
Tina Learmonth		2024-11-18
Tristan Bungaroo		2025-01-27

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VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

England & Wales - Charity number 1076392

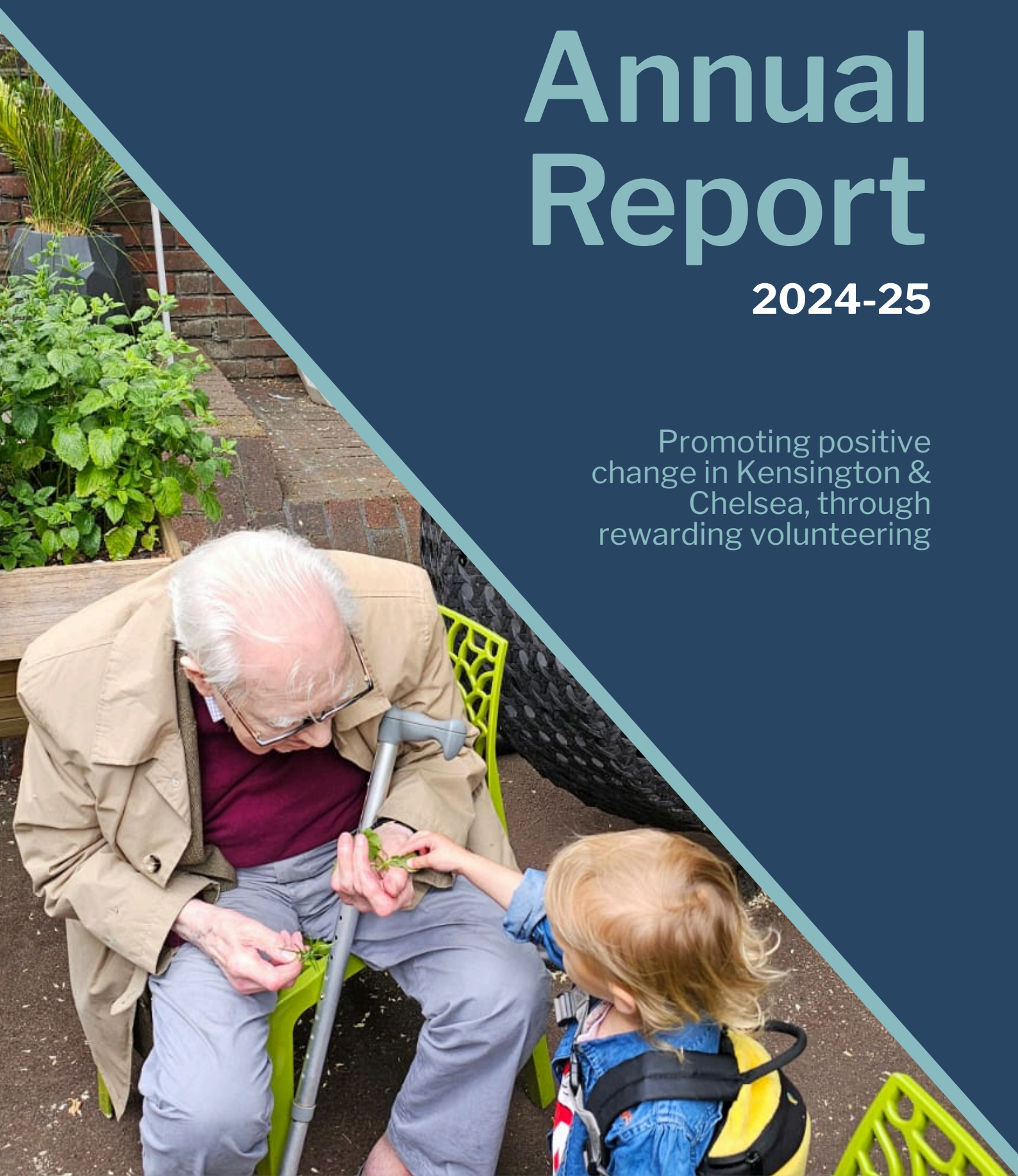
Accounts

VOLUNTEER CENTRE
KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

Annual Report

2024-25

Promoting positive change in Kensington & Chelsea, through rewarding volunteering



LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

CHARITY NUMBER
1076392

COMPANY NUMBER
03725459

REGISTERED OFFICE
1 Thorpe Close, London W10 5XL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan	Chair
Karen Boecker (appointed 27/01/25)	
Tristan Bungaroo (appointed 27/01/25)	
Joseph Carim	
Jennifer Clarke (resigned 23/09/24)	
Maria-Iuliana Dinu	
Bashir Hassan (resigned 06/04/25)	
Muskaan Khurana	Vice-Chair
Marley Obi	
Michael Pearson (resigned 24/05/25)	
Rossana Rocchini	Treasurer
Tina Learmonth (appointed 18/11/24)	
Ruth Leonard (appointed 14/07/25)	
Kishma Smithurst (appointed 24/11/25)	
Linda Thomas (appointed 23/09/24)	
Aria Wong (appointed 18/11/24)	

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Michael Ashe	Company Secretary

BANKERS
CAF Bank
Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

SOLICITORS
Russell-Cooke Solicitors
2 Putney Hill, London SW15 6AB

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER
Shruti Soni Limited
117a St John's Hill, Sevenoaks, TN13 3PE

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

The oldest Volunteer Centre in the UK, the Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea has served as the beating heart of volunteering in K&C for over 55 years. From our base in Ladbroke Grove and through outreach across the borough, we're a catalyst for change - recruiting, placing, supporting and celebrating volunteers who enrich the lives of others and their own. This year we connected with over 1,200 people on their volunteering journey, placed 438 in volunteering roles, and collaborated with 88 local organisations to create and shape meaningful and inclusive volunteering opportunities.

Our specialist programmes help people who face barriers to achieving their goals, particularly people living with long-term physical or mental health conditions, or with criminal records. We use volunteering as a pathway to employment, improved wellbeing, and greater independence. These programmes enable people to grow; they transform lives, building confidence, skills, and stronger social bonds. Everyone should be able to give their time and their care to help others – these Volunteer Centre programmes make that a reality.

In a year marked by continued strain across the voluntary sector, we remained focused on our mission. We expanded our core volunteering offer and integrated our specialist services, making particular progress in our Supported Access programme, which focuses on young disabled people in K&C. The pressures we face are often shared by our clients - and our achievements are a testament to their resilience as much as ours.

We continued to work beyond our immediate services with voluntary and statutory partners to tackle the systemic barriers that affect voluntary participation in the life of our community. We played a leading role in the borough's Partnership Transformation Board, its Supporting Anti-Poverty, Fairness and Equality group, and the bi-borough Safeguarding group, improving outcomes for local people and the operating environment for community organisations in K&C.

We renewed our finance function, responding to evolving demand while bidding farewell to valued colleagues. At the same time, we were thrilled to see staff members returning to VCKC to take on new roles. We completed the rollout of our digital platform, Plinth, which has since been adopted by several of our local partners.

Recognising the need to reflect and learn continuously, we created space for meaningful one-to-one conversations between staff and trustees. These discussions, alongside extensive stakeholder interviews, laid the groundwork for a comprehensive strategic review, to be completed next year, that will guide us as we strive to be even more effective. We increased our investment in impact this year, building our capacity to monitor and evaluate client outcomes, enable staff performance, and support volunteer-involving organisations. This raised our costs substantially, while income fell slightly, resulting in a modest deficit alongside greater impact.

Our deepest thanks go to our exceptional volunteers (Champions, Ambassadors, Volunteering Advisers, Befrienders and trustees) and staff. Following a successful recruitment round, we were delighted to welcome five new trustees who bring diverse skills and perspectives to the board. We also bid farewell to two of our long-serving trustees, former Treasurer Michael Pearson and former Chair, Jen Clarke, to whom we extend our special gratitude for her inspiring and assured leadership and service.

Our clients could not achieve the things they do without our funders. We are proud to have secured another three years of core funding from RBKC - our local authority is one of few left in the UK that empowers its community and their organisations in this way. Our employment work was also enabled by RBKC and the steadfast support of the Campden Charities. The outstanding support of the Henry Smith Foundation, the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust, and the Charles Hayward Foundation has meant we continue to enable people with criminal records to develop their independence. For our wellbeing work this year, particularly our horticultural outreach in the south of the borough, we are deeply grateful to the Julia Rausing Trust, as well as our friends at the Kensington & Chelsea Social Council and RBKC Adult Services. Our Market Ambassadors programme would not have been possible without the support of Portobello and Golborne market traders and our esteemed Markets Manager, Nick Kasic.

Thank you to all our donors and partners, our team, and most of all our clients, whose determination inspires everything we do.

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan
Chair of the Board of Trustees



REPORT OF TRUSTEES

The trustees, who are also directors of the Company for the purpose of the Companies Act, present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. This is also a Directors' Report as required by Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 of the accounts. They comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011, and the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice ("SORP"), applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Legal Structure

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (VCKC) was founded in 1969 and incorporated under a memorandum of association on 5 July 1999, amended by special resolution on 14 November 2014. It is governed under its articles of association.

Governance

Role

The Board of Trustees are also the Directors of the charity for Companies Act purposes. Trustees have no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, VCKC.

Trustee Appointment, Induction, and Training

The Board appoints new trustees at its discretion, aiming for a broad mix of skills and experiences that reflect the charity's mission and activities. Trustees receive induction, ongoing training, and both formal and informal learning opportunities during their term.

Organisational Structure

The Board has three committees: Finance, Policy, Procedure and Personnel, and Fundraising. Each committee has specific terms of reference and may co-opt non-trustee members with relevant skills. The Board is responsible for strategic planning, policy review, and oversight of resources. Day-to-day operations are delegated to the Chief Executive, who leads a team of paid staff and volunteers.

Pay and remuneration of staff

VCKC's pay policy aims to offer fair pay to attract and retain appropriately qualified staff. VCKC's trustees are responsible for setting remuneration levels for its senior staff - the Chief Executive Officer and Head of Volunteering and Operations. VCKC considers advice and support from HR advisers, local and regional peers, and regional and national infrastructure bodies when setting pay. Staff salaries are increased annually, as far as possible in line with inflation. They are formally revised where it is appropriate to reflect changes in professional responsibilities. VCKC is a Living Wage-accredited employer.

Involvement of volunteers

VCKC is committed to flexible volunteering open to people of all backgrounds. Its core volunteers are essential to the Volunteer Centre's success, supporting its brokerage and specialist services and the smooth running of its operations. VCKC continues to be a trusted partner throughout the borough, organising volunteers for major local events, including the Great Exhibition Road Festival and Age UK's Valentine's Gala. VCKC's Market Ambassadors welcomed visitors to the Portobello and Golborne Markets every Saturday this year. Wherever VCKC can innovate to make volunteering more inclusive and accessible, it will take the opportunity to do so.

Related Parties

VCKC does not have branches or subsidiaries.

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



In 2024-25, we supported

1,217 people, of whom **533** were residents of Kensington & Chelsea

Our Core Team **supported**

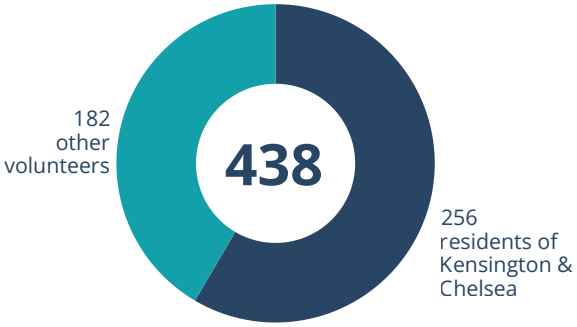
88

organisations to offer

148

inclusive, accessible, and safe **volunteering opportunities**.

Our teams **placed**



people into rewarding volunteering roles; helping themselves and helping others.

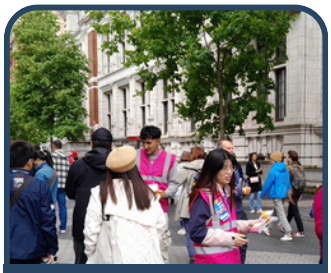
122

people who were lonely, isolated, or concerned about their mental health **got the support they needed**.

Our Core Team supported **four local events** with volunteer recruitment and coordination:



Longridge Road Greening Day



Great Exhibition Road Festival 2024



Trellick Tower Festival



Age UK's Valentine's Gala 2025

OUR OBJECTS

To promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the communities and inhabitants of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and other parts of London in general (hereinafter called the “area of benefit”) by associating together volunteers and organisations in a common effort to advance education, protect health, relieve poverty, sickness and distress and in furtherance of these objects but not otherwise through:
a) advice and support persons willing to volunteer promoting volunteering
b) giving advice and support to organisations in the involvement of volunteers in furthering the organisations charitable purposes.

To promote the value and impact that volunteering and community involvement can have on responding to and supporting the needs of local communities and social exclusion, and to undertake and arrange voluntary work in education, social services and similar charitable activities amongst those in need thereof.

OUR VISION

Kensington & Chelsea is a place in which everyone is able to volunteer, contributing to the community and their own wellbeing.

OUR MISSION

We support people's growth and the development of our community through rewarding volunteering, promoting positive change in Kensington & Chelsea.



Black History Month Walk, Nov 2024

OUR VALUES

VALUING PEOPLE

We treat everyone with care, integrity and respect - enabling people to achieve their goals and make a meaningful contribution.

COLLABORATION

We use our deep roots and strong local ties to help organisations and groups adopt good volunteering practices and champion accessible, inclusive volunteering opportunities.

KNOWLEDGE

We connect and help communities come together using local resources to meet local needs.

CATALYST

With volunteers, partners and the community, we are a catalyst for local impact, taking opportunities and acting together to tackle the causes of shared problems.



Valentine's Card Making, Feb 2025

ACTIVITIES & MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

VCKC operates as both an infrastructure organisation - supporting other public benefit organisations - and as a direct delivery organisation - supporting individuals.

Our work is divided into three key areas:

Core Services	Volunteer brokerage and support services for the voluntary sector
Specialist Services	Inclusive volunteering support for individuals who are disabled, have a long-term health condition, a criminal record, or other barriers to participation
Community Champions	This project enables local people in the Notting Dale ward to set their health priorities and work together to achieve them

Measuring the social impact of infrastructure organisations such as VCKC can be challenging. We act as a bridge between diverse charities, social enterprises, and community projects, united by their shared reliance on volunteers from all walks of life. These volunteers bring a wide range of skills, motivations, and experiences, yet they share one common goal: to give their time to improve the community.

Through our impact reporting, we highlight the value of inclusive, accessible volunteering across the borough. We measure our impact by showcasing both quantitative data and qualitative insights, particularly the stories of the people we work with, and by showing how volunteering positively affects health, personal development, and social connection.

Beyond social change, we also measure our organisational capacity. To manage the growing volume of volunteering requests, VCKC sought a unified system that could enhance collaboration across services, streamline client journeys, and improve resilience.

In October 2023, we began working with Plinth, a platform capable of supporting volunteer and partner registration, volunteer brokerage, and case management for our Specialist Services team. Following a soft launch for Core Services in January 2024, full migration to this new platform was completed in October 2024.

This year we have become a more data-driven organisation, making evidence-based decisions about our service provision and improving practice through the data we have on Plinth. We are now able to record and analyse data related to both project-specific targets and VCKC internal metrics within one secure and unified system. Plinth enables us to report directly to funders, including RBKC on our agreed metrics, utilising their system of tags and outcomes to enrich the process.

MEASURING OUR IMPACT

We measure our impact using a range of quantitative and qualitative indicators, including:

Participation and Engagement: tracking attendance at events, volunteer registrations via our website, and engagement through weekly volunteering advice sessions

Service Outputs: recording outputs relevant to VCKC's services and funded projects

Demographics: monitoring demographic data to ensure our services reach and reflect all parts of the borough

Outcomes: reporting on placements, outputs, and outcomes agreed with RBKC as part of our core grant and with other funders

Since 2017, RBKC has placed a stronger emphasis on resident outcomes. In response, we have introduced specific targets for:

- Increasing the number of resident volunteer placements
- Improving emotional health and social connection
- Enhancing skills, knowledge, and confidence among volunteers

In addition, we track outcomes related to partnerships and policy influence, as VCKC plays a key convening role in local networks, shaping collective responses to systemic challenges, advising the local authority and other stakeholders.

We will continue to use Plinth to align and track our overarching outcomes, enabling us to reflect on our practice, demonstrate impact, and continuously strengthen the culture of volunteering in our borough.

CORE SERVICES

2024-25 was the first year of a three-year grant from RBKC for our Core Services, in particular our brokerage service, designed to match volunteers with volunteering opportunities across the community.

Sean Turnbull, our Head of Volunteering and Operations, taking over from Liz Woodman in January, leads our Core Services, supported by Angela Weir, our Volunteering Officer. We are fortunate to have recruited Moska Saidy as our Volunteering Development Coordinator. Moska leads our work with volunteer-involving organisations across the borough, supporting them to create and maintain roles which are meaningful, accessible, inclusive, and safe.

2024-25 included the major challenge of migrating to a new volunteer management provider, Plinth CRM, and supporting our partners to come on the journey with us, all of us learning the ropes together. Plinth has repaid our investment in staff time, substantially increasing our capacity to match volunteers with the organisations that need their support and acting as a case management tool for our direct work with clients. Despite the hard work involved in making this transition, the Core Services team has continued to deliver a vital brokerage service across the borough.

We worked with **88** organisations

to facilitate **148** volunteering opportunities

which allowed **291** people to volunteer.

CORE VOLUNTEERING EVENTS

Great Exhibition Road Festival 2024

It was excellent to partner again with Imperial College to recruit and manage volunteers for the Great Exhibition Road Festival (15-16 June 2024), and a privilege to have supported 32 brilliant volunteers who helped to make it a great success by staffing the information points and signposting more than 50,000 visitors who came to enjoy a weekend of science and culture.

This year, Imperial College championed inclusivity at the Festival. They made changes in the design and delivery of the event, including physical adaptations, the provision of sensory maps, and comprehensive briefings for volunteers on how to best support guests with specific needs, ensuring everyone could fully participate in and enjoy the festival. We were just as keen to make sure everyone who wanted to volunteer could get involved, so we learnt from our experiences in 2023-24 and offered shorter shifts so people could volunteer if they were available for only part of the day or if they needed additional rest.

The volunteers shared their motivations for giving their time at the festival, and it was a reminder of how volunteering helps us flourish as human beings:

Two volunteers were looking for work and wanted to do something for the community and their CV at the same time

Two volunteers were new to London, so this was an opportunity to help people find their way at the festival and for them to enjoy their new city

One student volunteered to help overcome their shyness when speaking English

Another person volunteered at the festival as a way to keep active and occupied in their retirement



Great Exhibition Road Festival

Someone who volunteered last year and came again told us that this is their favourite volunteering activity. They stayed with us all weekend!

> I am really glad to be part of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea today for the Great Exhibition Road Festival as a volunteer. It was my second experience with the festival and I enjoyed being there.
> A massive thanks to you and the team at VCKC.
> **You gave me a chance to do something for the community.**

Age UK's Valentine's Gala 2025

As part of our ongoing partnership with Age UK, we were proud to support their annual Valentine's Gala, running for the eleventh year. The Valentine's Gala is one of their highlights of the year, celebrating connection from companionship and kindness to the simple joy of spending time with others alongside tea, cake, and live jazz. More than 70 enthusiastic volunteers helped to create a warm, meaningful experience for older people in the borough.

This year, in addition to supporting the event, we also held a card-making session at our hub in Ladbroke Grove, creating handmade, personalised Valentine's Cards for guests at the Gala.



Valentine's Card Making

One of our braver volunteers, Sandy, acted as an MC for the event. She reflected:

> Volunteering as the MC for AgeUK's Valentine's Gala was **an incredibly meaningful experience that I'll always cherish**. The event was not only filled with warmth and laughter, but seeing the faces of our guests light up as they connected **reminded me just how important it is to make everyone feel seen, valued, and included**.

CORE KEY STATS

This year,

959

people engaged with our volunteering brokerage service.

On average, we offered

78

volunteering opportunities each month.

We placed

291

volunteers in at least one role.

MARKET AMBASSADORS

The Market Ambassadors programme made a difference again this year, with volunteers welcoming visitors to Portobello Road and Golborne Road Markets each Saturday. Ambassadors offered directions, advice on local sights, and helped people feel safe and welcome - creating a friendly and approachable atmosphere at the markets.

The programme was led by our lovely colleague, Sristi Kumar, from October 2023 until December 2024. When she moved to pastures new, Moska Saidy shepherded the project to its conclusion.

Although funding was not extended beyond March 2025 due to financial pressures on the markets, the project finished on a positive note. Market Ambassadors recorded over 3,000 interactions with the public during the year. 49 volunteers took part - 35 of them joining for the first time. Many became regulars, returning throughout the year. To celebrate their contribution, we hosted a thank you event where volunteers received certificates, handwritten cards, and small tokens of appreciation from Markets Manager, Nick Kasic.



Ambassadors Thank You Party

We hope to relaunch the programme once new funding is secured. The impact of the Market Ambassadors has been clear - improving the visitor experience and offering an inclusive, low-barrier way for people to connect, contribute, and build confidence through volunteering, sometimes leading to longer-term commitment.



Ambassadors at the Market

PLINTH CRM

In 2022, VCKC embarked on a strategic journey to identify a CRM platform capable of supporting the work of our client-facing teams while integrating our vital volunteering brokerage function through our website. The platform offered by Plinth emerged as the solution to this, and since October 2023, we have been working with their team to make this a reality.

This year marked a significant step forward as Ana Urbina, our Finance and Operations Coordinator, successfully collaborated with Plinth developers to bring their innovative product to all teams at VCKC. This achievement culminated in the launch of the new platform for Community Champions in March 2025, following the adoption of those for our Specialist Services team from October 2024.

Core Services
We worked intensively with the developers and with partner organisations to ensure a smooth, straightforward user experience for volunteering brokerage. After a year of hard work, the system is working effectively, and we continue to see thousands of prospective volunteers and a significant proportion of K&C volunteer-involving organisations register via the platform.

Specialist Services
The Specialist Services platform is now allowing the team to tag their clients, record event attendance, analyse surveys, send reminders, and record outcomes.

Community Champions
The Community Champions platform enables us to analyse attendance at events and gatherings and hold data from partner organisations and our dedicated Champions. This enables VCKC to use this information for monitoring and programme sustainability purposes, moving away from storing our data in spreadsheets or funders' databases.

With all teams now operating on these integrated platforms, VCKC will be able to achieve several organisational benefits:

- Capture shared outcomes from work across all departments
- Ensure information on risks to clients and staff is communicated systematically
- Analyse data from across our team to improve organisation-wide learning and strategic decision-making

Looking ahead, we are confident about further enhancing the platform's reporting capabilities, optimising the user experience for everyone involved, and exploring the integration between our platforms and our new newsletter provider Brevo - so we can email and text our clients, ensuring they don't miss out on valuable events and volunteering opportunities. Additionally, we aim to integrate other key platforms with our website, creating a more seamless referral process (including self-referral) for clients to connect with the most appropriate team quickly and easily.

SPECIALIST SERVICES

Our commitment to inclusive volunteering sits at the heart of VCKC's mission. We believe everyone should have access to the benefits of volunteering and participation in the life of the community, regardless of background, health, or personal circumstances.

This year, we brought together our Wellbeing, Employability, and InsideOut programmes under one Specialist Services team. This joined-up approach strengthened referral pathways, improved partnership working, and ensured that clients receive the right mix of support, meeting them where they are and recognising that many clients can and do benefit from more than one of our services.

WELLBEING

Our Wellbeing Programme supports local people whose mental and physical health can make it hard for them to take part in community life. Led by Jaya Alvarez-Murray and Tracey Golding, the programme was funded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the North West London NHS Integrated Care Board (via Kensington & Chelsea Social Council), and the Julia Rausing Trust.

We help members of the programme to develop a plan to achieve their goals, building on their strengths and going at their own pace. This enables them to try new things and meet new people in a way that feels safe and secure for them. Our approach helps to build self-esteem and independence as clients recognise and reflect on their achievements, whether through volunteering or other kinds of participation.

As a Volunteer Centre, it's important to offer people with long-term health needs the chance to give as well as get, by designing or leading an activity or trip, buddying or mentoring, volunteering at a local charity, or getting together for social activities as a peer group. Not every member wants to volunteer, and many that do take their time to build their skills and confidence first, but almost everyone we work with gives it a try sooner or later, usually with excellent results.

Stan's Story
Stan is one of our longest-standing Wellbeing volunteers, contributing his time and skills to facilitate various sessions. He shared his experience of loneliness, what it means to him, and how the Wellbeing programme has supported him:



Loneliness is experienced both internally and externally. It is an empty room or an empty feeling; sometimes it is both. Loneliness carries with it shame and stigma, which runs on a continuum from embarrassment to feelings of chronic and searing shame.

Once you become isolated, it starts to feel increasingly difficult to find a way out. As contact with others shrinks, you get out of practice, which in turn can make even minor social interactions feel daunting. This leads to further feelings of shame and inadequacy. To prevent such feelings arising you avoid and shun difficult interactions. As a result, your comfort zone continues getting ever smaller, as you become more and more isolated in a vicious cycle. How can this cycle be broken?

Firstly, you need to admit you feel lonely and are not just self-contained and solitary, – though you may be these things too. No shame attaches to this, it is an inevitable consequence of how society now operates. You are not to blame.

The next step is reaching out. A phone call to a service like a Wellbeing programme is a start. Having a telephone conversation can feel like a difficult first step, but also easier than face to face contact. If an initial call feels difficult, email can be even less threatening. This is the step I took. The important thing is to feel comfortable and in control of the process. **You will be treated with respect and admitting to feeling lonely does not detract one iota from worth, intellect, experience, or abilities.**

The Wellbeing programme here at the Volunteer Centre quickly put me in contact with a telephone befriender who was genuinely interested in what I had to say, and in my views and interests. Regular telephone contact with someone who is interested in what you have to say and can gain from engaging with you is the first step in regaining self-esteem. It can then enable one to engage with other services and service users. In my own case this led to a gradual process of accessing other services run by the Wellbeing programme. Leading to a greatly improved quality of life. **There is no magic cure for loneliness and breaking out of isolation can feel extremely difficult, but, and here is the irony, you are not alone**, across the UK there are millions suffering from degrees of loneliness. The first step is however only the relatively easy step of an email or telephone call.

Bespoke Volunteering

We take a person-centred approach, creating flexible, tailored volunteering opportunities for those who need extra support. By adapting roles to individual interests and comfort levels, VCKC helps people build confidence and skills at their own pace.

CASE STUDY

Supported Access volunteer SV puts her good skills into use by offering mini manicure sessions to local volunteers. SV never had the experience to offer this service outside of her friends and family network. SV later enrolled in a college course to further develop her skills in this area.



Community Connections

Our Community Connections project supports adults aged 18+ who live in North Kensington and/or are affected by the fire at Grenfell Tower. Participants are disabled, learning disabled, and are affected by mental ill-health.

Our activities, such as English conversation groups, creative writing, meditation, wellbeing gardening, and art workshops, combine social interaction with personal growth. Each participant also receives one-to-one support from our wellbeing coaches and, where appropriate, we help them access volunteering, training, or work placements.

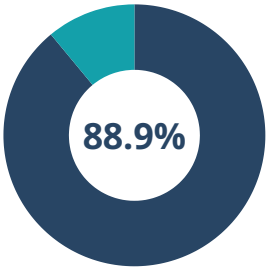


Sristi and Jaya



Volunteers on the way to a taster day

This year, we exceeded our new referrals target by 129%, and 88.9% of participants said they were satisfied with the programme. Many expressed interest in continuing similar activities—showing the strong, ongoing need for this kind of support in the community.



Stepping Stones

Our Stepping Stones project helps disabled people and those with long-term health conditions to find supported volunteering opportunities that suit their interests and abilities.

This year we worked closely with social workers, residential care homes, and partner charities to build strong referral pathways:

> Thank you very much for your hard work and the pleasure you give to the people we support... **You really enrich their life experiences...** It is really a pleasure working with you.

Registered **50** new clients.

Achieved **37** volunteering placements.

Met **100%** of set targets.

Through this collaborative, one-to-one approach, people joining us gain meaningful experiences that boost their confidence and social connections. Kai Lok is one of the more remarkable volunteers this year:

> I want to do something that makes a difference, something that is helpful.

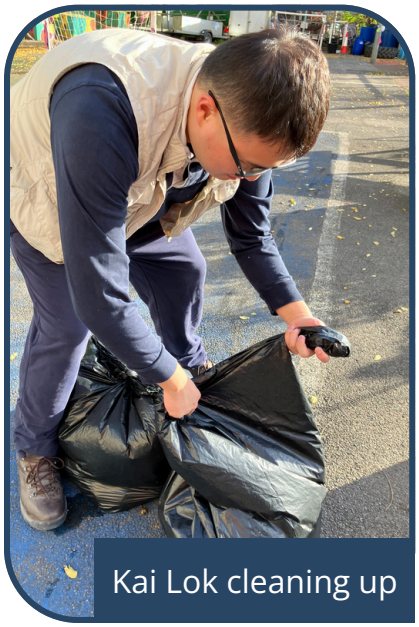
When Kai Lok joined us in August he already had a clear goal in mind - to create his own Litter Picking Volunteering Group. Partnering with the Lancaster West estate team, Kai Lok has launched his own initiative, demonstrating his deep commitment to making his local environment cleaner and safer for everyone.

Achieving his initial goal and being appreciated for his care has only spurred Kai Lok on - he has taken on four different volunteer placements, attended events and trips, and become a valued member of the project, bringing warmth and generosity into the office.



Canalside volunteers at an 'Are You Mad' workshop

Volunteering has also played a crucial role in helping Kai Lok navigate a personal traumatic experience. He shared that having a meaningful and productive focus has provided him with a positive way to process his emotions and continue moving forward.



Kai Lok cleaning up

> While it might have been tiring, there was something rewarding about putting in the physical labour. The act of something as simple as cleaning up the fallen leaves and discarded litter outside the Canalside Centre made a noticeable difference. It made the environment safer for the children going in and just more pleasant to look at in general. **It was a nice feeling to actually do something about an issue and see the change.**

Kai Lok's journey is a testament to the power of volunteering—not only in benefiting the community but also in providing a sense of purpose and resilience. He brings a fantastic energy to everything he does, and we're so grateful to have him as part of the VCKC family.

Kai Lok, you're amazing! Keep making a difference, one step at a time.



Jaya, Amalia, and Kai Lok

Supported Access

Supported Access helps young people who are disabled or have special educational needs to develop skills for employment. The project is delivered jointly by our Wellbeing and Employment staff.



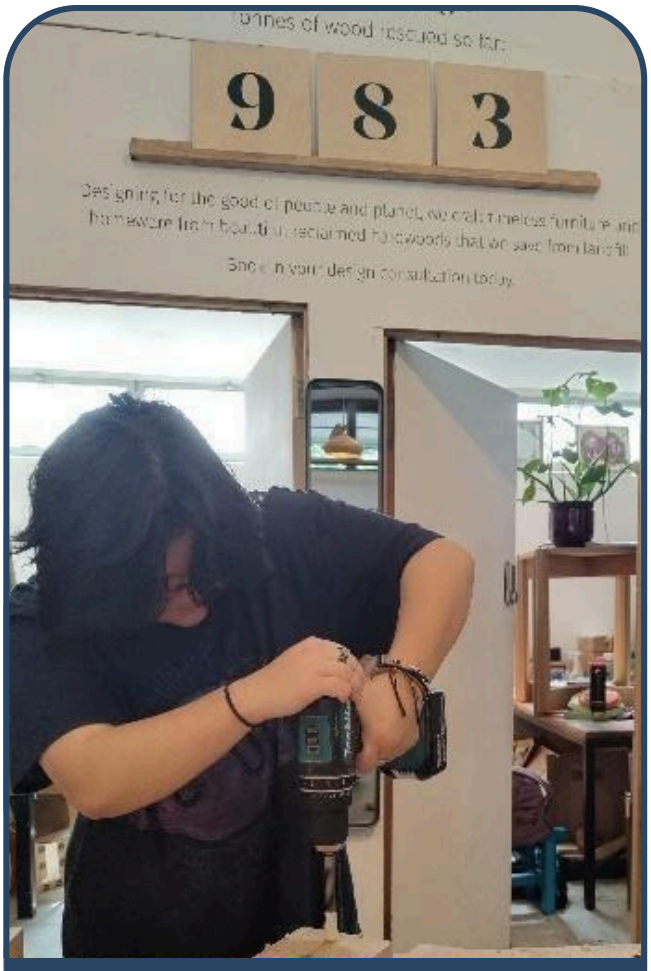
This year, **62** young people joined the programme,

38 of whom successfully completed voluntary and paid placements, increasing their skills, knowledge, and confidence, building their CVs and making new friends.

MAIA'S STORY

I first visited the Volunteer Centre as an appointment was arranged via my mum. I found it to be a good meeting; the whole atmosphere and vibe was really calming, and it wasn't super hectic. **It felt like a weight was lifted off my shoulders**, knowing that I had a place that would help me find activities I'd be interested in and opportunities to learn new things.

After the meeting, I attended some volunteering sessions (Wellbeing Gardening group) and other activities like the play reading sessions at the Playground Theatre. The experience for both was very nice. **I love gardening, and everyone was really welcoming – I connected with people instantly.** The play reading session was fun as I really love theatre and we got to read a play that someone from the group had written, which was pretty cool!



Maia using a drill at 'Future Makers' workshop

By registering with the Volunteer Centre, I now get emails for a range of different opportunities. That's how I found out about the Future Makers furniture making workshop at Goldfinger's and I decided to sign up to that directly. The workshop was really fun – I was able to get the opportunity to learn about it, we started playing games like icebreaking activities and others and I got to learn new things. My favourite thing from the workshop was using the drill. **I loved meeting new people and I made a bunch of new friends who I remain in touch with!**

INSIDEOUT

InsideOut, funded by the Henry Smith Charity, and led by Jason Hudson, continued to provide essential support for people leaving custody, helping them rebuild their lives through volunteering, training, employment, and personal development. Working closely with prisons like HMP Downview, probation, and our local Youth Offending Team, the programme focuses on improving wellbeing, employability, and community reintegration.

Over the past year, InsideOut has helped dozens of clients move forward positively with training, education, volunteering and work experience, and securing paid employment. Supporting the independence of our clients is only getting more challenging due to increasing poverty, inequality, and housing inequity, especially for those released from prison, and the journey we take with people with criminal records is rarely straightforward. Tailoring one-on-one support to the circumstances of each client is crucial to enabling them to progress. Despite a tough year for clients and staff, the project has maintained a strong impact and continued to deliver important outcomes, particularly for clients we support long-term.

INSIDEOUT KEY STATS

48
clients received tailored one-to-one support

only **3**
clients were returned to custody during the year

35
clients reported improved wellbeing and resilience

31
clients engaged in vocational or accredited training

25
clients began volunteering placements

23
clients moved into employment

30
clients sustained work or volunteering for at least a year

InsideOut's close collaborations matured this year. Our partnership with HMP Downview included disclosure workshops, CV sessions, and training that helped prepare women for employment after release. Having worked with the Youth Offending Team in K&C to build a mutually beneficial relationship, this year we started to see it flourishing, with VCKC providing early interventions and practical employment support for young people. We helped one of these clients, David, with personal protective equipment so that he could start work as an air-conditioning installer.

With InsideOut's support, another client, Stephen, secured funding through the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund to pay for his accountancy qualification and set up as a self-employed decorator while he studies. His renewed confidence and ambition have transformed his outlook and inspired others in similar situations.

> **I never thought I'd have a future after prison, but InsideOut helped me see that I could start again.** I'm now working part-time and studying accountancy—something I never imagined possible.

InsideOut reconnected with the NHS Inclusion & Involvement OPD Pathway, joining their new work-based hub in London Bridge to support clients seeking employment. The team also explored collaboration with Emmaus, a charity supporting people who have experienced homelessness, to develop a new woodshop upcycling project at HMP Downview - facilitating rehabilitation through enterprise and craft.

EMPLOYMENT HUB

The Employment Hub continued to focus on individuals' needs and understanding their journey to work. Supporting disabled people, those with mental health challenges and other long-term health conditions, the programme provided inclusive, one-to-one employment guidance, training, and volunteering pathways that build confidence and opportunity. Led by Ruth Daniel, the programme enjoyed a significant period of growth.

EMPLOYMENT HUB KEY STATS



51
new clients registered



30
new partnerships established with employers and volunteer-involving organisations



50%
increase in referrals within six months through new outreach initiatives



38
Supported Access clients received tailored employability support



25
clients completed skills-based training



33
clients began volunteering placements



5
clients moved into employment

The Employment Hub developed dynamic new partnerships, including:

- **Morley College:** hosting weekly referral sessions for students, especially those with SEND or mental health needs
- **St Charles Sixth Form College, Mencap, and the RBKC Kickstart Scheme:** creating work placements and volunteering opportunities
- **Strengthening Kensington Youth & Families:** co-developing the Moped Scheme, a pilot providing road safety training, volunteering experience, and Compulsory Basic Training certification for young people aged 16–25

Weekly outreach across Chelsea Theatre, Kensington Town Hall, and North Kensington Leisure Centre created a consistent community presence, enabling easy access for residents seeking support.

Samuel, a 17-year-old with autism, secured his first paid job as a Customer Service Assistant at a local skateboard store through the Employment Hub. With support from his carer, he combined work and college studies with his passion for skateboarding.

> This is my first job and I love it! Ruth helped me prepare for interviews and supported my dad to help me get to work. **I never thought I'd find a job that feels right for me.**

The Hub launched new CV Workshops and prepared to introduce a Dyslexic Reading Book Club, supporting clients with literacy or language barriers to build employability skills. This creative, inclusive approach reflects the Hub's mission to meet clients where they are and equip them with the confidence to develop themselves towards paid work.

Five office volunteers continue to play key roles in community outreach, data management, and translation, demonstrating how the Hub's peer-led structure both strengthens delivery and provides hands-on work experience for clients preparing to re-enter employment.



Employability CV workshop

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Our Community Champions project recruits and supports residents of Kensington & Chelsea's Notting Dale ward to volunteer to improve local health, housing and the environment. Champions identify barriers to health and wellbeing within their own communities and work in partnership with voluntary and statutory services to develop ways of overcoming these barriers, delivering sustainable solutions to improve outcomes.

Led by our Community Champions Manager, Ewa Kasjanowicz, the project works primarily with the residents of Lancaster West and Silchester estates, and is one of six across Kensington & Chelsea.

This year, our programme had **16** Community and Maternity Champions volunteering, reaching **2,177** residents in person and another **1,100** online.

We ran a variety of free regular activities, community days out, events and health campaigns.

ACTIVITIES

Yoga Classes

Our women-only yoga classes, part of KCSC's Healthier Futures programme in North Kensington, ran throughout the year and the feedback we received from residents was extremely positive. The combination of exercise and social connection had a sometimes profound impact on their lives. One said:

> I had the privilege of experiencing profound somatic restorative healing from Pamela at the time when I was suicidal and I was in so much pain. I have done many healing sessions, but was blown away by the transformative healing from Pamela. From when I stepped into the space, her energy was powerful and I felt safe. **These sessions saved my life.**

Clothes Upcycling

Building on the enormously popular clothes upcycling workshops we ran in 2023-24, this year we worked with Future Neighbourhoods 2030 and the same resident facilitators on Windows of Hope, beautifully explained by one of its creators, local artist Ilaria Di Fiore:

Windows are designed for looking outside, but from the street, you can also peer through a window and see inside a room, getting a glimpse into someone else's life.
In this project, when a person creates a small window, they are symbolically expressing their inner feelings about external events in the community.
These windows then become not only portals to look outside but also mirrors into their own inner worlds and a way to communicate with the outside.



Windows of Hope

A group of women and girls met weekly for several months, decorating several small ceramic windows (created as part of another community art project led by Ilaria after the Grenfell Tower fire) with curtains and ornaments, using recycled materials and developing their upcycling skills. Those sessions offered the group an opportunity to relax and connect over a mindful activity. The group created a booklet containing photos of the completed artwork, alongside poems and the reflections of participants, which we shared with local people.

Fabulous Fridays with Friends

In January, one of our Champions, Tiffany, knowing how many local people are lonely and how much it affects their wellbeing, started Fabulous Fridays with Friends - a group of local people meeting each Friday and going for a walk or having coffee together. It showed once again that simply providing people with an opportunity to connect can work wonders. During one of their meetings, approached by a colleague from another organisation who wanted to know what people needed to improve their health, they all said: 'This exactly!'

Seaside Trip

In August, we joined the W11 Neighbourhood Team and Lancaster West Residents Association to organise our annual day trip to the seaside (this year to Margate) so that local people could relax in the sun with their families and neighbours. Feedback was so positive - one resident said:

> It was the best trip we've ever attended by far!!! Organised, comfortable, enjoyable, vibrant, exuberant, magical, child-friendly, extravagant, unlimited—
> **FANTABULOUSLY DONE!!!**

Black History Month Walks
In October, we delivered two Black History Month community walks, led by local historian, poet, and activist, Isis Amlak. Isis guided attendees using the blue plaques installed by the Nubian Jak Community Trust to honour remarkable individuals of African and Caribbean heritage who have called North Kensington home. The residents who joined us deepened their knowledge of local history, and shared their own memories; connecting with and celebrating the continuing impact of Black people on Kensington & Chelsea.

Festive Community Event
In December, we organised a festive community event in Notting Hill Methodist Church. Our volunteers served delicious, healthy food to around 100 people, hosted festive quizzes and activities, and distributed gifts, such as books and colourful socks. One resident got in touch later, saying:


Festive Community Event

> Dear Ewa – congratulations on this afternoon's event. **It was really top class... You excelled!**

Across the year, Champions organised a wide variety of trips and outings. These events encourage local people to leave home, broaden their horizons, learn, stimulate their imaginations, take some exercise, and form new connections with their neighbours, improving their health in both the short- and longer-term. Opportunities included visits to Kew Gardens, Kensington Palace, Leighton House, the Design Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Museum of Brands, a London Children's Ballet performance at Peacock Theatre, several operas at London Coliseum, and two concerts at the Royal Albert Hall.

> I am so keen to let you know how much I benefited from being a member of the Champions. Before I learned about them I felt so lonely and isolated. By today...my daily depression and anxiety subsided. **I am so very grateful to [you] for making me feel no longer isolated.**

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER - LEVEL 3 APPRENTICESHIP

The Community Champions apprenticeship scheme has been recognised externally and nominated for the Health Service Journal award in the Workforce Initiative of the Year category. Lauren Sinclair completed her placement with us in August, and in October, Saghar Hosseinmardi started working with us as our new apprentice. Her contribution to the project has been extremely valuable, and we are really proud of the progress she has made:

> They believed in me before I could believe in myself. **Through their encouragement and guidance, I gradually began to rebuild my confidence and to see that I was capable of much more than I realised.** The... sense of belonging within the Champions network gave me back a sense of purpose.



Saghar and colleagues

OUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Like both residents and organisations across Kensington & Chelsea, VCKC continues to feel the impact of rising living and operating costs and ongoing cuts to statutory services. In many cases, the voluntary sector has stepped in where no one else could, providing vital support to residents in need.

This challenging context has been compounded by the continued effects of the pandemic, the Grenfell Tower fire, and people newly arrived in the borough fleeing war and persecution. In the face of these demands, our stability as an infrastructure organisation and our commitment to volunteers has allowed us to respond quickly and effectively to emerging needs.

We remain a trusted and respected voice. We are valued by clients, funders, and partners for our insight, adaptability, and on-the-ground understanding of the borough's complexities, reflected in our diverse portfolio of work and our willingness to continue to collaborate and advocate for structural improvements in the lives of residents, particularly those facing the biggest challenges and the toughest circumstances.

THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE

The impact of the fire and its aftermath continues to shape life in North Kensington. The period covered by this report marked the seventh anniversary of the fire, a year that saw the release of the final report of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the Council's response to it, and the Government's decision to demolish the Tower itself.

While the inquiry acknowledged multiple failures at both local and national levels, its findings have brought little comfort to those most affected. For VCKC, the disaster has changed our thinking and the way we work alongside survivors, bereaved families, and the wider community every day.

Our commitment since the fire has been twofold:

1. To ensure our programmes reflect the current needs of local people, not just future aspirations.
2. To deliver meaningful, long-term value for those affected—helping rebuild lives, trust, and the connections needed for community-led recovery.

POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

From 2021, our CEO chaired the borough's Cost of Living Group, which brought together partners to address the growing financial pressures on local residents. Building on that work, the group evolved this year into the Supporting Anti-Poverty, Fairness and Equality (SAFE) Group, chaired by the CEO of the Kensington and Chelsea Foundation, with VCKC providing close support.

SAFE brings together voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations and key departments within RBKC to coordinate efforts to tackle inequality. This year, the group has:

- Strengthened links between advice agencies and frontline poverty services such as foodbanks
- Explored the use of digital referral tools like Plinth to give residents faster access to help in emergencies, and coordinate support across agencies
- Worked with RBKC to explore how the Low-Income Family Tracker can help services identify vulnerable households for targeted support
- Identified and promoted opportunities to tackle the structural causes of poverty and inequality, helping to develop the Council's Fairer Action Plan

VCS PARTNERSHIPS

VCKC continues to play an active role in the bi-borough Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Group, which brings together infrastructure bodies and partners to respond to national and local policy changes in health and social care. We contribute by amplifying the voices of our clients, sharing their experiences of services, and helping shape policy and funding decisions. We co-design health initiatives that tackle inequality and help to develop fairer funding models that protect smaller VCS organisations, especially those that are global majority-led, from the effects of budget reductions.

EMERGENCY AND RESILIENCE NETWORKS

Having been actively involved in responding to major local emergencies like the Grenfell Tower Fire, the pandemic, the Afghan evacuation, and the invasion of Ukraine, VCKC continues to contribute to borough-wide and London-wide resilience planning. Through our CEO, we support the RBKC Emergency Preparedness Strategy and sit on the Borough Resilience Forum, offering community insight and helping turn strategic plans into practical action. We also maintain strong links with London-wide bodies, ensuring that the voices of residents and volunteers are represented in emergency planning and recovery.

STATEMENT ON PUBLIC BENEFIT

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and have complied with section 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Charity's income was £630,466 in the year ended 31 March 2025 (£640,145, 31 March 2024). The total expenditure was £644,274 in the year to 31 March 2025 (£574,792, 31 March 2024). The unrestricted funds carried forward on 31 March 2025 were £298,290, whilst £24,500 of restricted funds were also carried forward. This compares to an unrestricted balance of £289,231 carried forward on 31 March 2024, and a restricted balance of £47,367. The unrestricted funds include designated funds of £3,556 (£3,556 on 31 March 2024).

As trustees we take seriously our responsibility to deploy the funds we hold in trust in support of our charitable objectives. In contrast to our previous report, this year we were able to fill professional vacancies as they arose and finished the year with a full complement of staff. This enabled us to meet the Supported Access targets for the current year as well as some of the milestones we could not complete in the previous reporting period, reducing our restricted reserves. We remain committed to investing in our capacity, in particular in our people, but also our systems and resources, to deliver our charitable objectives, and will designate funds accordingly as appropriate.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board reviews risks to the effective operation and sustainability of the Volunteer Centre regularly, assessing the major risks that the charity is exposed to at the Finance Committee meeting before every trustee meeting, as we address existing (or identify new) risks. The risk register is updated at least twice annually and appropriate systems and procedures are in place to mitigate the internal and external risks that the charity faces. Our policies are updated to reflect internal processes and legal and regulatory changes as and when they occur. Our core policies, for example, safeguarding and data protection, are reviewed annually, the rest at least every other year. We have robust processes in place to continue to offer services in the event of a major emergency, another lockdown due to a pandemic, or other unexpected circumstances. Outside of disaster response, principal risks and mitigation strategies are:

Reporting and Monitoring
While we have made great strides to improve our monitoring and reporting, our long-term future is contingent on the Volunteer Centre continuing to show its value to the people, organisations and funders we work with. Our ongoing work with Plinth puts us in a stronger position to show the immediate and longer-term impact of our work.

Resourcing and Funding

Our recent experience and a range of national surveys show that it is harder for local charities to raise money than for many, many years. There are fewer sources of funding and grants have not been able to keep pace with rising costs. This increases the number of applications and awards required to secure funding for a given programme, and so the amount of monitoring and reporting required once funding is secured. This reduces the amount of direct delivery in favour of administration, itself a disincentive for funders. We will continue to seek and invest in new funding relationships, based on shared goals and values.

Similarly, we have limited resources to recruit and retain staff to deliver our programmes. We believe that Volunteer Centre salaries, particularly at entry level, remain competitive, and that we provide a level of autonomy to our staff that is motivating and encourages retention. Our recent staff and volunteer recruitment shows that, with good planning and careful targeting, we can continue to attract dedicated, skilled people to join us.

Changes in the volunteering environment

We noted in our 2023-24 report a fundamental shift in regular volunteering post-pandemic, with many not returning to volunteer or seeking more flexible opportunities as financial and social barriers persist. Alongside our peers nationally and regionally, VCKC is working hard to understand who wants to volunteer, how they want to do that, and how best we can support our fellow organisations to help more people to get out and get involved in the life of their community. Where appropriate, we are developing our own direct solutions for those who need flexibility.

Over the last year, we've done a lot of work identifying our audiences and improving our brand, based on day-to-day communications work and the outreach at the heart of our Volunteering Development Coordinator's programme. There are always lessons to learn about how we serve our remarkably diverse borough most effectively, increasing the number of people who volunteer and the impact each placement has, both on the volunteers and those they volunteer for and with.

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE

At the end of last year, we integrated our specialist services - Wellbeing, Employment, and InsideOut - under a Head of Specialist Services. This investment delivered increased collaboration internally and externally this year, and more efficient internal referral for clients with additional needs. It also gave us time to think more about how we design interventions with clients, giving them the means to take the next steps in their journey.

Recruitment market conditions have improved significantly, though the high costs of living in London and the salary constraints of local charities mean recruiting effective people remains challenging. Despite this, we welcomed six new skilled colleagues this year.

This year brought renewed focus on our ability to deliver on our mission and shape our future strategy, not least by ensuring that we have a diverse, effective board. We recruited five new trustees, who have brought diverse skills and perspectives to VCKC while increasing our ability to cope when our most experienced trustees step down.

We brought the majority of our finance functions back in-house following a review, creating a new Finance and Operations Coordinator role. This has markedly improved support to the wider team and has enabled VCKC to develop our Plinth CRM into a volunteer management and reporting system that connects everything we do. We also recruited a part-time Volunteering Development Coordinator. This additional capacity allows us to support the borough's volunteering programmes to recruit volunteers more effectively, improve volunteer management, and ensure volunteering in K&C is increasingly accessible, inclusive and safe.

Reserves Policy

The Board has examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be equal to at least 3 months of the charity's total expenditure. This reserve is intended to ensure that the charity can continue to operate in the event of an emergency, or a sudden cut in funding. The level of reserves available to the charity at 31 March 2025 was £294,734, above the minimum target of 3 months of the Charity's total expenditure. Although we ran a small deficit on our restricted funds this year (built up during the previous year when unfilled vacancies meant that we did not have enough staff to achieve all of the relevant outcomes), we increased our unrestricted reserves. The Board keeps under review the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed, should circumstances require such action.

Investment Policy

The unrestricted funds in reserve fluctuate and can be called upon temporarily to meet immediate cash flow needs. They are held in higher-yield savings accounts with UK banks at levels protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND GOING CONCERN

At the time of writing this report, and having given consideration to internal and external factors, the financial position of the charity (including the level of its reserves), the ability to continue to raise sufficient funding for its operations, and the uncertain economic situation, we believe the Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is financially sustainable and a going concern. While inflation levels remain high, the charity continues to attract funders thanks to the concrete benefits it brings to the local community.

FUTURE PLANS

We are embarking on a new three-year strategy that is intended to ensure our inclusive volunteering approach is at the heart of all our programmes. As Plinth becomes more sophisticated, we will also be able to be more effective in our placement of volunteers and improve our service delivery to our clients and partners. Plinth also allows us to understand better, and respond to, the volunteering needs in the borough and beyond. The recruitment of a Volunteering Development Coordinator has improved our ability to provide additional support to the voluntary sector, at a time when our sector is under increasing pressure as a result of long-term trends like falling incomes and the widening gap between the cost of living and sector salaries, while pressure on those local residents who rely on our support has been growing year on year. Throughout the next year we will be building a bank of volunteering resources, training and workshops, as well as providing one-to-one support for organisations at any level of their volunteering journey. We believe this is an important contribution to the strength and resilience of local civil society at a critical time.

We continue to see the Volunteer Centre as an incubator for innovation, and our Community Champions, Wellbeing, and Inside Out programmes continue to thrive despite the funding challenges we have faced. This direct service delivery for clients develops trust between us and people across the borough, providing insight into the local community that facilitates our brokerage work. The Volunteer Centre's reputation for reliability and connecting people and organisations for mutual benefit is a strength we want to celebrate and build on in the year ahead.

With five trustees, Head of Volunteering and Operations, Finance and Operations Coordinator and Volunteering Development Coordinator all newly recruited this year, in 2025-26, we plan to consolidate the development we have made to our internal operations, ensuring we live out our mission and values by being a well-run organisation that supports its staff and volunteers to develop at their own pace.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

a) Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
b) Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
c) Make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
d) State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
e) Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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.

This report, which has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006, was approved by the Board on 24 November 2025 and signed on its behalf.

Signature:  **Date:** 8 December 2025

Full Name: Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan

Position: Chair

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

I report on the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2025 as set out on pages 39 to 50.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (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 Report

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
2. the accounts do not accord with such records; or
3. 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
4. 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.

Shruti Soni

Shruti Soni FCCA FCIE

Shruti Soni Ltd • Chartered Certified Accountants

117A St Johns Hill, Sevenoaks TN13 3PL

Date: 9 December 2025

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	153,307	204,671	357,978	187,780	164,705	352,485
Charitable activities							
Volunteering services	3	1,318	–	1,318	1,926	–	1,926
Wellbeing	3	–	52,277	52,277	–	89,909	89,909
Community Champions	3	58,644	29,221	87,865	57,709	16,000	73,709
SEND Volunteering	3	–	113,000	113,000	–	113,000	113,000
Investments – bank interest		18,028	–	18,028	9,116	–	9,116
Total income		231,297	399,169	630,466	256,531	383,614	640,145
Expenditure on:	4						
Raising funds		6,991	–	6,991	1,666	–	1,666
Charitable activities							
Volunteering services		21,682	175,823	197,505	216,579	356,547	573,126
Wellbeing		62,026	73,494	135,520	–	–	–
Resettlement Scheme		1,020	83,887	84,907	–	–	–
Community Champions		61,264	72,832	134,096	–	–	–
Employment		69,255	16,000	85,255	–	–	–
Total expenditure		222,238	422,036	644,274	218,245	356,547	574,792
Net income / (expenditure) for the year		9,059	(22,867)	(13,808)	38,286	27,067	65,353
Transfers between funds		–	–	–	–	–	–
Net movement in funds		9,059	(22,867)	(13,808)	38,286	27,067	65,353
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		289,231	47,367	336,598	250,945	20,300	271,245
Total funds carried forward	15	298,290	24,500	322,790	289,231	47,367	336,598

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15 to the financial statements.

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Company no. 03725459

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	£	2024 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		-		-
			-		-
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	36,556		85,926	
Cash at bank and in hand		370,370		311,336	
		406,926		397,262	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	84,136		60,664	
Net current assets / (liabilities)			322,790		336,598
Total assets less current liabilities			322,790		336,598
Total net assets / (liabilities)			322,790		336,598
The funds of the charity:	14				
Restricted income funds			24,500		47,367
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		3,556		3,556	
General funds		294,734		285,675	
Total unrestricted funds			298,290		289,231
Total charity funds	15		322,790		336,598

For the year ending 31 March 2025, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees' Responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476

- The trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements, which have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), were approved by the Board on 8 December 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan

Trustee

Name

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025		2024
		£	£	£
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period			(13,808)	65,353
Depreciation charges			–	–
(Increase)/decrease in debtors			49,370	(40,693)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors			23,472	11,388
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities			59,034	36,048
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			59,034	36,048
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			311,336	275,288
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			370,370	311,336

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 31 March 2025	At 31 March 2024
	£	£
Cash in hand and at bank	370,370	311,336
Total cash and cash equivalents	370,370	311,336

Analysis of changes in net debt

	At Start of year	Cashflows	At end of year
	£	£	£
Cash in hand and at bank	311,336	59,034	370,370

1 Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England with registration number 03725459. The accounts are presented in GBP rounded to £1.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

b) Public benefit entity

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

c) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

No key judgements that the charitable company has made, have a significant effect on the accounts include.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

d) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

f) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

g) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of operating an orchestra for the public performance of music by young persons and related charitable activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

i) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

j) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitallsed. Depreciation is provided so as to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life at the fofiowlng annual rates:

• Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line
• Computer equipment	25% straight line

k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l) 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. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

m) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Volunteering				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	133,287	-	133,287	127,705
RBKC - Street Markets	-	33,243	33,243	20,545
London Plus	-	2,500	2,500	5,000
Other grants	-	-	-	3,600
Garfield Weston Foundation	20,000	-	20,000	-
Employment				
Camden Charities	-	16,000	16,000	60,000
Wellbeing				
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	20,917	20,917	18,000
Other grants	-	300	300	-
Resettlement Scheme				
Henry Smith	-	53,100	53,100	52,400
Charles Hayward	-	10,000	10,000	-
Hollick Family Foundation	-	-	-	10,000
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	25,000	25,000	-
Community Champions				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	-	15,030	15,030	24,739
Community Champions Apprentice				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	-	28,581	28,581	30,421
Other donations	20	-	20	75
	153,307	204,671	357,978	352,485

Of the total income £352,485 received in 2024, £187,780 is unrestricted and £164,705 is restricted.

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Volunteering				
Vounteer - Consulting and training fees	1,318	-	1,318	1,926
	1,318	-	1,318	1,926
Wellbeing				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	-	31,650	31,650	31,650
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	-	20,627	20,627	58,259
	-	52,277	52,277	89,909
Community Champions				
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	-	14,221	14,221	15,500
RB Kensington and Chelsea	57,184	-	57,184	57,709
RBKC - Future Neighbourhood	-	15,000	15,000	57,709
Other	1,460	-	1,460	500
	58,644	29,221	87,865	131,418
SEND Volunteering				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	-	113,000	113,000	113,000
	-	113,000	113,000	113,000
Total income from charitable activities	59,962	194,498	254,460	336,253

4 Analysis of expenditure

		Charitable Activities						
	Cost of raising funds £	Volunteering £	Wellbeing £	Resettlement Scheme £	Community Champions £	Employment £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Staff costs	–	161,953	117,226	72,634	97,991	75,216	525,020	459,831
Other direct costs	–	17,547	2,983	863	24,001	622	46,016	43,139
Office costs	6,991	6,265	6,119	5,792	4,506	3,456	33,129	37,084
Premises costs	–	10,774	8,521	5,201	7,043	5,519	37,058	31,484
Governance costs	–	966	671	417	555	442	3,051	3,254
Total expenditure 2025	6,991	197,505	135,520	84,907	134,096	85,255	644,274	574,792
Total expenditure 2024	1,666	164,450	145,905	72,733	128,124	61,914	574,792	

Of the total expenditure £422,036 (2024: £356,547) was restricted and £222,238 (2024: £218,245) was unrestricted

		Charitable Activities					
	Cost of raising funds £	Volunteering £	Wellbeing £	Resettlement Scheme £	Community Champions £	Employment £	2024 Total £
Staff costs	–	125,664	126,302	62,683	92,736	52,446	459,831
Other direct costs	–	19,208	1,558	832	20,839	702	43,139
Office costs	1,666	10,528	8,866	4,442	7,122	4,460	37,084
Premises costs	–	9,023	8,028	4,178	6,510	3,745	31,484
Governance costs	–	27	1,151	598	917	561	3,254
Total expenditure 2024	1,666	164,450	145,905	72,733	128,124	61,914	574,792

5 Net incoming resources for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2025 £	2024 £
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	31,730	26,207
Independent examiner		
Independent Exam	1,500	1,500

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	429,035	384,687
Social security costs	36,576	32,101
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	23,503	20,387
	489,114	437,175

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2024: nil).

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the trustees ("Directors" for the purposes of the Companies Act) and Senior Management Team. The total amounts paid in respect of the key management personnel of the Charity (including employer's National Insurance contributions and employers pension contributions) were £138,032 (2024: £100,433). We have made decision to change the structure of the organisation so that the senior management team now includes three people, the CEO, the Operations Director (existing position upgraded from manager) and added a Head of Specialist Services. None of the trustees received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.
The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2024: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £nil).

During the year, no trustee was reimbursed travel expenses of nil (2024: nil).

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Volunteering	4.2	11.9
Wellbeing	3.1	-
Resettlement Scheme	1.9	-
Community Champions	2.6	-
Employment	2.0	0.8
	13.7	12.7

8 Related party transactions

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2024: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £nil).

No trustees were reimbursed any expenses representing payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs or similar expenses relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

Aggregate donations from trustees and related parties were nil (2024: nil).

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation		
At the start of the year	1,114	1,114
At the end of the year	1,114	1,114
Depreciation		
At the start of the year	1,114	1,114
Charge for the year	-	-
At the end of the year	1,114	1,114
Net book value		
At the end of the year	-	-
At the start of the year	-	-

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

11 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	28,602	85,302
Prepayments	454	624
Accrued income	7,500	-
	36,556	85,926

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	14,193	11,074
Taxation and social security	3,569	-
Other creditors	44	-
Accruals	51,557	16,110
Deferred income	14,773	33,480
	84,136	60,664

13 Deferred income

Deferred income comprises grants relating to next financial year received in this financial year.

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	33,480	25,443
Amount released to income in the year	(33,480)	(25,443)
Amount deferred in the year	14,773	33,480
Balance at the end of the year	14,773	33,480

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	294,734	3,556	24,500	322,790
Net assets at 31 March 2025	294,734	3,556	24,500	322,790

Analysis of net assets between funds

	General £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	285,675	3,556	47,367	336,598
Net assets at 31 March 2024	285,675	3,556	47,367	336,598

15 Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025
Restricted funds:					
Volunteering	–	35,743	(39,956)	4,213	–
Wellbeing	–	73,494	(73,494)	–	–
Resettlement Scheme	–	88,100	(83,887)	(4,213)	–
Community Champions	–	44,251	(44,251)	–	–
Community Champions Apprentice	–	28,581	(28,581)	–	–
SEND Volunteering Project	47,367	113,000	(135,867)	–	24,500
Employment	–	16,000	(16,000)	–	–
Total restricted funds	47,367	399,169	(422,036)	–	24,500
Unrestricted funds:					
Training and mentoring of employees	3,556	–	–	–	3,556
Total designated funds	3,556	–	–	–	3,556
General funds	285,675	231,297	(222,238)	–	294,734
Total unrestricted funds	289,231	231,297	(222,238)	–	298,290
Total funds	336,598	630,466	(644,274)	–	322,790

15 Movements in funds (continued)

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Volunteering	–	29,145	(29,145)	–	–
Wellbeing	–	107,909	(107,909)	–	–
Resettlement Scheme	–	62,400	(62,400)	–	–
Community Champions	–	40,739	(40,739)	–	–
Community Champions Apprentice	–	30,421	(30,421)	–	–
SEND Volunteering Project	20,300	113,000	(85,933)	–	47,367
Total restricted funds	20,300	383,614	(356,547)	–	47,367
Unrestricted funds:					
Employee training & mentoring	3,556	–	–	–	3,556
Total designated funds	3,556	–	–	–	3,556
General funds	247,389	256,531	(218,245)	–	285,675
Total unrestricted funds	250,945	256,531	(218,245)	–	289,231
Total funds	271,245	640,145	(574,792)	–	336,598

Transfer between funds

Transfer from Resettlement Scheme to Volunteering restricted funds is to cover part of the core costs funded by J&H Rausing Trust

Purposes of restricted funds

Volunteering - Marketing Ambassadors - To enable volunteers to support the Portobello Road and Golborne Road markets, helping visitors make the most of some of Kensington & Chelsea's best public spaces.

Wellbeing - To enable adult residents of Kensington & Chelsea who are disabled or have long-term health conditions to improve their health and wellbeing via supported volunteering, coaching, mentoring, training and other forms of personal and social development.

Resettlement Scheme - To enable people with criminal records living in London to re-establish themselves in their local communities, promoting their wellbeing, and securing and maintaining their independence.

Community Champions - To enable people living in the Notting Dale ward of Kensington & Chelsea to take greater control of their health and housing through voluntary action.

Community Champions Apprentice - To facilitate the apprenticeship of one local person to VCKC's Community Champions Manager.

Employment - To enable people in Kensington to take the necessary steps to move from low incomes towards sustained employment and financial independence, including by referring them to the Campden Charities for support.

SEND Volunteering Project - To enable 16-25 year old residents of Kensington & Chelsea who are disabled or have long-term health conditions to secure paid work (or to increase their prospects of doing so) via volunteering, work experience, training and other forms of personal and social development.

16 Contingent assets or liabilities

The charitable company has been awarded multi-year grants with specified or implied timeframes which preclude recognition of the full amount. The total amount af contingent asset at 31 March 2025 was £348,757 (2024: £293,208).

17 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

England & Wales - Charity number 1076392

Accounts



VOLUNTEER CENTRE
KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

Annual Report

2023-24

Empowering our community to realise its full potential

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

CHARITY NUMBER
1076392

COMPANY NUMBER
03725459

REGISTERED OFFICE
1, Thorpe Close, London W10 5XL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan	Chair
Joseph Carim	
Jennifer Clarke *resigned 23/9/24	
Maria-Iuliana Dinu	
Bashir Hassan	
Muskaan Khurana	Vice-Chair
Marley Obi	
Michael Pearson *resigned 3/5/24	
Rossana Rocchini	Treasurer
Tina Learmonth *appointed 18/11/24	
Linda Thomas *appointed 23/9/24	
Aria Wong * appointed 18/11/24	

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Michael Ashe	Company Secretary

BANKERS
CAF Bank
Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

SOLICITORS
Russell-Cooke Solicitors
2 Putney Hill, London SW15 6AB

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER
Shruti Soni Limited
117a St John's Hill, Sevenoaks, TN13 3PE

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

The Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is the oldest volunteer centre in the UK. It has been the central hub for volunteering in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) for 55 years, recruiting, placing and celebrating volunteers. Operating from offices in Ladbroke Grove and a number of outreach venues across the borough, this year we supported 1,035 people on their volunteering journey, successfully registered 532 of them for at least one role, and engaged with more than 80 local organisations. Together with these organisations, we shaped and co-designed high-quality roles for volunteers, enabling a diverse range of people to enrich their lives while helping those around them.

Through our specialist programmes, our team serves some of the most marginalised residents in the borough, enabling them to overcome the specific barriers they face by using volunteering as a route to employment, improved health and wellbeing, and increased independence. The support that we provide to our volunteers and clients can be life changing – resulting in development of valuable new skills and experience, greater focus and self-confidence, and stronger connections with the rest of the community.

Despite facing a challenging environment this year, the Volunteer Centre, along with many of its peers, remained steadfast in our mission and priorities. By staying focused on the community we serve, we successfully navigated these challenges and made noteworthy progress.

After bidding farewell to two Wellbeing colleagues as they accepted promotions elsewhere, we battled a testing recruitment market. Despite this, we successfully hired talented new staff for those roles and our Employment and Market Ambassadors programmes. Staffing challenges resulted in unspent income, increasing our restricted reserves. We also welcomed a new Communications Officer, our first Community Champions Apprentice, and our first Head of Specialist Services, as we restructured and integrated our casework programmes to increase effectiveness.

Despite the cost pressures faced by all organisations reliant on fixed public sector grants and contracts during high inflation, we remained committed to investing in our people and their wellbeing. This included not only training but also maintaining regular reflective practice sessions for staff supporting clients dealing with mental ill-health and thoughts of self-harm.

We invested in seeking structural solutions and having a larger impact on these issues beyond our doors, too. We continued to chair the borough's Cost of Living group, working with voluntary and statutory partners to address the poverty and inequality that are often at the root of poor health, and present major barriers to volunteering and participation in the civic life. We helped establish the new multi-sector Transformation Board, collaborating to improve the operating environment for community organisations in K&C and to improve outcomes for local people. And we developed a strategic Safeguarding group with RBKC, the Young K&C Foundation, Kensington & Chelsea Social Council, and our opposite

numbers in Westminster in order to ensure a more consistent and effective Safeguarding practice across community and statutory organisations in the two boroughs.

This progress took a huge amount of effort, not just from our professional team, but from the volunteers that work alongside them. Our dedicated Champions, Ambassadors, Volunteering Advisers, and Befrienders directly deliver services, while our excellent administrative colleagues track our achievements . Additionally, my amazing trustee colleagues oversee everything, setting the strategic direction and keeping us on course. When we talk about making progress in challenging times, those challenges are ultimately faced by our clients and our colleagues, and our achievements rest on their shoulders.

Our ability to achieve also rests on the shoulders of our funders. We are proud to have secured another three years of core funding from RBKC via their Voluntary Sector Support Fund, and proud that our local authority is one of few left in the UK that empowers its community organisations in this way. Alongside this, they directly support our Market Ambassadors and our work with disabled adults and with residents of the estates around Grenfell Tower. We are extremely grateful to the Campden Charities, who granted us exceptional support this year. For the first time, we were fortunate enough to be supported by the Hollick Family Charitable Trust, for our work with people with criminal records. We also owe our ability to empower this client group towards independence to the outstanding support of the Henry Smith Charity. For our Wellbeing work in North Kensington, we are deeply grateful to the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust, North West London NHS, and our friends at the Kensington & Chelsea Social Council.

Thank you to all our donors and partners, our team, and most of all our clients, for making this year successful and stimulating in an ever-demanding environment.

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan
Chair of the Board of Trustees



REPORT OF TRUSTEES

The trustees present their annual report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The trustees confirm that the financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the recommendations in 'Accounting & Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice' (issued in October 2019).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

The Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (abbreviated 'VCKC' and known as the 'Volunteer Centre') was founded in 1969 and incorporated under a memorandum of association on the 5th of July 1999 and amended by special resolution on 14 November 2014. It is governed under its articles of association.

ROLE

The trustees, for purposes of the Companies Act, are also the Directors of the charity. During the year the trustees have had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the VCKC.

TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT, INDUCTION AND TRAINING

The Board of Trustees makes appointments to the Board at its discretion. The Board endeavours to ensure that its membership contains people with a broad mix of skills and experiences and that the backgrounds of the members reflect a balance that is appropriate to the charity's mission and activities. Trustees receive induction and training, and both formal and informal opportunities for learning during their term.

In addition to the opportunities for skills and knowledge development provided by scheduled meetings of the Board and its committees, specific training sessions are arranged as required.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organisation is overseen by a voluntary Board of Trustees who are responsible for strategic planning and reviewing policy and are accountable for the Volunteer Centre's resources. The Board has three committees: Finance; Policy, Procedure and Personnel; and Resourcing. Each committee has specific terms of reference and can co-opt non-trustee members possessing relevant skills and experiences. The respective Chairs are appointed by the Board. Day-to-day running of the Charity is delegated to the Chief Executive who operates within defined terms of reference and authority, leading a team of paid staff and volunteers.

PAY AND REMUNERATION OF STAFF

VCKC's pay policy aims to offer fair pay to attract and retain appropriately qualified staff to lead, manage, support and deliver its aims. VCKC's trustees are responsible for setting remuneration levels for its senior staff - the Chief Executive Officer and Operations Manager. In order to inform the setting of appropriate pay for these staff, VCKC considers

insights from its HR advisers, local and regional peers, and regional and national infrastructure bodies. Staff salaries are increased annually, as far as possible in line with inflation. They are formally revised where it is appropriate to reflect changes in professional responsibilities.

INVOLVEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Despite the challenges volunteering has faced across the UK, we have continued to receive exceptional support from our core volunteers. With the successful recruitment of our new Market Ambassador Officer, Sristi Kumar, we relaunched our Volunteer Market Ambassadors Programme. Our friendly volunteers can now be seen meeting, greeting, and assisting visitors every Saturday at the vibrant Portobello Road and Golborne Road markets.

This year, we also played a key role in organising volunteers for major local events, including the Great Exhibition Road Festival and Age UK's 10th edition Valentine's Gala. Our dedication to offering flexible, low-commitment volunteering opportunities remains strong, ensuring ongoing community engagement through diverse roles that make a meaningful impact.

RELATED PARTIES

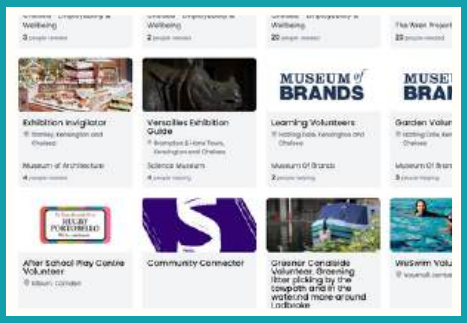
VCKC does not have branches or subsidiaries.

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

532 VOLUNTEERS REGISTERED IN AT LEAST ONE ROLE IN KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

247 PEOPLE AIMING TO IMPROVE THEIR MENTAL HEALTH GOT THE SUPPORT THEY NEEDED TO VOLUNTEER

80 ACTIVE LOCAL VOLUNTEERING ROLES EACH MONTH



WE MADE IT **EASIER FOR VOLUNTEERS** TO FIND OPPORTUNITIES AND **FOR ORGANISATIONS** TO MANAGE THEIR ROLES BY **LAUNCHING OUR NEW VOLUNTEERING PLATFORM!**

40 REGULAR CLIENTS AT OUR NEW EMPLOYMENT HUB

72 WELLBEING SESSIONS DELIVERED (WORKSHOPS, ACTIVITIES, TRIPS) ASIDE FROM REGULAR 1:1 SUPPORT

1562 RESIDENTS REACHED BY OUR COMMUNITY MATERNITY CHAMPIONS



OUR OBJECTS

To promote any charitable objective for the benefit of the communities and inhabitants of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and other parts of London in general (hereinafter called the "area of benefit") by associating volunteers and organisations in a common effort to advance education, protect health, relieve poverty sickness and distress, and in furtherance of these objects but not otherwise through a) advise and support persons willing to volunteer promoting volunteering b) giving advice and support to organisations in the involvement of volunteers in furthering the organisations charitable purposes

To promote the impact and value that volunteering and community involvement can have on responding to and supporting the needs of local communities and social exclusion, and to undertake and arrange voluntary work in education, social services and similar charitable activities among those in need thereof.

OUR VISION

Kensington & Chelsea is a place in which **everyone is able to volunteer**, contributing to the community and their own wellbeing.

OUR MISSION

We **empower people and communities to develop themselves** through rewarding volunteering, **promoting positive change** in Kensington & Chelsea.



OUR VALUES

VALUING PEOPLE

We treat everyone with care, integrity and respect - empowering them to realise their potential and make a positive difference in the community.

COLLABORATION

We use our local understanding to help organisations and groups adopt good practices and champion accessible and rewarding volunteering.

KNOWLEDGE

We connect and empower communities to come together using local resources to meet local needs.

CATALYST

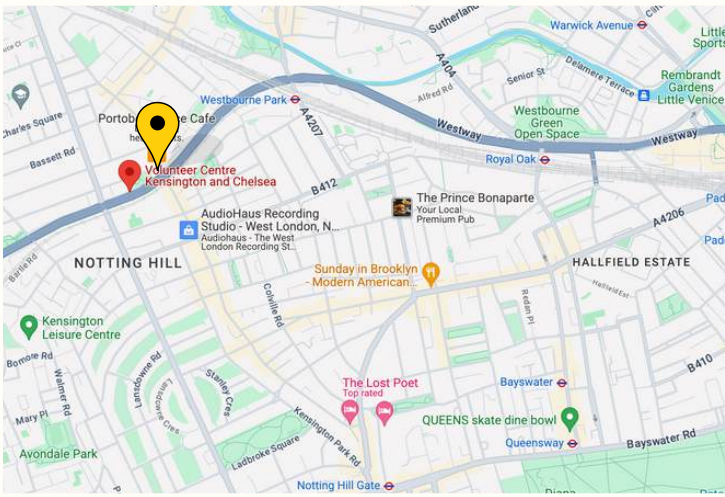
We are a catalyst for local impact, with volunteers, partners and the community, taking opportunities, acting decisively to tackle the causes of shared problems.



OUR LOCATION

Since our foundation in 1969, we have been based in North Kensington. Our office is located right by Portobello Road, giving us great access to the borough we serve.

Address:
1 Thorpe Cl, London W10 5XL



OUR ACTIVITIES

The Volunteer Centre is both an infrastructure organisation working with other public benefit organisations and a direct delivery organisation supporting individuals directly on a one-to-one basis through its own programmes. Our main activities and programmes are:

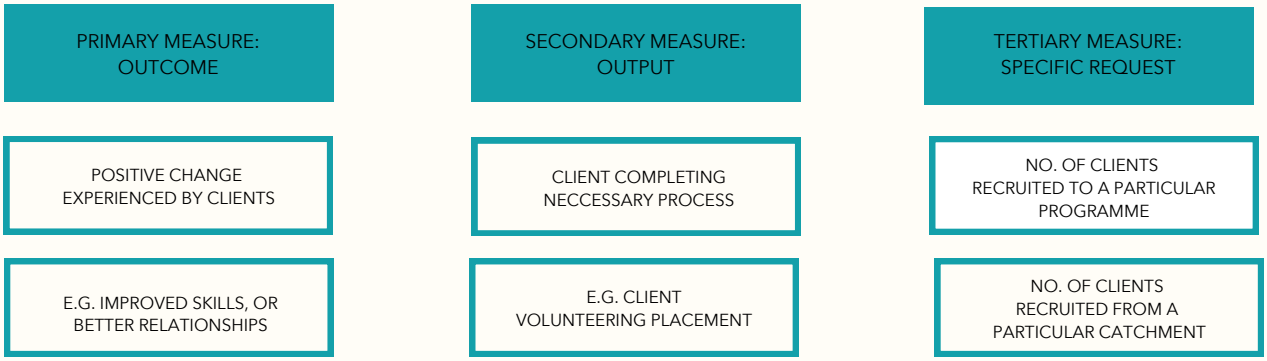
- CORE SERVICES
- COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS
- SPECIALIST SERVICES

HOW WE MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS

Measures of success differ across our programmes, each tailored to the programme's design. This design incorporates input from clients, staff, trustees, partners, and best practices, while also considering the requirements specified by the programme's funders and negotiated during the application process.

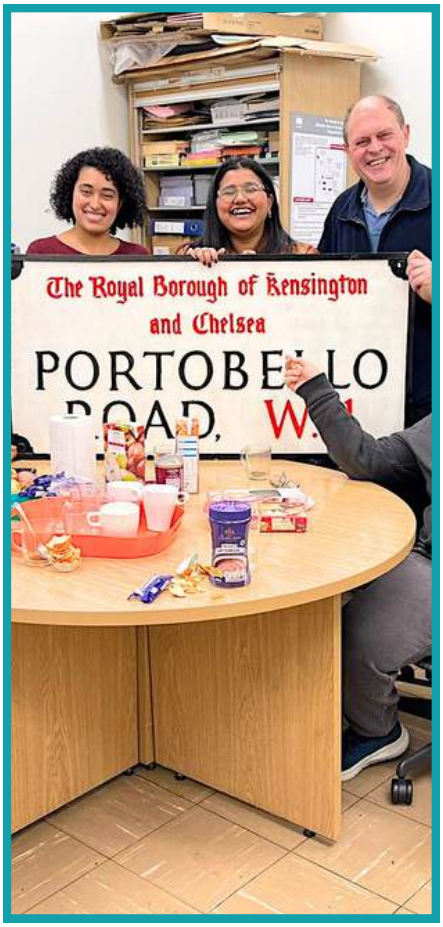
VCKC is working towards establishing a set of outcomes, underpinned by its Theory of Change framework, that will be common across all its programmes. The key benefit of this approach is to enable trustees and staff to assess more effectively the changes and impact made by VCKC as a whole. We are close to completing the implementation of our new Client Relationship Management (CRM) platform, provided by Plinth, which will make it much easier to analyse our impact and report on it internally and externally.

Our primary measures are set in terms of outcomes - did clients achieve the positive change anticipated when they joined the programme - with targets for the number of clients achieving the outcomes over a particular reporting period. Secondary measures are set in terms of outputs - did clients get to a milestone that we consider necessary to achieve a desirable outcome. For example, an output measure common to all our programmes is that a client is placed as a volunteer with an organisation of their choosing. Tertiary measures are sometimes used at the specific request of a funder; for example, the number of clients recruited to a particular programme, or from a particular catchment.



CORE SERVICES

Our Core Services, funded by RBKC, are designed to connect volunteers with meaningful opportunities across our community. Led this year by our Operations Manager, Liz Woodman, and our Volunteering Officer, Angela Weir, we support the needs of people eager to volunteer and local organisations seeking to enhance their volunteering programmes. Our aim is to foster community engagement, provide opportunities for personal growth, and address social isolation, enhancing the wellbeing of both volunteers and those they support.



This year we managed over 80 active roles each month on average and introduced 86 new opportunities across 40 organisations. We successfully registered 532 volunteers for at least 1 role, including 143 concerned about their mental health and 104 feeling isolated or lonely. Through these efforts, we not only support local charities but also provide valuable opportunities for personal development whilst strengthening community bonds among our volunteers.

KEY VOLUNTEERING EVENTS IN 2023-24

We worked closely with the Kensington & Chelsea Over-50s Forum and RBKC to deliver a successful **Coronation Big Lunch event (7 May)** at Kensington Town Hall. We recruited 73 volunteers to support the planning, preparation, and delivery of the event, 65 joining us on the day. We designed the job descriptions, inducted and managed the volunteers (including an additional 23 recruited by our partners) for the set-up and on the day itself, led by Moska Saidy, who we recruited as the Project Coordinator with funding from RBKC.

During **Volunteers' Week (1-7 June)** we were invited to attend two events at the Town Hall to encourage RBKC staff to volunteer. Angela, alongside two of our fantastic Core volunteers, Ralph and Monica, attended. Feedback from RBKC was really positive and we engaged 25 budding volunteers. This was also a great opportunity to demonstrate our impact to our core funders!

At the **Great Exhibition Road Festival (17 & 18 June)**, we were proud to work with Imperial College to manage the recruitment and deployment of volunteers. Etty Dunn-Howe, our Wellbeing Programme Officer, was Volunteer Coordinator for this event. Etty said *"I feel incredibly privileged to have worked on this inspiring event. As volunteer coordinator I was in charge of a fantastic team of volunteers who supported partners from the Science Museum*

and Imperial College London to engage with the vast array of exciting talks, workshops and performances that brought together the incredible institutions on Exhibition Road.".

Over the festival weekend, we deployed 22 volunteers. The volunteers worked in shifts on the information desks, and as roaming guides, greeting members of the public as they arrived, providing them with maps and helping to navigate and answer questions. Not only did visitors to the festival benefit from our volunteers but the volunteers benefited too and they really enjoyed themselves.

"I had an amazing experience volunteering at the Exhibition Road Festival…I hope I can volunteer with them again next year" - (Sunday Volunteer)

Etty concluded, *"It was a pleasure to be a part of and we are incredibly proud of the work of our volunteer team across the weekend, particularly when it started to rain at the end of Sunday and, just as the bands continued to play, our volunteers put on their clear plastic rain ponchos and continued to smile talking to festival guests."*

To support our local voluntary sector in their volunteer management, Liz ran a **training course focusing on recruiting and supporting young volunteers (6 February).** This was part of K&C together week, alongside KCSC and Young K&C. It was a really beneficial event, helping to inspire organisations to more meaningfully engage young volunteers in their volunteering programmes.

We were responsible for the deployment of 55 volunteers, assisting over 350 guests at the tenth annual **Valentine's Gala Concert (9 February)** hosted by Age UK Kensington & Chelsea, as part of their ongoing efforts to combat isolation among those over 55.

Ana Urbina was Volunteering Co-Ordinator at the gala and said *"Coordinating the volunteers on the day reminded me of the positive value of volunteering. Witnessing people from different organisations…. coming together, and for 4 hours, becoming a team to deliver this afternoon full of music, love, cake, and companionship… It was wonderful to see the volunteers having fun decorating… taking selfies with their old and new friends – and catering the most efficient afternoon tea I have ever seen! Their friendly attitude and eagerness to help was contagious and simply made the atmosphere ten times better."*

RE-INTRODUCING OUR VOLUNTEER MARKET AMBASSADORS

We were excited to restart our Market Ambassadors volunteering programme in October 2023 after it had been on pause for a year. Thanks to new funding from the Council's Markets Office, we were able to do a complete reboot and recruited Sristi Kumar to be our new Market Ambassadors Officer.

Market Ambassadors provide valuable support to visitors and stall holders at Portobello Road and Golborne Road markets. The team help visitors get the most out of the markets, guiding them to landmarks, local eateries, and the best places to shop; while also translating for people, signposting them locally and around London, and even helping

people find lost things - and people!

In the first 6 months after relaunching, we had 33 new Volunteer Market Ambassadors. An average of 4 Ambassadors joined us each Saturday, and some weekends many more! Starting in winter, we braced the unpredictable weather - as this is very much an outdoor role. Despite this, our new Ambassadors remained enthusiastic and faithful, with many becoming regulars and returning multiple times each month. A mammoth 1715 interactions with the public was recorded over this initial 6 month period.

The benefit of this role is not only to visitors and market stall holders, it is also a flexible, supportive and inclusive volunteering opportunity. It allows people to explore volunteering at their own pace, and it is great for those who want to volunteer without commitment. Sristi has witnessed how it allows volunteers to: reconnect with the community and learn more about its history; foster a sense of belonging; to enjoy time away from caring responsibilities; to socialise with people from other parts of the world; and to learn new skills and improve employment prospects.

CORE KEY STATS

- This year, over 1,000 people used our Core brokerage service
- We successfully registered 532 volunteers for at least one role
- Each month we had an average of 80 active volunteering opportunities. 86 of these opportunities were brand new
- We engaged with more than 80 local organisations
- Among those who volunteered, 143 individuals expressed concerns about their mental health, and 104 identified as being isolated or lonely. By connecting with the Volunteer Centre, they received the support they needed to volunteer
- Our volunteer survey, sent to 400 people who the brokerage service worked with during the year, showed:
    - 65% of respondents felt their skills, knowledge or confidence improved as a result of their volunteering
    - 63% said they felt more emotionally healthy as a result of their volunteering and that they are better connected to other people or have better social networks as a result of volunteering





COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Our Community Champions programme recruits and supports volunteers to improve awareness of Public Health campaigns, strengthen healthy behaviours and identify barriers to health and wellbeing in the places they live.

They work together, and in partnership with public services, to develop ways to overcome these barriers and deliver sustainable solutions to health, housing and social care issues. Champions show how local people can work with statutory services and voluntary organisations to improve outcomes.

The Volunteer Centre's Community Champions project, led by our Community Champions Manager Ewa Kasjanowicz, works with the residents of Lancaster West and Silchester estates in Notting Dale ward, and is one of six across Kensington & Chelsea.

OUR WORK IN 2023-24

This year our programme had 16 Community and Maternity Champions volunteering, reaching 1,562 residents. We ran a variety of local, free and regular activities, such as women-only yoga classes - which due to its popularity, is now offered in three separate sessions per week.

'L', a community resident who attends the yoga said:"*Attending Jaya's class has given me a feeling of roundedness and calm alertness which I have carried and taken with me into my day when I leave. I noticed that this has supported me to deal with my Grenfell-related trauma and any challenges that arose in my day in a more calm and peaceful way.*"

We also offer outdoor walking and exercise sessions, meditation and chair-based exercise classes (in partnerships with Age UK K&C) and supported trips to events in the borough and around London. This included exhibitions at Kensington Palace and community days at Kew Gardens. Our seaside excursion is also an annual highlight, as one attendee said "*It was the best trip we've ever attended by far!!! Organised, comfortable, enjoyable, vibrant, exuberant, magical, child-friendly, extravagant, unlimited—FANTABULOUSLY DONE!!!*"

Above all, we spend time connecting and having meaningful conversations with residents. Everything we do is based on relationships, which are underpinned by trust and respect. These relationships, cultivated over years, are a tremendous asset. They enable us to promote prevention and early intervention to both residents and decision-makers, without stereotyping local people or the people working with them. Working on a small scale, but over a long period, the people we work with know that they can rely on us, so we are well positioned to take risks and innovate to improve results.

Our Maternity Champions delivered buggy walks for local parents of young children, each ending with a nice hot beverage and chat. These aid the development of mutual support networks and promote the feeling of normality and of confidence, which can be especially

elusive to first-time parents. They also supported Magic Mums at Rugby Portobello Trust, offering breastfeeding peer support and promoting sustainable choices at their Nappy Natters and Baby Stuff Swap event.

As always, our work involved a lot of signposting, particularly in response to rising poverty. We continued to assist residents in receiving: debt advice; Council Tax support; warm spaces; free meals; and other forms of practical assistance. Our Employability services were also in high demand. We shifted the narrative around poverty, framing it at as a systemic issue rather than an individual one, which helped lower the stigma for residents in seeking support.

On the creative side, we continued our weekly clothes upcycling sessions for women and girls. Set up to promote sustainable fashion, this workshop has become a safe and supportive space for sharing, and for fostering intergenerational connection. Participants found that the sewing and embellishing activities to be calming and therapeutic, and that the gentle atmosphere encourage natural and flowing conversations. This became the unintended, but most important outcome of the project. It showed us, once again, that, if we provide a basic, safe and welcoming space, groups grow organically towards what matters most to them Everyone is both a giver and a receiver in these sessions, which changes the 'user' and 'provider' dynamics for the better.

For the Community Champions programme, each year seems better than the last one, because each year we get more embedded in the local community. Connections are built and sustained, our understanding deepens, and our presence in Notting Dale becomes more deeply rooted and naturally integrated.



THE APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

In May 2023, a new apprenticeship scheme was launched across the Community Champions programme in Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster, aiming to offer existing volunteer Champions a more formal and structured path to employment. It was also a great opportunity to increase capacity in our Notting Dale programme.

Our apprentice, Lauren, contributed to many of our initiatives, focusing particularly on Maternity Champions activities, such as buggy walks, trips and picnics for parents and babies. She also delivered a series of very popular baby massage classes and supported other activities such as the clothes upcycling, chair-based exercise class and women's only yoga sessions. She built her own personal and professional connections within the community, which bolstered her standing in the role and improved her future employment prospects.



Screen, Detect, Protect

We secured a Community Chest grant to run a 6-month Screen, Detect, Protect Cancer Awareness Campaign . The competition was high and our application was praised for its depth and person-centred approach, rather than the usual disease-centred approach.

As everything Champions do is based on relationships, we avoided simply instructing people on what is good for them. Instead, we explored the issue together with local residents to address the underlying barriers to cancer screening and treatment, such as pain, shame and embarrassment. This was done through a series of workshops and events that addressed the women in the North Kensington area, using the networks we have

developed through other activities to carry out.

We know that many awareness campaigns use fear as a key motivator. This can be effective, but can also result in avoidance and denial. For this reason, we choose to emphasise self-care and self-love; reframing cancer screenings as an expression of this positive motivation, alongside other constructive ways of looking after our physical and mental health. This gentle approach, combined with practical information, seemed to work well for our audience, who gave us some great feedback.

We also ran workshops on patients' rights and self-advocacy skills, which strongly resonated with local residents. We learned that people often do not have confidence to speak up in healthcare settings and instead sometimes end up avoiding NHS services altogether.

At the time of writing the report, the campaign is ongoing. It is difficult to predict how much our efforts will translate into increased cancer screening uptake, but our numerous conversations, often raw and unfiltered, have made us understand the North Kensington community better than we ever did. And we will continue growing and sharing that understanding with local people and organisations who want to help us empower people to improve their health!



SPECIALIST SERVICES

Our Specialist Services team, led since January 2024 by our new Head of Specialist Services, Amalia Loizidou, consists of our Wellbeing, Employment, and InsideOut programmes. Catering to people with relatively complex requirements, we work with clients over a period of months to build community integration and achieve better health, wellbeing and employment opportunities. Using a personalised development plan centred on volunteering and experiential learning, along with training, mentoring, coaching, and advice, we provide our clients with practical support in these areas!



WELLBEING

Our Wellbeing Programme offers a comprehensive package of tailored support for disabled people and those living with mental health needs in RBKC. We provide clients with 1-2-1 support, based on personalised development plans, alongside a variety of group activities such as trainings, workshops, community events, and tailored volunteering placements. Our aim is to foster holistic learning within a supportive and safe environment, allowing clients to engage on their own terms.

We respect and listen to our clients, empowering them and helping them recognise their personal progress. We also provide a platform to celebrate and showcase our clients' inspiring work, including aphorisms, personal mental health journey testimonies, play readings performed in local theatre groups, and poems created during our volunteer-led sessions. We share their work on our website and social media, highlighting their achievements and personal growth.

This year, the Wellbeing programme was delivered by our Wellbeing Officers, Louisa Schepes, Etty Dunn-Howe and Jaya Alvarez-Murray. It was funded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the North West London NHS Integrated Care Board (via Kensington & Chelsea Social Council), and the Julia and Hans Rausing Trust.



INTRODUCING 'TAG TEAM SHREDDING'

Overhearing a client answer the question 'What are you doing?' with 'I'm working' sparked the bright idea to create shredding sessions that felt more like a social, valued working environment for our Wellbeing Officer Jaya. It lead to her creation of "Tag Team Shredding", which evolved from 2 clients volunteering separately to shred paper once a month into a social and inclusive work experience with over 4 clients working all together. The volunteers meet up to shred paper over a cup of tea, sometimes singing along to music, discussing their weeks or simply enjoying the friendly environment.

'Tag Team Shredding' has increased productivity within the Wellbeing schedule, optimised property usage, and expanded the number of clients volunteering each month. It has also allowed us to deepen partnerships with local organisations and residents and demonstratated our commitment to innovation. We continued to strengthen relationships with Piper House, a local supported living organisation, as well as the local Learning Disability Resource Centre, Certitude, Integrity Care, and other local agencies that provide support workers for many of our clients.

"T*hank you very much for the update and the support our people receive from you. You will always have our support. You are doing a good job already"* Shamsuddin Burug, Registered Manager at Certitude, Barlby Road site

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT WITH SUPPORTED ACCESS

Supported Access, the newest initiative within the Wellbeing programme, targets young disabled people aged 16-25 in RBKC. This programme is designed for people living with and without mental health needs, offering tailored support to help them achieve their employment goals. Supported Access is a collaborative effort between our Wellbeing and Employment Hub staff, using personalised development plans, 1-2-1 support, and assistance in finding suitable volunteering, paid work, and training opportunities.

Currently, we are developing a relationship with Overbury, a leading UK construction and regeneration group, to provide tailored and accessible volunteer placements and apprenticeship schemes. These opportunities are available to referrals received from Community Living Well Youth Navigators and other local stakeholders.

WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

All of our Wellbeing clients, including Supported Access, Stepping Stones (working with Kensington & Chelsea adults with long-term health conditions) and Community Connections (for North Kensington residents aged 18-64) have access to our monthly activities. We also organise events and trips to places like Kew Gardens and Saatchi Gallery.

For a full list of wellbeing activities, please see next page.

OUR WELLBEING ACTIVITIES INCLUDE

WELLBEING & SELF-CARE WORKSHOPS: We deliver workshops to help clients build self-care skills and improve mental health, such as 'understanding anxiety', 'wellbeing in nature', and 'mindfulness and relaxation tips'. These workshops connects us with partner organisations and we often develop and deliver joint sessions of different kinds.	**MEDITATION SESSIONS:** Our Wellbeing Officer, Jaya, offers spaces to wellbeing clients to a session she provides on a weekly basis outside of VCKC. This has received amazing feedback on how people with complex needs feel energised and happier with themselves after attending. Through the sessions relaxation and positive affirmation tips are delivered in a way that helps to reduce anxiety and enhance self-confidence.	**GARDENING GROUP:** We offer a gardening group in partnership with W11, the Lancaster West estate team. Wellbeing volunteers help to keep a community space welcoming and beautiful while learning about plants and gardening techniques from an experienced gardener. This is also an opportunity for people to get to know each other and build connections in a positive, safe, supportive environment
SOCIAL/CREATIVE WORKSHOPS & TRIPS: To counteract our isolation and anxiety, we offer creative and social workshops, including our evening Wellbeing Art workshops. Our trips to accessible workshops and performances (e.g. National Theatre productions, Kew Gardens and the Royal Academy of Arts) were particularly popular this year, and provided opportunities for people to meet and for informal chats around wellbeing and self-care, which are often more fruitful than formal approaches.	**VOLUNTEERING PLACEMENTS:** We match clients to tailored, accessible and supportive volunteering placements with external organisations. We also create opportunities within our own organisation for people to volunteer. This involves working with clients to come up with an idea, and then to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence, to get there - all backed by ongoing supervision. 3 of our wellbeing workshops are currently facilitated by wellbeing volunteers.	**OTHER SUPPORT:** Phone calls to clients with mental health needs to provide them with self-care tips, build resilience and help them keep engaged with counselling services. We also remind them to attend activities they have expressed interest in and signpost and forward referrals, for example: to advice agencies for housing and debt case work and to talking therapy.
WELFARE CHECK CALLS: We offer welfare calls, texts and emails to clients who feel isolated and/or anxious		 WEEKLY YOGA WITH JAYA!

WELLBEING CASE STUDIES

I first came in contact with the Volunteer Centre roughly 2 or 3 years ago. I was missing purpose and structure to my week and it was getting me down. My anxiety complicated my ability to find and commit to voluntary work and so I embarked on a mission to succeed with the help of Etty and Jaya. Upon reflection, I'm really pleased that I was able to access this service as it's had a substantially positive impact on my life!

Throughout my time working with the Volunteer Centre, I've dabbled in various activities and groups - to not only occupy my time but to boost my confidence too, the latter being initially much needed! I was given the freedom to explore various opportunities without a pressure of having to fully commit, which I found incredibly helpful considering I wasn't even sure where my interests lay. I found it extremely helpful to be able to freely explore these activities whilst on my journey of personal discovery. I had a go at many things, ranging from gardening, to the playreading group and boxing. I felt fully supported too. For example when I went for an interview at the Nourish Hub, Etty walked me there whilst simultaneously prepping me for the interview. Afterwards, she waited for me to be done so that I could debrief her. This was a hugely beneficial experience as I'm not fully versed in the whole interview process. I particularly liked attending the English conversation workshop. Not only was it intellectually stimulating but also an arena to grow in confidence with regard to conversing with others.

All of these seemingly small experiences have culminated in me being able to take some ultra positive steps forwards! I felt inspired to seek out a voluntary position with St Mungo's, a charity dedicated to helping people who find themselves homeless for an array of reasons. I once resided in one of their supported housing projects, so I was aware of their inclusive ethos and the huge impact they have on people's lives. I wanted to be a part of that. Talking with their volunteer coordinator really solidified in my mind how much I wanted to do something that will ultimately affect people that are in a position that I once was in myself. There wasn't a role centred around policies but after showcasing my skills and previous experience, I suggested volunteering within that arena. Somehow, luckily, they created a role for me!

So there I was, a 'quality and continuous improvement volunteer!'. I even got my own lanyard which is cool! Initially I found the office environment extremely daunting and bordering on intimidating. But the staff have been exceptionally friendly and ever so welcoming! My role is to look at their policies and procedures and give my viewpoint and feedback from an ex-client perspective. I've reviewed policies such as client visitors and client safeguarding and it's nice to have such positive feedback, it reinforces that I'm actually doing a good job and contributing effectively. I've found it both intellectually and socially challenging, but I'm so proud of the progress I've made. I even won a St Mungo's volunteer award which was incredible!! St Mungo's

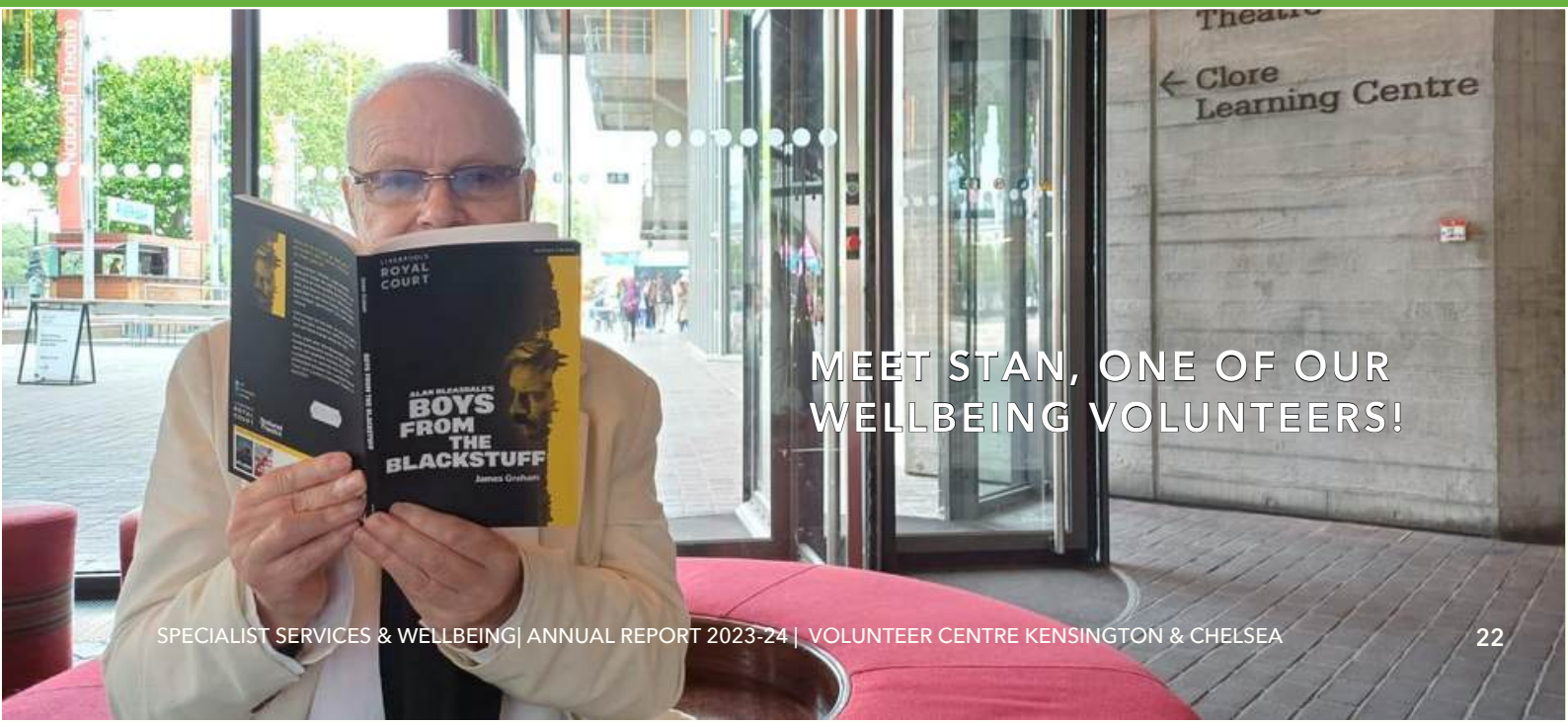
have extended my placement for another six months which I feel is a testimony to the hard work I've put in. I have my own personal mantra, 'progress is a process' and I honestly believe that if I didn't build the foundation blocks I built whilst working with the Volunteer Centre, then my volunteer placement at St Mungo's wouldn't have been possible.

My next steps are focused around continuing the progress I've made thus far and really strengthening the foundation blocks. Ultimately I'd love to get into paid work but I know that's a journey within itself. A journey, that I believe I have started. Life can be unpredictable and you never truly know what's ahead but it's such a lovely and satisfying feeling to reflect on past years and truly recognise the progress being made. Sometimes it's just about taking subtle steps forward, but those steps accumulated can take you a long way!!

- AMC (Wellbeing Client)

I did meditation for the first time in my life and I now feel so relaxed, thank you very much, it was amazing.
- AJ (Wellbeing Client)

I laid down on the mat, I relaxed, in meditation, without noticing I felt tears come, is that sadness happiness, I don't know, but I sleep one hour deep sleep, I felt like I was on the seaside, I was on holiday, when I got up, I really felt peaceful, peace of mind, it was so nice. - Anonymous Wellbeing Client



MEET STAN, ONE OF OUR WELLBEING VOLUNTEERS!

INSIDEOUT

Our resettlement programme, InsideOut, funded by the Henry Smith charity until 2025, helps people with criminal convictions re-integrate into the local community. Delivered by our InsideOut Coordinator, Jason Hudson, we prioritise ex-offenders with complex needs and at higher risk once released from custody, including older people, those living with addiction, institutionalised offenders, and people with mental health issues. We offer a tailored, 1-2-1 service – with personal development plans for clients that identify their needs and the personal and professional goals they want to achieve. With the support we provide, clients gain skills, knowledge and confidence, access to a wide range of essential services, volunteering, work experience and employment, and so increase their capacity to reintegrate into their local community.

Over the past year we have seen an increase in clients who are struggling with the cost of living and managing their benefits and housing payments. This is seen alongside an increase in clients coming to us, who have either been released from custody into homelessness and/or who are struggling to navigate life in their community and housing. Our aim is to limit the amount of clients being released from custody into homelessness, as lack of affordable housing and rent increases force clients into desperate situations. We aim to get all clients the support they need to maintain a productive lifestyle, and this includes access to safe and stable housing, as without it, access to employment is restricted. We seek to work with the Prisons Service to ensure this is secured upon release. For instance, we have been working with the housing officer in HMPS Downview to provide adequate housing for some of the most complex cases where there are multiple underlying issues that bring clientback to custody, such as substance misuse.

InsideOut has also experienced an increase in referrals from Wing Officers who are worried about offenders in custody. They make these referrals when they know that the offenders don't have access to regular support in the community. Most of these referrals centre around housing, or mental health issues upon release. We also support clients struggling to maintain their mental health by making referrals to local organisations such as Latimer Community Art Therapy (LCAT) and family therapy, as well as connecting them with substance misuse organisations like Turning Point and the Kensington & Chelsea South Mental Health Hub.

Since December 2023, we have been working with the community youth offending team (YOT) to support 16-24-year-olds in transitioning out of the youth probation system. This includes helping clients access education, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities. Five of the under-24 referrals came from YOT. One of them enrolled in the Headmasters Hairdressing Academy, another is finishing his A-levels in July 2024, after which we will continue to support him in pursuing a career or further

education, and one secured a construction role as a fitter's mate immediately after InsideOut provided PPE. InsideOut has also seen an increase in clients who cannot take steps towards volunteering and employment because of their uncertain immigration status, including those who have lost their right to remain due to being held on remand and are no longer entitled to any form of funding, often waiting months, even years, without community support. Jason found these cases particularly challenging to navigate, as the clients were often extremely agitated and frustrated with their situation. One such client came to our offices for help, deeply distressed after being released without charge, but still not having his right to remain reinstated. He explained that his situation was dire, as no borough agencies would assist him, and he lacked the funds for legal advice. This uncertainty severely impacted his mental health, leaving him unsure of how to proceed and where to turn for help. In response, we set up a council account, completed a duty of care referral, and contacted immigration authorities to understand the status of his case and explore ways to expedite the process – and were delighted when the client's right to remain was promptly reinstated much to the client relief and gratitude. The client undertook to come back to InsideOut for help with volunteering/employment once his housing was sorted out, which he did.

INSIDEOUT KEY STATS

- We have provided 19 disclosure and CV workshop sessions for clients both in and out of custody, including three through-the-gates sessions
- 64 clients have engaged in one-to-one sessions
- 31 clients have participated in training
- 12 clients have secured long-term employment
- 41 clients are now involved in long-term volunteering

INSIDEOUT CASE STUDIES

J is a disabled person with a criminal record who referred himself to InsideOut in early September 2023. He had previously engaged with us during lockdown, looking for work and accommodation as he was sleeping on his father's kitchen floor. J's situation had since become a lot more complex, as his father had passed away and J was isolating, all dramatically undermining his mental health. His family are not local and he struggled to make friends, since meeting people made him uncomfortable, and this meant that he was very isolated. This was worrying as he was struggling to find purpose and activities to engage within the community.

Jason addressed this first issue by interviewing him and finding out what he thought would help him the most. J expressed his desire to volunteer somewhere where he could help people. After having a conversation with Angela, VCKC's Volunteering

Officer, J was offered a volunteering position with VCKC – assisting with registrations and the provision of guidance to potential volunteers. He gets on really well with Ralph, another VCKC volunteer.This made a big difference to J's life and mental health. Since starting, J has engaged with his mental health worker again and it has given him a sense of purpose. Jason can really see the difference in J's confidence

LW, a InsideOut client, struggled as her new accommodation was unfit to live in and an unsafe environment for her autistic child. She was unable to cook in her kitchen for 3 months due to damp so bad that she had slugs on the wall. When Jason spoke to her, she was worried that she could not afford the property she had been placed in and that she would be considered intentionally homeless if she left, and thus ineligible for Council housing. We contacted her housing provider (Notting Hill Genesis) to secure safe and appropriate housing.

EDS, an Inside Out client, was released into homelessness during lockdown and required support in making a formal complaint to the probation service. In the last 6 months he started his own community project: Loves Kitchen. It's a small project that offers free meals to those that cannot afford them, and the elderly in the community, on a weekly basis. EDS has also started the RU4 driving project run by the Upper Room. He plans to buy a car, allowing him to travel to buy larger quantities of ingredients at lower cost, which in turn helps his business whilst increasing the amount of support he can provide to the community.



GOOD FOOD,
MADE WITH HEART
AT LOVE'S KITCHEN!

EMPLOYMENT

Our Employment programme needed to be completely rebuilt in the summer of 2023, following the sad demise of our Head of Employment, Ola, in 2022, and a hiatus due to recruitment challenges. Delivered by our new Employment Support Officer, Ruth Daniel, the Employment Hub welcomed 20 clients between its start in August and the end of the financial year.

Dedicated to supporting people overcoming significant barriers to employment, we offer support to:

- Young people, aged 16–25, via our Supported Access Programme. We focus on assisting young disabled and learning disabled people, as well as those experiencing mental health barriers. Our goal is to help these young people transition smoothly into the workforce by providing tailored support, signposting to training, and personalised career counselling
- People over 25. We offer additional support through funding from Campden Charities; this financial assistance is aimed at overcoming employment barriers and facilitating job placements. Our services include skills development, job search assistance, and ongoing support to ensure long-term employment success

Our services are available exclusively to residents of Kensington & Chelsea, including people living with the psychological aftermaths of the Grenfell Tower Fire. We are sensitive to the needs of the community and use the team's lived experience to ground our understanding of the barriers many local people face and the potential to overcome those barriers with the right combination of motivation and support.

Rebuilding the programme from scratch required us to work systematically on a number of activities in parallel. Upon launching our Supported Access programme, we expected the majority of our referrals to come from RBKC teams supporting disabled older children and younger adults, and their families. Surprisingly, we only received 2 referrals from these sources in our first year. Instead, we used existing VCKC and new referral relationships with voluntary sector partners, and broke new ground by connecting directly with supported housing providers, schools and further education colleges. We also worked to raise our profile with RBKC teams to benefit their clients.

Being a North Kensington resident herself, Ruth has taken advantage of her knowledge of the borough's residents and the services they trust to restart the Employment Hub. She revitalised old connections and built new ones, with e.g. the Cardinal Hume Centre, Caxton Youth, HealthWatch, and local food banks. Alongside this, she developed new activities, referral protocols, and forms for the Hub, drawing on her experience supporting disabled people to provide clients with a range of ways to mobilise their capabilities and resilience, gain experience, secure paid work, and build their independence.

EMPLOYMENT HUB CASE STUDY: OVERCOMING DEPRESSION AND BUILDING CONFIDENCE

Z's journey began with a shared assessment of their goals, interests, and the barriers they faced. Battling severe depression and low self-esteem, and feeling isolated by the deterioration of relationships within their immediate family, Z struggled to envision a positive future.

Despite lacking a strong interest in the field, Z expressed great determination to pursue a career in IT. We agreed that their first priorities were to build confidence and to improve communication with family, who were both encouraging and constraining Z. We met every week, following an agreed mentoring plan to develop coping and communication skills. As Z's overall health improved and capacity for more challenging activities increased, they were able to research IT courses taught online.

With patience and persistence, Z reached the point of being able to commit to a four-month training programme in the fundamentals of IT. Each step of the journey so far has built foundations for the next step, each achievement increasing self-efficacy and resilience and opening up more opportunities. Z is much more confident of reaching their employment goals with the support of the Employment Hub in the coming months. Watch this space!



A DOG-FRIENDLY SUPPORTED ACCESS MEETING

INFRASTRUCTURE

Recent crises in our borough, including the Grenfell Tower fire, the pandemic, three distinct rounds of new arrivals, and the sharply increased inflation and poverty of the last three years, have highlighted the critical role of small informal groups/networks and charities in identifying and meeting local needs quickly. This has increased the reliance of statutory services on the charity sector, highlighting the role of the Volunteer Centre as an important infrastructural organisation. Owing to our commitment and reliability, the statutory services often reach out to us to collaborate on wider issues, including coordination of crisis responses for small grassroots groups alongside support for their volunteering systems, volunteering policies, safeguarding practice, and training).

THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE

The immediate and longer-term effects of the disaster at Grenfell Tower from the limited perspective of VCKC are described in previous annual reports, and in much broader and more comprehensive terms in "A Journey of Recovery", the Public Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment report following the fire. The period of this report includes the sixth anniversary of the fire, and key stages of the public enquiry. The disaster response literature makes clear this period of time after a disaster is often very hard on those directly affected, the wider community, and the people trying to provide support to those people.

The trustees are conscious at all times of the need to act transparently, with compassion, and to take as much time and flexibility as necessary to deliver value for money, to those affected directly by the fire, the wider community, and the public in general, as well as to specific funders. The Volunteer Centre has a continuing role in supporting community advocates and their voluntary involvement in the strategic and tactical response to the fire, in the social and economic context in which the fire happened. This includes the demands of local people that money allocated and spent in the name of those affected by the disaster should deliver value for money to those affected, and that it should be spent in a way that improves their long-term outcomes, and their ability to direct and improve their own lives for years to come.

COST OF LIVING

Our CEO continued to Chair the borough's Cost of Living (CoL) group this year, facilitating the joint work of community and statutory partners to improve outcomes for the poorest households in the borough, while seeking ways to address local poverty and inequality long-term. The CoL partners worked to connect advice agencies to food banks with the aim of enabling food insecure people to get support beyond their immediate crisis, improving their incomes, reducing their debts, and giving them a better chance of a sustainable future. They also collaborated with the Volunteer Centre's CRM partner, Plinth, with the aim of increasing our collective understanding of the determinants that make poor households insecure and keep them that way. The CoL partners hope to use Plinth across as many front-line agencies as possible, alongside RBKC's Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) database, coordinating our efforts to give local people consistent support to escape from poverty.

COMMUNICATIONS

The year began with recruitment to the permanent Communications Officer role, with our new colleague, Emilia Wik. The Board developed a new Communications Strategy and, as part of the process, reviewed the mission, vision and values of the Volunteer Centre, which are set out at the beginning of this report. The Strategy frames and focuses our day to day work with social media, our website, monthly newsletter, and other opportunities to both listen and speak, connecting the many routes we have to promote volunteering to our diverse audience.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Charity's income was £640,145 in the year ended 31 March 2024 (£533,752, 31 March 2023). The total expenditure was £574,792 in the year to 31 March 2024 (£483,100, 31 March 2023). The unrestricted funds carried forward on the 31 March 2024 was £289,231, whilst £47,367 of restricted funds were also carried forward. This compares to an unrestricted balance of £250,945 carried forward on 31 March 2023, and a restricted balance of £20,300. The unrestricted funds include designated funds of £3,556 (£3,556, 31 March 2023).

As trustees we take seriously our responsibility to deploy the funds we hold in trust in support of our charitable objectives. As set out in detail in the earlier sections of our report, a key challenge this year has been filling professional vacancies for which we had secured funding. This is the principal cause of the increase in both our restricted and unrestricted reserves. A significant amount of our restricted reserve represents funds received from RBKC for the delivery of our Supported Access project, some milestones of which we were not able to meet because of these professional vacancies. We set out below our developing approach to mitigating this risk. We remain committed to investing in our capacity to deliver our charitable objectives, in particular in our people, but also our systems and resources, and will designate funds accordingly as appropriate.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board reviews risks to the effective operation and sustainability of the Volunteer Centre regularly, assessing the major risks that the charity is exposed to at the finance committee meeting prior to every trustee meeting as we address existing (or identify new) risks. The risk register is updated at least twice annually and appropriate systems and procedures are established to mitigate the internal and external risks that the charity faces. Our policies are updated to reflect internal processes and legal and regulatory changes as and when they occur. Our core policies – safeguarding, data protection – are reviewed annually and our others at least every other year. Outside of disaster response, principal risks and mitigation strategies are:

STAFF RECRUITMENT

Though the environment for recruiting and retaining paid staff remained challenging this year, we were able to cover some vacancies with temporary staff while recruiting successfully to six permanent posts, making use of promotional support and advice from our local and regional peers and professional networks. The Volunteer Centre's budget reflected our desire to offer competitive salaries in the context of high inflation while appreciating that greater competition for limited funding is a major constraint on our ability to offer salaries in line with rising costs.

CORE AND PROGRAMME FUNDING

The Volunteer Centre maintains good working relationships with a range of current and prospective funders, building mutual understanding and helping to identify shared objectives. The Board's sub-committee charged with the co-ordination of the development of funding convenes in advance of, and reports its work to the trustees at, each full Board meeting.

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

The Volunteer Centre gathers data on its performance from regular monitoring of its work with clients, from periodic generation of case-studies based on client and staff experience, from surveys of staff and trustees, and from its routine financial processes. It retains this data (in compliance with its regulatory obligations) and reports it internally to staff and trustees, and externally to funders, regulators and the wider public (again subject to compliance with regulatory obligations). The Volunteer Centre is currently simplifying and integrating its systems, and investing in resources to support this process. The Volunteer Centre regularly reviews its organisational structure to promote collaboration between all programmes and organisational resilience.

DISINTERMEDIATION AND CHANGES IN THE VOLUNTEERING ENVIRONMENT

As noted above, our data, and that of national and regional actors in volunteering, suggests that there has been a fundamental shift in regular volunteering post pandemic, with many older people not returning to volunteer, many younger people not yet volunteering regularly, and many potential volunteers seeking much more flexible or specific roles in order to manage constraints in their lives like work, childcare, and education. One-off and event-based volunteer numbers have recovered much more quickly post-pandemic, emphasising the importance of flexibility to volunteers, and perhaps also reflecting the nature of much of the pandemic volunteering. With the Cost of Living crisis, financial barriers to volunteering have also become more apparent.

In mitigation, the Volunteer Centre has made considerable structural improvement to its communications planning, with greater clarity of objectives and audiences, better matching of audiences to channels, and regularity of content, all of which enable our Communications Officer and wider team to be more proactive and to take opportunities at a hyper-local level. We are more methodical in platforming our partners and ensuring we have mutually supportive endorsements. Next steps include developing the capacity of our Core team to adapt further the range and accessibility of local volunteering placements.

In mitigation, the Volunteer Centre has made considerable structural improvement to its communications planning, with greater clarity of objectives and audiences, better matching of audiences to channels, and regularity of content, all of which enable our Communications Officer and wider team to be more proactive and to take opportunities at a hyper-local level. We are more methodical in platforming our partners and ensuring we have mutually supportive endorsements. Next steps include developing the capacity of our Core team to adapt further the range and accessibility of local volunteering placements.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding remained a priority for us this year, though fewer incidents of concern were raised compared to the previous reporting period. We reviewed and updated our Safeguarding policy in light of statutory guidance and our annual review of Safeguarding practice, and ensured staff training was refreshed. We continued to undertake collective work on VCS Safeguarding capacity and practice with our VCS and statutory partners, adding vulnerable adults to our focus on Safeguarding children.

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE

A three-year funding agreement with RBKC, starting in August 2022, gave us the exciting opportunity to work much more consistently with younger clients through our new Supported Access programme. We set out to work with Kensington & Chelsea residents from 16-25 with a wide range of long-term conditions and additional needs, enabling disabled and learning-disabled young people to set and attain their volunteering and employment goals. This meant developing new partnerships with referring agencies, employers and volunteering programmes. The recruitment challenges we refer to elsewhere in the report meant that we did not meet all the project goals we set in the first year of the project, but this year we were able to fill our Employment vacancy and, with our new Head of Specialist Services in place, we are looking forward to not only meeting our targets in the year ahead, but recovering as much as we can on preceding years.

Despite the challenges of rapid adaptation during the pandemic and immediate post-pandemic years, the Volunteer Centre has continued to review its operating environment regularly and make improvements to our plans and our practice in light of what we learn.

This year that process resulted in the development of a new Communications Strategy, including a review and restatement of our Vision, Mission and Values. This provided additional impetus to continue the restructuring process we began in 2022-23. This year we worked to create a Specialist Services team under a single manager, integrating the Employment, InsideOut and Wellbeing programmes to increase our effectiveness for our clients.

In 2024-25 we plan a fuller reassessment and revision of our objectives and programmes, led by the trustees, but with the contribution of our paid staff team, volunteers engaged in delivering our services, our partners and our funders.

RESERVES POLICY

The Board has examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be equal to at least 3 months of the charity's total expenditure. This reserve is intended to ensure that the charity can continue to operate in the event of an emergency, or a sudden cut in funding. The level of reserves available to the charity at 31 March 2024 was £285,675, above the minimum target of 3 months of the Charity's total expenditure (total expenditure was £574,792, so 3 months was £143,698). We increased our unrestricted reserves this year, primarily due to staffing vacancies (arising from recruitment challenges and delays in implementing the restructuring of our specialist services). The Board keeps under review the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed, should circumstances require such action.

INVESTMENT POLICY

The unrestricted funds in reserve fluctuate and can be called upon temporarily to meet immediate cash flow needs. They are held in higher yield savings accounts with UK banks at levels protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

FUTURE PLANS

To achieve success in our multi-year strategy, we committed to five specific objectives:

- Develop our "Volunteer Journey" model to offer a tailored, flexible, personalised service to potential volunteers across all our programmes and provide them with opportunities with local organisations which correspond to their goals and needs. We made substantial progress this year, recruiting temporary staff to help in implementing our new client relationship management system provided by Plinth (formerly Time to Spare). We concentrated on our Core team, as improved technology delivering better management information and a better volunteer journey can have the impact on most clients that way. We migrated Core clients to the new system this year, checking with every registered person to obtain their informed consent. Work on Core implementation should be completed in 2024-25, alongside the transition for both Specialist Services and Community Champions programmes.

- Strengthen our relationships with local and hyper-local organisations, improving their capacity to engage volunteers, shape additional rewarding volunteering roles, and offer bespoke resources and training. We stepped up our direct training and 1:1 support of our volunteering-involving partners to increase the number of volunteering roles as well as the accessibility of some of them.

- Continue to (i) offer dedicated long-term specialist support to ensure access for all to life changing experiences through volunteering and (ii) build a track record around employment and community contribution as a result of volunteering. As mentioned in this report, this year we adapted our organisation structure to be more collaborative and efficient and continued to enable clients to overcome barriers to both volunteering and paid work in significant numbers, and influenced statutory services to take a more joined up approach, too.

- Provide volunteering best practice advice and training to individuals and organisations. Participate in local groups and forums, acting as an advocate of voluntary action as well as a connector, a facilitator of partnerships, a trusted intermediary and contributor to social capital. With a continuing leading role in the borough's response to the Cost of Living crisis, a proven track record in bringing our partners together to create shared recommendations around healthcare or co-design of RBKC's Service Standards, we are proud of the many collaborations we are part of, learning with and from our peers and partners, and the opportunities thus created to tackle the structural barriers to wellbeing, access and inclusion.

- Aim to be a high trust learning environment, supported by accredited systems, with open communication and effective feedback between team members, such that all understand their roles, how they connect to our strategy and feel motivated, supported and valued. Improving our appraisal process so that it connects more directly with our organisational strategy and objectives, and provides a systematic input from the team, has helped us move this objective forward, as has the introduction of a digital HR system. Both staff and volunteer handbooks have been updated to further develop the systems to underpin our high trust culture. Team members have been encouraged and supported to take a leading role internally, and to represent the Volunteer Centre externally, demonstrating the organisation's trust in them

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY & GOING CONCERN

At the time of writing this report, and having given consideration to internal and external factors, the financial position of the charity (including the level of its reserves), the ability to continue to raise sufficient funding for its operations, and the uncertain economic situation, the Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is financially sustainable and a going concern. While inflation levels remained high, the charity continues to attract funders thanks to the concrete benefits it brings to the local community.

Hiring continues to be the primary risk to the organisation. Recruitment market conditions, as well as the high costs of living in London and the salary constraints of charities, mean recruiting people of the right experience remains very challenging. Despite this, we welcomed six new skilled colleagues this year.

As mentioned above, we have a robust risk management process in place: we review the changes to the risk register at Board meetings twice each year at a minimum and update it as necessary as we address existing, or identify new, risks. Our core policies are updated to reflect internal processes and/or legal and regulatory changes, and reviewed at least annually.

We have robust processes in place to continue to offer services if there was to be another lockdown due to a pandemic or other unforeseen circumstance. We are now better connected to local emergency preparedness infrastructure then in previous years as a member of the Borough Resilience Forum.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

a) Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
b) Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
c) Make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
d) State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
e) Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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.

This report, which has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006, was approved by the Board on 19 December 2024 and signed on its behalf.

Signature: Anne-Helene Biosse-Duplan Date: 19 December 2024

Full Name: Anne-Helene Biosse-Duplan

Position: Chair of Trustees

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

I report on the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2024 as set out on 37-47.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

As the charity's trustees of the Company (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

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
2. The accounts do not accord with such records; o
3. 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
4. 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.

Shruti Soni

Shruti Soni FCCA FCIE
Shruti Soni Ltd ● Chartered Certified Accountants
117A St Johns Hill, Sevenoaks TN13 3PL

Date: 19 December 2024

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £ (Restated)	Restricted £ (Restated)	2023 Total £ (Restated)
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	187,780	164,705	**352,485**	208,374	95,984	304,358
Charitable activities							
Volunteering services	3	1,926	–	**1,926**	1,607	–	1,607
Wellbeing	3	–	89,909	**89,909**	–	76,268	76,268
Community Champions	3	57,709	16,000	**73,709**	52,476	11,554	64,030
SEND Volunteering	3	–	113,000	**113,000**	–	84,750	84,750
Investments – bank interest		9,116	–	**9,116**	2,739	–	2,739
Total income		256,531	383,614	**640,145**	265,196	268,556	533,752
Expenditure on:	4						
Raising funds		1,666	–	**1,666**	–	–	–
Charitable activities							
Volunteering services		216,579	356,547	**573,126**	176,413	306,687	483,100
Total expenditure		218,245	356,547	**574,792**	176,413	306,687	483,100
Net income / (expenditure) for the year		38,286	27,067	**65,353**	88,783	(38,131)	50,652
Transfers between funds		–	–	–	(46,876)	46,876	–
Net movement in funds		38,286	27,067	**65,353**	41,907	8,745	50,652
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		250,945	20,300	**271,245**	209,038	11,555	220,593
Total funds carried forward	15	289,231	47,367	**336,598**	250,945	20,300	271,245

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15 to the financial statements.

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Company no. 03725459

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		-		-
			-		-
Current assets:					
Debtors	11	85,926		45,233	
Cash at bank and in hand		311,336		275,288	
		397,262		320,521	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	60,664		49,276	
Net current assets / (liabilities)			336,598		271,245
Total assets less current liabilities			336,598		271,245
Total net assets / (liabilities)			336,598		271,245
The funds of the charity:	14				
Restricted income funds			47,367		20,300
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		3,556		3,556	
General funds		285,675		247,389	
Total unrestricted funds			289,231		250,945
Total charity funds	15		336,598		271,245

For the year ending 31 March 2024, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Trustees' Responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476

- The trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements, which have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), were approved by the Board on 19 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Anne-Helene Biosse-Duplan

Trustee

Name

Anne-Helene Biosse-Duplan

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period		**65,353**	50,652
Depreciation charges		**–**	278
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		**(40,693)**	(6,315)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors		**11,388**	7,833
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities		**36,048**	52,448
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		**36,048**	52,448
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**275,288**	222,840
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		**311,336**	275,288

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 31 March 2024 £	At 31 March 2023 £
Cash in hand and at bank	**311,336**	275,288
Total cash and cash equivalents	**311,336**	275,288

Analysis of changes in net debt

	At Start of year £	Cashflows £	At end of year £
Cash in hand and at bank	275,288	36,048	311,336

1 Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England with registration number 03725459. The accounts are presented in GBP rounded to £1.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

b) Public benefit entity

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

c) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

No key judgements that the charitable company has made, have a significant effect on the accounts include.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

d) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

f) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

g) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

1 **Accounting policies (continued)**

h) Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of operating an orchestra for the public performance of music by young persons and related charitable activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

i) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

j) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitallsed. Depreciation is provided so as to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life at the fofiowlng annual rates:

• Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line
• Computer equipment	25% straight line

k) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

l) 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. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

m) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £ (Restated)
Volunteering				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	127,705	–	**127,705**	133,287
RBKC – Street Markets	–	20,545	**20,545**	–
London Plus	–	5,000	**5,000**	–
Other grants	–	3,600	**3,600**	–
Kensington and Chelsea foundation	–	–	**–**	11,667
Camden Charities	–	–	**–**	3,120
Employment				
Camden Charities	60,000	–	**60,000**	60,000
Wellbeing				
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	–	18,000	**18,000**	7,500
Resettlement Scheme				
Henry Smith	–	52,400	**52,400**	51,600
Charles Hayward	–	–	**–**	10,000
Hollick Family Foundation	–	10,000	**10,000**	–
Community Champions				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	–	24,739	**24,739**	24,000
Other grants	–	–	**–**	2,884
Community Champions Apprentice				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	–	30,421	**30,421**	–
Other donations	75	–	**75**	300
	187,780	164,705	**352,485**	304,358

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £ (Restated)
Volunteering				
Vounteer – Consulting and training fees	1,926	–	**1,926**	1,607
	1,926	–	**1,926**	1,607
Wellbeing				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	–	31,650	**31,650**	30,000
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	–	58,259	**58,259**	46,268
	–	89,909	**89,909**	76,268
Community Champions				
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	–	15,500	**15,500**	11,554
RB Kensington and Chelsea	57,709	–	**57,709**	52,476
Other	–	500	**500**	–
	57,709	16,000	**73,709**	64,030
SEND Volunteering				
RB Kensington and Chelsea	–	113,000	**113,000**	84,750
	–	113,000	**113,000**	84,750
Total income from charitable activities	59,635	218,909	**278,544**	226,655

To maintain consistency and accurary the income for 2023 has been regrouped between Income From Donations and Legacies (note 2 above) and Income from Charitable Activities (note 3 above) in the SOFA.

4 Analysis of expenditure

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable Activities £	Support costs £	2024 Total £	2023 Total
Staff costs	–	**367,865**	91,966	**459,831**	375,526
Other direct costs	–	**43,139**	–	**43,139**	39,389
Office costs	1,666		35,418	**37,084**	38,936
Premises costs	–		31,484	**31,484**	25,178
Governance costs	–		3,254	**3,254**	4,071
	1,666	**411,004**	162,122	**574,792**	483,100
Support costs	–	**162,122**	**(162,122)**	**–**	–
Total expenditure 2024	**1,666**	**573,126**	**–**	**574,792**	**–**
Total expenditure 2023	–	483,100	–	**–**	483,100

Of the total expenditure £356,547 (2023: £306,687) was restricted and £218,245 (2023: £176,413) was unrestricted

5 Net incoming resources for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation	–	278
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	**26,207**	25,178
Independent examiner 2024 / Auditors' remuneration 2023:		
Independent Exam 2024 / Audit 2023	**1,500**	2,500
Other services	–	788

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries and wages	**384,687**	309,890
Social security costs	**32,101**	26,499
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	**20,387**	16,807
	437,175	353,196

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2023: nil).

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the trustees ("Directors" for the purposes of the Companies Act) and Senior Management Team. The total amounts paid in respect of the key management personnel of the Charity (including employer's National Insurance contributions and employers pension contributions) were £100,433 (2023: £55,295). We have made decision to change the structure of the organisation so that the senior management team now includes three people, the CEO, the Operations Director (existing position upgraded from manager) and added a Head of Specialist Services. None of the trustees received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.
The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023: £nil).

During the year, no trustee was reimbursed travel expenses of nil (2023: nil).

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Charitable activities	**11.9**	7.9
Support	**0.8**	0.8
	12.7	8.7

8 Related party transactions

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023: £nil).

No trustees were reimbursed any expenses representing payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs or similar expenses relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

Aggregate donations from trustees and related parties were nil (2023: nil).

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation		
At the start of the year	1,114	1,114
At the end of the year	1,114	1,114
Depreciation		
At the start of the year	1,114	1,114
Charge for the year	-	-
At the end of the year	1,114	1,114
Net book value		
At the end of the year	-	-
At the start of the year	-	-

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

11 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	85,302	43,610
Prepayments	624	1,623
	85,926	45,233

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	11,074	8,134
Taxation and social security	–	–
Other creditors	–	–
Accruals	16,110	15,699
Deferred income	33,480	25,443
	60,664	49,276

13 Deferred income

Deferred income comprises grants relating to next financial year received in this financial year.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Balance at the beginning of the year	25,443	36,828
Amount released to income in the year	(25,443)	(36,828)
Amount deferred in the year	33,480	25,443
Balance at the end of the year	33,480	25,443

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	–	–	–	–
Net current assets	285,675	3,556	47,367	336,598
Net assets at 31 March 2024	285,675	3,556	47,367	336,598

Analysis of net assets between funds

	General	Designated	Restricted	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	–	–	–	–
Net current assets	247,389	3,556	20,300	271,245
Net assets at 31 March 2023	247,389	3,556	20,300	271,245

15 Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024
Restricted funds:					
Volunteering	–	29,145	(29,145)	–	–
Wellbeing	–	107,909	(107,909)	–	–
Resettlement Scheme	–	62,400	(62,400)	–	–
Community Champions	–	40,739	(40,739)	–	–
Community Champions	–	30,421	(30,421)	–	–
SEND Volunteering Project	20,300	113,000	(85,933)	–	**47,367**
Total restricted funds	20,300	383,614	(356,547)	–	**47,367**
Unrestricted funds:					
Training and mentoring of employees	3,556	–	–	–	**3,556**
Total designated funds	3,556	–	–	–	**3,556**
General funds	247,389	256,531	(218,245)	–	**285,675**
Total unrestricted funds	**250,945**	**256,531**	**(218,245)**	**–**	**289,231**
Total funds	**271,245**	**640,145**	**(574,792)**	**–**	**336,598**

15 Movements in funds (continued)

	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources & gains £	Outgoing resources & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds:					
Wellbeing	10,633	83,768	(114,932)	20,531	–
Resettlement Scheme	–	61,600	(72,528)	10,928	–
Community Champions	922	38,438	(107,977)	68,617	–
SEND Volunteering Project	–	84,750	(11,250)	(53,200)	**20,300**
Total restricted funds	11,555	268,556	(306,687)	46,876	**20,300**
Unrestricted funds:					
Training and mentoring of employees	5,000	–	–	(1,444)	**3,556**
Total designated funds	5,000	–	–	(1,444)	**3,556**
General funds	204,038	265,196	(176,413)	(45,432)	**247,389**
Total unrestricted funds	**209,038**	**265,196**	**(176,413)**	**(46,876)**	**250,945**
Total funds	**220,593**	**533,752**	**(483,100)**	**–**	**271,245**

Purposes of restricted funds

Volunteering – Marketing Ambassadors – To enable volunteers to support the Portobello Road and Golborne Road markets, helping visitors make the most of some of the Kensington & Chelsea's best public spaces.

Wellbeing – To enable adult residents of Kensington & Chelsea who are disabled or have long-term health conditions to improve their health and wellbeing via supported volunteering, coaching, mentoring, training and other forms of personal and social development.

Resettlement Scheme – To enable people with criminal records living in London to re-establish themselves in their local communities, promoting their wellbeing, and securing and maintaining their independence.

Community Champions – To enable people living in the Notting Dale ward of Kensington & Chelsea to take greater control of their health and housing through voluntary action.

Community Champions Apprentice – To facilitate the apprenticeship of one local person to VCKC's Community Champions Manager.

SEND Volunteering Project – To enable 16–25 year old residents of Kensington & Chelsea who are disabled or have long-term health conditions to secure paid work (or to increase their prospects of doing so) via volunteering, work experience, training and other forms of personal and social development.

16 Contingent assets or liabilities

The charitable company has been awarded multi-year grants with specified or implied timeframes which preclude recognition of the full amount. The total amount af contingent asset at 31 March 2024 was £293,208 (2023: £453,570).

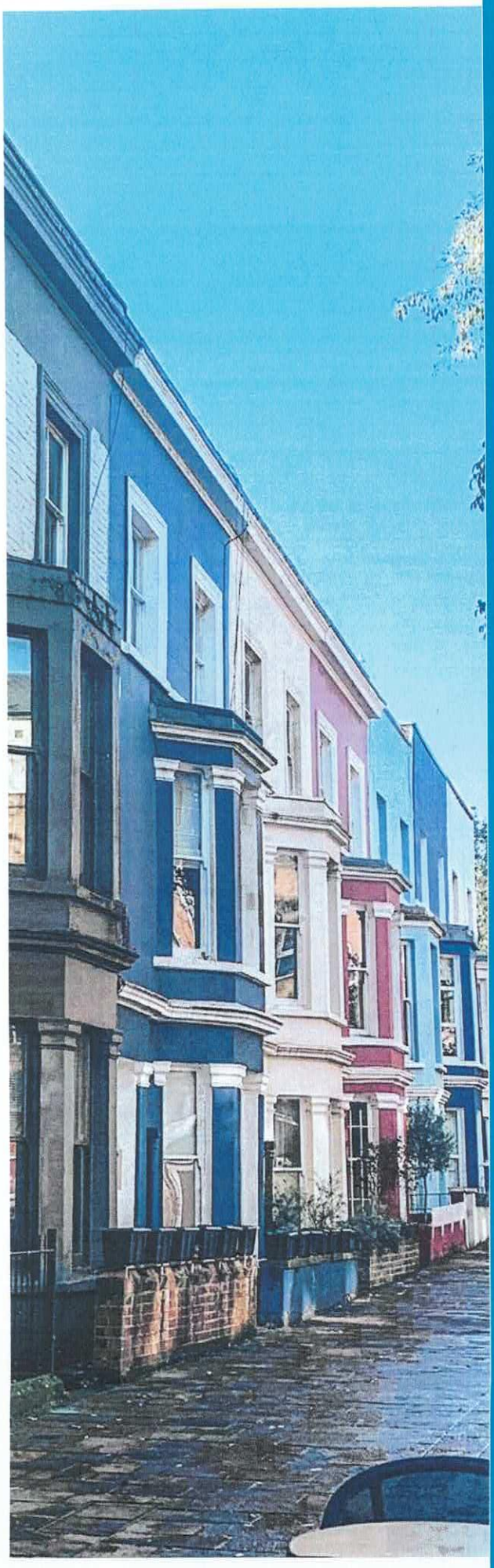
17 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

England & Wales - Charity number 1076392

Accounts



Volunteer Centre
Kensington and Chelsea

Annual **Report**

Empowering our community to realise its full potential.

Year **2022-23**

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea, along with many of its peers, continued to face a challenging environment this year as the repercussions of lockdowns, international upheavals and the developing Cost of Living crisis affected us all. As researched by projects such as Vision for Volunteering, the impact on volunteering was notable, with declining participation and satisfaction arising in part from growing financial pressures. Yet this testing landscape presented opportunities for VCKC: it played to our expertise in helping organisations shape more attractive and flexible opportunities for volunteers, as well as supporting those with barriers to accessing the benefits of volunteering. Our role as a local infrastructure body has also grown, with statutory partners increasingly relying on organisations like VCKC to coordinate community responses to crises.

This was, therefore, a year of achievement, but also of consolidation for Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea. Both were enabled significantly by the arrival of our new Operations Manager, Liz Woodman, in April 2022. Liz oversaw the commissioning of a new digital platform as part of a wider improvement in HR systems, including a new internal appraisal process. We selected Time to Spare (now Plinth) to provide a new platform for us to handle, monitor and respond to requests from new volunteers or volunteering organisations. Improvements to our other IT systems, physical environment, and to the volunteer drop-in room were also made. We invested in ongoing reflective practice support for our caseworkers, recognising the challenges to their mental health of working with clients with more and more complex needs and fewer opportunities to address those needs systematically, making them more unwell, less capable of managing their needs alone, and more likely to seek help from our team in a crisis – homelessness, suicidality, and food insecurity just three common examples.

In light of the increasing complexity of our clients' lives and our operating environment, we began to develop a plan for a partial restructuring of our team this year, which you can read about in more detail later in our report.

The sharp increase in prices taking its toll on local people also affected our team, meaning that we had to increase salaries significantly to give our staff some chance of meeting their basic needs, but with our income made up of grants and public sector contracts we couldn't hope to raise salaries in line with inflation, and so our ability to attract new staff was further tested, not least as the gap between our salaries and those of our statutory colleagues' increased. Staffing was perhaps the biggest challenge this year, not only for us, but for many of our key partners.

None of this prevented the Volunteer Centre from playing its small, but important part

in helping local people and organisations to make Kensington & Chelsea a better place to live, work and learn. We started the year chairing working groups of voluntary and statutory partners coordinating support for newly arrived Ukrainians, as the first Afghan bridging hotel was being closed. In July we helped draft a proposal for a community-led recovery approach for the North Kensington Health Partners, and in August we drafted a multi-sector response to the Council's Mental Health Strategy consultation. In September our CEO, Michael Ashe, was asked to chair a new borough Cost of Living group (under the aegis of the Community Resilience Group we helped establish ahead of the first lockdown), and just before Christmas to co-chair the borough's first Cost of Living Summit alongside the Council's Director for Communities. Our commitment to community-led development meant that Michael was also asked to facilitate the co-design of the Council's Customer Service Standards with a group of residents and officers.

All of this shows the responsiveness and effectiveness of our approach to working with our community and their organisations, the power of multi-sector partnerships based on trust and shared principles, and the dedication of our small team. We aim to be a hyper-local enabler and facilitator of voluntary community participation for the collective good. Following our community's lead and taking opportunities to collaborate and build capacity has delivered much positive change since we opened in 1969. It's an approach which has become particularly essential since the fire at Grenfell Tower.

We are very grateful to those who gave us the financial means to support our community and thank the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea who provided the largest share of those resources this year, alongside North West London NHS (through Kensington & Chelsea Social Council), the Henry Smith Charity, the Kensington & Chelsea Foundation, Julia and Hans Rausing, the Charles Hayward Foundation, and in particular the Campden Charities, who supported us this year through the loss of a dear colleague. As ever, I would like to thank our staff and my trustee colleagues for their dedication, hard work and resilience, without which the Volunteer Centre could not continue its valuable work.



Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan
Chair of the Board of Trustees

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER
1076392

COMPANY NUMBER
03725459

REGISTERED OFFICE
1, Thorpe Close , London W10 5XL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan	Chair
Joseph Carim	
Jennifer Clarke	
Maria-Iuliana Dinu	
Bashir Hassan	
Muskaan Khurana	Vice-Chair
Marley Obi	
Michael Pearson	
Rossana Rocchini	Treasurer

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Michael Ashe	Company Secretary

BANKERS
CAF Bank
Kings Hill, West Malling
Kent ME19 4TA

SOLICITORS
Russell-Cooke Solicitors
2 Putney Hill
London SW15 6AB

AUDITORS
Myrus Smith
Norman House
8 Burnell Road
Sutton SM1 4BW

REPORT OF TRUSTEES

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The trustees present their annual report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. The trustees confirm that the financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the recommendations in 'Accounting & Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice' (issued in October 2019).

The Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (abbreviated 'VCKC' and known as the 'Volunteer Centre') was founded in 1969 and incorporated under a memorandum of association on the 5th of July 1999. It is governed under its articles of association.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

4

Role

The trustees, for purposes of the Companies Act, are also the Directors of the charity. During the year the trustees have had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the VCKC.

Trustee Appointment, Induction and Training

The Board of Trustees makes appointments to the Board at its discretion. The Board endeavours to ensure that its membership contains people with a broad mix of skills and experiences and that the backgrounds of the members reflect a balance that is appropriate to the charity's mission and activities. Trustees receive induction and training, and both formal and informal opportunities for learning during their term.

In addition to the opportunities for skills and knowledge development provided by scheduled meetings of the Board and its committees, specific training sessions are arranged as required.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

5

Organisational Structure

The organisation is overseen by a voluntary Board of Trustees who are responsible for strategic planning and reviewing policy and are accountable for the Volunteer Centre's resources. The Board has three committees: Finance; Policy, Procedure and Personnel; and Resourcing. Each committee has specific terms of reference and can co-opt non-trustee members possessing relevant skills and experiences. The respective Chairs are appointed by the Board. Day-to-day running of the Charity is delegated to the Chief Executive who operates within defined terms of reference and authority, leading a team of paid staff and volunteers.

Pay and Remuneration of Staff

VCKC's pay policy aims to offer fair pay to attract and retain appropriately qualified staff to lead, manage, support and deliver its aims. VCKC's trustees are responsible for setting remuneration levels for its senior staff - the Chief Executive Officer and Operations Manager. In order to inform the setting of appropriate pay for these staff, VCKC considers insights from its HR advisers, local and regional peers, and regional and national infrastructure bodies. Staff salaries are increased annually, as far as possible in line with inflation. They are formally revised where it is appropriate to reflect changes in professional responsibilities.

Involvement of Volunteers

Against a challenging background for volunteering UK-wide and in Kensington & Chelsea this year, we continued to enjoy fantastic support from our Core volunteers, our Community and Maternity Champions, and Wellbeing befrienders. Although recruitment challenges led to the temporary suspension of our Market Ambassadors and Operation Cup of Tea activities, our ability to offer low-commitment volunteering placements was sustained with our support for projects like the K&C Mutual Aid Clothes Bank, and one-off events like the Jubilee tea at the Town Hall and support for the Queen's funeral.

Related Parties

VCKC does not have branches or subsidiaries.

OBJECTIVES, MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

Principal Objectives

VCKC's main objectives, in accordance with its governing document, are:

- To promote the value and impact that volunteering and community involvement can have in responding to the needs of local communities
- To encourage people to volunteer from all walks of life and backgrounds
- To encourage volunteering and work experience in the voluntary sector as a way of facilitating employment and combating social exclusion
- To undertake and arrange voluntary work in education, social services and similar charitable activities that benefit residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and other parts of London

Vision

Kensington & Chelsea is a place in which everyone is able to volunteer, contributing to the community and their own wellbeing.

Mission

VCKC empowers individuals and communities to develop themselves through rewarding volunteering, promoting positive change in Kensington & Chelsea.

Core Values

Valuing People	We treat everyone with care, integrity and respect - empowering them to realise their potential and make a positive difference in the community.
Collaboration	We connect and empower communities to come together using local resources to meet local needs.
Knowledge	We use our local understanding to help organisations and groups adopt good practices and champion accessible and rewarding volunteering.
Creativity	We are a catalyst for local impact, with volunteers, partners and the community, taking opportunities, acting decisively to tackle the causes of shared problems.

ACTIVITIES

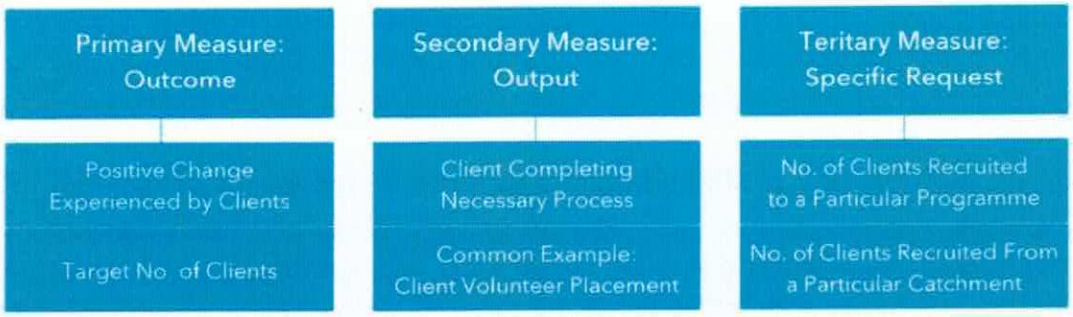
The Volunteer Centre is both an infrastructure organisation working with other public benefit organisations and a direct delivery organisation supporting individuals directly on a one-to-one basis through its own programmes. The main activities and programmes are:

- Core Services
- Community Champions
- Specialist Services

Measuring Effectiveness

Currently, measures of success vary from programme to programme, based in each case on the design of the programme (including input from clients, staff, trustees, partners and the corpus of good practice) in light of any requirements specified by a programme's funder(s) and negotiation with them during any application process. VCKC is working towards setting a handful of outcomes, underpinned by its Theory of Change framework, that will be common across all its programmes, one benefit of which will be to enable trustees and staff to assess more easily the changes achieved by VCKC as a whole. The staged implementation of the digital Client Relationship Management (CRM) platform Time to Spare (now Plinth) will be helpful in providing the base data required across the organisation.

Our primary measures are set in terms of outcomes - did clients achieve the positive change anticipated when they joined the programme - with targets for the number of clients achieving the outcomes over a particular reporting period. Secondary measures are set in terms of outputs - did clients complete a process or get to a milestone that we consider necessary to achieve a desirable outcome. For example, an output measure common to all our programmes is that a client is placed as a volunteer with an organisation of their choosing. Tertiary measures are sometimes used at the specific request of a funder; for example, the number of clients recruited to a particular programme, or recruited from a particular catchment.



CORE SERVICES

With funding from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, our Core Services team of paid staff and volunteers, led by our Operations Manager, Liz Woodman, who joined us in April 2022, deliver a wide range of support to the local community and its voluntary sector.

Liz says: *"I believe that volunteering changes lives! Not only do volunteers help charities and the wider community, but volunteering can also have such a positive impact on the volunteer themselves. I have benefited myself from volunteering since I was really young and continue to volunteer every week."*

Our brokerage service, led by our Volunteering Officer, Angela Weir, offers support to people who want to give their time, while working closely with organisations seeking to increase their volunteering capacity and develop inclusive and supportive volunteering programmes. Since resuming face to face appointments for potential volunteers post-pandemic, the number of volunteer registrations has increased - with online zoom appointments still available for those who are unable to attend in person. This year the number of advertised roles also increased, with over 100 active opportunities on average each month in over 40 different organisations, and 86 brand new opportunities in total. Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea placed an excellent 1,078 unique volunteers this year. This included 186 people who identified as being concerned about their mental health, and 254 people identifying as isolated or lonely and who, by connecting with the Volunteer Centre, received the support they needed to volunteer.

Key Volunteering Events

Working with The Kensington and Chelsea Over 50s Forum, VCKC recruited and then coordinated a large group of volunteers at the Tea for the Queen event, enabling more than 400 older people from the local community to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with their peers. This involved recruiting and managing 118 volunteers from 3-5 June, covering set up days and the event itself. We looked after 20 more volunteers who showed up on the day, and ten Councillors. 80 Scouts and other uniformed volunteers gave their time alongside us.

One guest commented: *"I would have stayed alone at home, watching the celebrations on the TV with no one to speak to. Thank you for making my day so special in meeting people and having fun."*

We also received correspondence from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Elizabeth

Campbell: *"What an amazing turnout we had on Sunday at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and what a turnout of volunteers! Please could you thank them for me because they were absolutely brilliant"*. She went on to say: *"I know it was a huge amount of work both to organise and to deliver but you have given so much pleasure to so many people."*. We also received a number of really positive messages from volunteers who took part. Feedback from the participants and volunteers at the event was really positive, and there were also some valuable lessons learnt for future events.

In September 2022, following the death of Her Majesty the Queen, we recruited 50 local residents in double quick time to volunteer as hosts to help with the funeral arrangements in the borough, alongside Council staff.

We worked with our sister organisation, Kensington & Chelsea Social Council to deliver two Networking and Recruitment Fairs, on 25 February and 4 March, as part of the K&C Together week. The aim of these events was to allow local people, especially from groups least likely to be reflected in local VCS teams, to meet organisations looking for volunteers, trustees, or staff members. We recruited 13 local volunteers to participate alongside our paid staff, setting up, taking down, looking after visitors and running our own stall.

Supporting Volunteer-Involving Organisations

We worked with local volunteer-involving organisations throughout the year, giving advice on how to recruit and support volunteers and ensure that their placements are accessible, inclusive and safe. We also continued to offer volunteering health checks to organisations - helping to identify and develop the relevant policies and procedures that need to be in place for their volunteers.

In January, Liz delivered our first training session on Good Practice in Volunteer Management since the pandemic, in partnership with KCSC. It was a great success, and really well attended with 26 participants. The feedback was very encouraging - every atendee reported that they had benefited from participating and that they would recommend the course to others: *"I found the session to be very informative... and if I can be honest, it was probably the most enjoyable online training session that I have been a part of."*

At the end of her first year with the organisation Liz commented: *"I feel privileged to be working in this amazing borough and in this superb organisation, supporting the team to promote volunteering as a force for change and social good."*

Flexible Volunteer and Community Development

Street-based work, led until September 2022 by Outreach Officer, Terry Kabengele, had to be put on hold in the second part of the year. Initially, this was the result of the challenge of recruiting a new colleague to work part-time, including on Saturdays, to oversee our K&C Ambassadors project. Our three years of funding from the Kensington & Chelsea Foundation's Isolation and Loneliness programme came to an end in November, which encouraged us to sit down with our long-standing partners in the Council's Markets Office and re-focus on supporting Portobello Road and Golborne Road markets on Saturdays (more on that in next year's report). In the meantime, we didn't stop enabling people to volunteer for the first time in Kensington & Chelsea, and while our street-based work was on hiatus, our work with new arrivals continued, whether through intermediaries like the K&C Clothes Bank, or directly by recruiting people in the asylum system to volunteer with us. This cohort experiences poor mental health at a level that is far higher than the general population, as a result of the experiences that have driven them to leave their country of origin, their journey to the UK, and the poor conditions they experience once they arrive. Months or years living in a hotel room, uncertain whether they will be accepted as refugees or not, is another major driver of mental ill-health, which for many, especially those arriving without family and friends, is exacerbated by loneliness and isolation. Not everyone wants to take part in community life as a volunteer, and not everyone is ready, but everyone is welcome, and we are proud to help.





Meet Adam, one of our Volunteer Market Ambassadors!

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

The Community Champions programme recruits and supports volunteers to improve awareness of Public Health campaigns, strengthen healthy behaviours and identify barriers to health and wellbeing in the places they live. They work together, and in partnership with public services, to develop ways to overcome these barriers and deliver sustainable solutions to health, housing and social care issues. Champions show how local people can work with statutory services and voluntary organisations to improve outcomes.

The Volunteer Centre's Community Champions project, led by Ewa Kasjanowicz, our Community Champions Manager, working with the residents of Lancaster West and Silchester estates in Notting Dale ward, is one of six across Kensington and Chelsea. Here, Ewa gives an overview of the year.

Our Neighbourhood

"So much is happening here" is a phrase we often hear from those who are new to Notting Dale. In this densely populated area with a close knit, active community supported by many local projects and organisations, it is actually quite challenging to keep up with all the local initiatives, events and activities.

The area has long had high rates of poverty and inequity, a key factor in the Grenfell fire, changing the lives of many in the most dramatic ways. In these circumstances it is not surprising that there is a lot of political awareness and activism amongst Notting Dale residents. It is humbling to see how the community comes together to face adversity, often despite a vast complexity of local relationships.

After the fire and then the Covid-19 pandemic, residents and those who support them are now dealing with falling incomes as prices rise, which has a devastating impact on the already strained finances of many people. Not having enough to meet basic needs is frightening and community support is just as important at such times as public services.

This is just part of the pressure on people's mental wellbeing. The impact of the fire is still a huge factor, but there are also everyday challenges that build up over time. Health, relationships, housing, money. There are many initiatives trying to address these issues, some more successful than others, but the problem remains and most residents asked about local challenges talk first about housing and mental health.

Whatever we say about Notting Dale, it will never be 100% accurate and reflective of all

points of view, simply because the area is very diverse. What we know for sure is that working there is an extremely rewarding experience and we feel privileged to be able to support the local community.

Our Work

In 2022-2023 our project had 18 Community and Maternity Champions volunteers, who together completed 936 volunteering hours, reaching 2,027 residents.

Our team ran a variety of free regular activities, such as women-only yoga classes, outdoor walking and exercise sessions, meditation and chair-based exercise classes (delivered in partnerships with AgeUK K&C).
In the summer we supported two trips, to Bournemouth and Margate. In the winter we visited some local attractions such as the Gate Theatre, London Coliseum, Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Palace and Hampton Court. As strong as the local community can be, it's important to its members' health to be enabled to experience the world beyond, and to do so with pride and self-belief.

We delivered our part of the Community Protects campaign around Covid-19 prevention as well as the Right Care one, focused on making the most of available NHS services, and starting with the most appropriate one for the particular need. The campaigns were delivered in interesting ways that reflected local priorities and interests, for example through quizzes that the Champions ran with residents during local community events.

Maternity Champions delivered local buggy walks for parents of young children, each ending with a nice coffee and a chat to help develop mutual support networks and promote those feelings of normality and being in control that can seem elusive when you have a new child, especially if it's your first. They also supported Magic Mums at Rugby Portobello Trust, offered breastfeeding peer support and promoted sustainability at their Nappy Natters and Baby Stuff Swap event. Before Christmas, they were busy distributing toys, gifted to us by SMART, to local children.

As always, we did a lot of signposting, this year mainly in the context of increasing poverty. We helped residents get debt advice, Council Tax support, warm spaces, free meals and other forms of very practical assistance. Employability services were very much in demand, too. One side effect of this increasing crisis was a new language to talk about poverty, and lenses to look at it as a systemic, structural problem rather than an individual one, which seems to have reduced stigma and made

it easier to both ask for, and offer, help.

Our weekly clothes upcycling class for women and girls was this year's highlight. Set up as a way of promoting sustainable fashion, it became a safe and supportive space for sharing, and for intergenerational connections. Participants found the sewing and embellishing very calming and therapeutic, and the whole atmosphere of the sessions just let the conversations flow. This became the most important outcome of the project, though not something that was initially included in our planning. It showed us once again that, if we provide the basic safe and welcoming space, groups can grow organically towards whatever light makes sense for them. Everyone is both a giver and a receiver, which changes the 'user' and 'provider' dynamics for the better.

Our Role

One of the aims of the new Place-Based Partnership model of health collaboration is to deliver services in a new, more community-friendly way. If Champions projects work best when they undermine 'user' and 'provider' roles in favour of community-led mutual support, where do they fit in this new collaboration? Our work backs and complements service delivery in many ways, and we see ourselves as a network of connectors. Sometimes we connect people and services, and sometimes we connect people with each other by providing time and space for them to meet and start talking. When we help people join activities or receive assistance, we don't mean sharing a leaflet; we mean picking them up from their doorstep and going with them on their journey. Part of our role is to know what is happening and to offer a level of granularity with which decision-makers are often not familiar. By sharing our insights with our Public Health and NHS colleagues, little by little we influence both big decisions and everyday practice.

Everything we do is based on relationships, underpinned by trust and respect. These relationships have taken years to build and we see them as a huge asset, enabling us to promote prevention and early intervention, to residents and decision-makers, without stereotyping either local people or professionals. Working on a small scale, we are well positioned to take risks and try new approaches to improve results.





Case Studies

"I have found the upcycling group to be an emotionally nourishing, joyful activity. A space where a touch of magic happens each week. I do not think the benefits of this group should be underestimated. There is a subtle yet powerful therapeutic and connective element to this activity held with wisdom by the facilitators, Isis and Ilaria. From the outset there is no pressure to engage, simply an invitation to turn up as yourself, be and get creative in whatever form that shows up as. I've witnessed people spanning all ages conversing, sharing their experiences, working independently yet sitting side by side supporting each other, hearing each other. It seems the people who attend this group are invested in their special creative projects, the generosity of the facilitators and look forwards to this group every weekday evening. It is uplifting and joyful to see others who might experience isolation in the community come together, be welcomed, and have the opportunity to be part of a micro community such as this - in this I can see that it may offer a special subtle life line weaving together to work through loneliness, share stories through the medium of material, kindness and togetherness."

- "L" (a local resident)

"Attending the buggy walk was the highlight of my week. It allowed me to get out of the house with my toddler and enjoy the fresh air outside (...) I was also pregnant when attending these walks and they gave me much needed exercise. Most importantly, seeing the other mums and spending time with them has been amazing. Drinks and snacks at Panella were the perfect ending to our walks. It was an opportunity to sit down and rest, bond with the other mums and share experiences. A huge thank you for making the walks so enjoyable. Your presence and attitude made the buggy walk what it is. We all shared many laughs and interesting conversations. I look forward to returning in spring with my daughter and new son."

- "S" (a local resident)

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

"Whilst in my previous hostel, I was working in a restaurant in East London. I found it difficult finding work local to me and I was struggling with the commute to work, finances as well as the physical and mental strain I took on. I opened up to Jaya about my situation and from that moment on, she consistently supported, encouraged and gave me hope that I would find a job that I enjoyed, local to my living address. Jaya also sent me several local job opportunities, until I finally found a receptionist role at a fantastic children, youth and family community centre."

- "N" (a local resident)

"When I started going to Jaya's yoga classes, I was dealing with dehumanizing conditions, abuse, discrimination and racism at the hostel lived in at the time. Starting yoga classes with Jaya became a lifeline, as it was a place that I could reconnect with myself and feel like a human being again. Jaya's teaching style, allowed for me to define my own journey in yoga and take time in getting to know my body again and getting to appreciate what my body could accomplish in a yoga class. Jaya was a light in my life, in a time when I was not conscious of my surroundings due to the stress, anxiety and depression I was facing. Jaya's classes where always a gateway for me to connect to the community, her classes where inclusive and a range of members of the community from different backgrounds, who like myself, had not had the privilege of attending yoga classes before. Jaya's classes, discussions and affirmations connected us students together and reminded us that we are brothers and sisters in the community and highlighted the significance of us empowering ourselves through our yoga and meditation practices."

- "K" (a local resident)

SPECIALIST SERVICES

We set out below, on page 19, our plans for integrating our "casework" activities into a single multidisciplinary team with the aim of improving outcomes for local people, creating an even more effective working environment for our team, and reducing risk. We report here on the work of the three programmes that are the subject of this restructuring process - Wellbeing, InsideOut, and Employment.

Wellbeing

Our Wellbeing team provides an ongoing, comprehensive package of support to clients, tailored to each individual's needs, designed and delivered with them. Training, workshops, community events and other types of group work run in parallel with one-to-one support. We work on individual development plans, build skills and support recovery through tailored volunteering placements. Clients are able to work together to evaluate and improve the programme, and contribute to designing and delivering activities for other clients.

Holistic learning in a supportive community environment enables clients to engage on their terms. Each client is different and every success counts, whether this is trying something new, learning a new fact or skill, building relationships, or starting a longer-term placement. With our incredible volunteers, we are developing new connections with clients who are otherwise often isolated from civil society and community organisations.

We work with people who have mental health needs or are physically or learning disabled. Many participants have diverse support needs; most live in Kensington and Chelsea, a few in its immediate environs. We receive referrals from a network of partners, including GPs, social prescribing link workers, VCS organisations, Adult Social Care, and local NHS mental health trusts, as well as accepting self-referrals.

Through VCKC, clients are enabled to develop their soft and workplace skills, improve their knowledge and confidence, reduce isolation and improve their social networks. They can also increase their independence, secure volunteering placements and some are able to work towards paid employment. This year we supported 138 disabled people and people with mental health needs.

We work in partnership to help build the capacity of not-for-profit organisations to engage and support volunteers with additional needs and to create and adjust opportunities for them. Earlier this year, we organised a volunteering open evening for the Natural History Museum at the Volunteer Centre, so that volunteering opportunities

at the Museum would be more accessible to the local community. As a result, some of our Wellbeing clients signed up and are now volunteering at the Museum.

Since the start of the pandemic we have worked with a growing number of clients who are experiencing increasing poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness, making it harder for them to improve their health and to maintain their involvement in the programmes. Our team has developed their knowledge and skills in providing practical support to clients in these circumstances, and in connecting them to sources of relevant expertise, which helps them maintain their process of recovery while addressing their other needs.

The Wellbeing programme is delivered by our Wellbeing Coordinator, Louisa Schepes, and our Wellbeing Officer, Etty Dunn-Howe. The programme was supported this year by the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, the North West London NHS Integrated Care Board (via Kensington & Chelsea Social Council), and Julia and Hans Rausing.

This year we have also started to target young disabled residents of Kensington and Chelsea, and those with mental health needs, with employability support. This new programme, which we call Supported Access, includes developing personalised progress plans centred on employment goals, to make the transition to paid work. Local people aged 16-25 take part in their choice of CV and interview workshops, one-to one-support, and help with finding suitable volunteering, work and training opportunities.







Our Wellbeing programme activities include:

- **Welfare check calls:** We offer welfare calls, texts and emails to clients who feel isolated and/or anxious

- **Volunteering Placements**: We match clients to tailored and supportive volunteering placements with external organisations. We also create opportunities within our own organisation for people to volunteer. This involves taking time to work with clients to develop an idea, and then to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence, backed with ongoing supervision. Opportunities with volunteer-involving organisations are only slowly returning to pre-pandemic levels, nonetheless we are pleased to have facilitated 73 volunteering placements this year for disabled people and people with mental health needs

- **Wellbeing and Self-Care Workshops:** Our programme of Wellbeing and Self-Care workshops connects us with partner organisations to develop and deliver joint sessions of different kinds. We deliver workshops to help build self-care skills and improve mental health, such as Understanding Anxiety, Wellbeing in Nature, and Mindfulness and Relaxation Tips

- **Social and Creative Workshops and Trips:** To counteract our clients' isolation and anxiety, we offer creative and social workshops, including our evening Wellbeing Art workshops. Our trips to accessible opera performances at the English National Opera and Opera Holland Park were particularly popular this year, and also provided informal opportunities for people to meet and for us to have informal chats around wellbeing and self-care, which are often more fruitful than formal approaches

- **Gardening Group:** We offer a gardening group in partnership with W11, the Lancaster West estate team. Wellbeing volunteers help to keep a community space welcoming and beautiful while learning about plants and gardening techniques from an experienced gardener. This is also an opportunity for people to get to know each other and build connections in a positive, safe, supportive environment

- **Wellbeing for Interviews Workshops:** Last year, Etty created a series of workshops with a self-care approach to job hunting and interviews, focussing on confidence building and stress management, delivered face-to-face at the Volunteer Centre. This year we have delivered these workshops in partnership with our friends at the Playground Theatre

- **Digital Connection Support:** We are able to provide some of our clients with smart phones and/or internet access. We also provide clients with help over the phone and face-to-face to use their phones, tablets and laptops to access and use email, Zoom and Microsoft Teams, to access information, attend appointments, and to stay in touch with friends and family

- **Wellbeing Walks**: Mindfulness in Nature walks, group walks in local parks and along the canal, and with Summer picnics, helping to keep people connected to the programme and each other, and to encourage their ownership of the programme

- **Other support:** Phone calls to those with additional mental health needs to provide them with self-care tips, build resilience and help them keep engaged with counselling services, and also to remind them to attend activities they have expressed an interest in; signposting and forward referrals, for example, to advice agencies for housing and debt case work, and to talking therapy

Wellbeing Case Study

C was first referred in June 2021 to the Wellbeing team's programme. She experiences complex PTSD and ADHD, along with disabling pain in her shoulders and knees which can be incapacitating at times. She often felt extremely distressed and isolated, and was looking for social connection, meaningful activity and emotional support. She wanted to engage with activities outside of her therapy sessions to build her resilience and stability.

During the Pandemic, when many of the workshops were virtual to protect vulnerable clients from the virus, C led some of Wellbeing's online Cook and Chat workshops from her kitchen. She taught a group to make a regional dish that she grew up with. She also took part in Wellbeing's online art workshops. C shared with the group during one of these virtual art workshops how art was helping her during lockdown, showing us sketches she had drawn to express difficult emotions. This sparked healthy conversations around different strategies the group were using and helped people to make new connections. C shared afterwards that learning to draw the Mandalas in particular were a great way to de-stress, the repetitive patterns offering a welcome distraction that felt calming.

When the lockdown restrictions eased, C started to attend our Wellbeing programme of wellbeing walks and trips, including a trip to the London Wetlands Centre for their

Wellbeing training, and to Holland Park Opera for a special relaxed performance and sensory tour.

C teaches part-time, and while we were first working with her, she was experiencing some difficulties at work with some challenging relationship dynamics. One aspect of the Wellbeing program C has benefitted from is the opportunity to talk through these issues over the phone. We have also helped to make a referral for art therapy. C has also received some one-to-one support from Wellbeing to apply for her Personal Independence Payments (PIP) to supplement her part time work, as her mental health and physical disability means she is unable to work full time. Receiving this benefit was a great reassurance for C, who had been experiencing food poverty, to the detriment of her mental and physical health. C is now excelling in her paid position, supporting children and young adults with disabilities with their IT skills. Receiving these payments has also helped C to engage with and excel in her volunteering positions.

It is now C's second year as a client working with the Wellbeing programme. Through the ongoing support of the Wellbeing team C has taken on two long term volunteering placements that are invaluable to the Kensington and Chelsea community.

C is a regular volunteer at the Goldfinger Trust's People's Kitchen project and has progressed to become an integral part of the meal preparation team, helping to prepare food and set up a free meal for isolated residents to share together at the Panella restaurant at the base of the Trellick Tower. C's second placement involves advising a community organisation on their allotment for young adults with disabilities. In this role, C has helped to set up a garden which is helping to teach their service users about plants, sustainability and healthy eating. C is quickly taking on more responsibility in this role, also helping to support the organisation's events and educational workshops.

C is a great example of how wellbeing support can empower adults with physical and mental health disabilities to contribute to their community, in turn providing wellbeing support for others from a place of understanding and empathy.

C shares: *"Being part of Wellbeing at the Volunteer Centre has meant that I can work. And it is also very important to me that I can work without taking medication for my mental health. I realised during the pandemic that I was so isolated and needed help. Although I have lived in Kensington for many years, I knew almost nobody. That is when I reached out to the Volunteer Centre. The most important thing for me is to be able to feel part of a community. I never had that before I joined Wellbeing at the Volunteer Centre. Now, there are places where I can go that people know me, and I have fulfilment and responsibility and am understood."*

Inside Out

Our resettlement programme, InsideOut, funded by the Henry Smith charity until 2025, helps people with criminal convictions re-integrate into the local community. We prioritise ex-offenders with complex needs and at higher risk once released from custody, including older people, those living with addiction, institutionalised offenders, and people with mental health issues. We offer a tailored, one-to-one service - every client makes a Personal Development Plan, identifying their needs and the personal and professional goals they want to achieve. With the support we provide, clients gain skills, knowledge and confidence, access to a wide range of essential services, volunteering, work experience and employment, and so increase their capacity to re-integrate into their local community.

Our InsideOut Coordinator, Jason Hudson, has worked closely with the staff of HMPS Downview this year, helping support women leaving custody, completing Through the Gate interventions for some of those with the most complex needs. This includes escorting them to their Probation office and, in many cases, taking them to their local Job Centre Plus. This has given Jason lots of experience of the increasing barriers faced by those leaving custody homeless, and of the ineffectiveness of some of the services that are responsible for supporting people at risk in the community on the day of their release.

InsideOut also introduced the hairdressing salon chain Headmasters to the established HMPS Downview styling programme, where women are trained to a professional hair care standard, getting them ready to work in the community. Headmasters' Head of Recruitment and Chief Operating Officer attended the salon inside HMPS Downview and were amazed to see the standard of training the women were receiving. They spent the afternoon discussing working options with the women in the salon, and Headmasters offered three women paid Release on Temporary License placements in the community. This was a massive success and the prison have now asked InsideOut to do the same for Downview's beauty salon!

Jason maintained regular contact with all our InsideOut clients and provided a lot of emotional support. In addition to tackling isolation and loneliness amongst our clients, Jason also helped them focus on practical activities like updating and improving their CVs. Disclosure advice was as important as ever, as some clients have no knowledge of the process for disclosing their offences, but cannot make progress towards paid work and independence without taking this fundamental step.

Training opportunities have increased a lot this year, but we have also seen an increase

in clients requiring food bank referrals, financial support, and those turning down job opportunities because they wouldn't earn enough to cover their rent and other living cost (some getting into so much debt that they lose their home). As a result, we are seeing an increase in the number of clients looking for part-time positions so they would still be entitled to Housing Benefit.

Other support included holding mock interviews to get clients used to the recruitment process, signing them up with GPs, referrals for clients with mental ill-health due to compounding factors like poverty, Universal Credit cuts, and increasing energy costs. Ensuring all clients have key documents like birth certificates and driving licences, enabling them to claim welfare benefits, secure paid and unpaid work, and connect to further support. Various Prison Service resettlement teams, wing officers, and offender managers are making referrals to InsideOut for help with offenders who are homeless at their time of release. Referral pathways have been established and improved with organisations including CRC, NHS OXLEAS Foundation Trust, Turning Point, North West London NHS, and the Forward Trust.

Inside Out Case Study

MZ was referred to InsideOut from HMPS Downview. She was sent to prison for three and a half years after taking part in a street robbery. When I met with MZ she had been studying to be a seamstress in custody and had clearly found her talent and passion. HMPS Downview is an unusually resettlement-focused prison, and thanks to some of the senior officers, many of the facilities and programmes give the detained there a real chance of living better independent lives upon release. When MZ was released from custody she was confident in her skills, but afraid that her criminal record would prevent her from making a new start in her chosen career. Together, we looked at her circumstances realistically and agreed on a plan. MZ wanted to start her own clothing range, but that would take time, some luck and months of hard work. We started off with a disclosure letter that would allow her to apply for admin jobs whilst pursuing her dream. We worked on her CV, creating several formats so that MZ could customise them to her applications. After about a week MZ was already attending interviews, but didn't feel like she had the confidence to discuss her convictions. We did some mock interviews and supported her with other exercises until she was comfortable in explaining the circumstances that led to her conviction to potential employers. This really built her confidence and took some of the nerves away when she was interviewing. Then finally, four job applications in, MZ was offered a job as a receptionist for a local housing organisation.

MZ is still working with InsideOut and receiving ongoing support, taking steady steps towards her dream of starting her own business.

Employment

The sudden passing of our colleague and Head of Employability, Ola Omikunle, on 27 April 2022, affected us all and we endeavoured to support one another and honour her memory. The team, and particularly our Office Systems Coordinator, Mohamud Mohamud, stepped forward to communicate the news to our Employability clients (many of whom had known Ola, and received intensive support from her, over years) and to help as many of them as possible to reach their next goal or milestone. We received considerable support in this, and a good deal of flexibility, from our colleagues at Campden Charities, led by Mandy Ala, their Grants Director. Mandy had worked closely with Ola for longer than almost everyone in our team. Campden Charities have continued to provide generous support to us and the programme during this challenging period of change.

While putting our clients first, we also agreed as a team that we should take the chance to reflect on Ola's practice, the way that had shaped Employability over many years, and how we might learn from our experiences further to improve results for our clients in the longer term. This review also considered the delivery, from August 2022, of a new Council contract to shape pathways to employment for young disabled people, young learning-disabled people, and young people with poor mental health (see Supported Access in Wellbeing section above). The section of this report covering our plans for restructuring our specialist services gives more detail about our reflective process and conclusions.

Employment Case Study

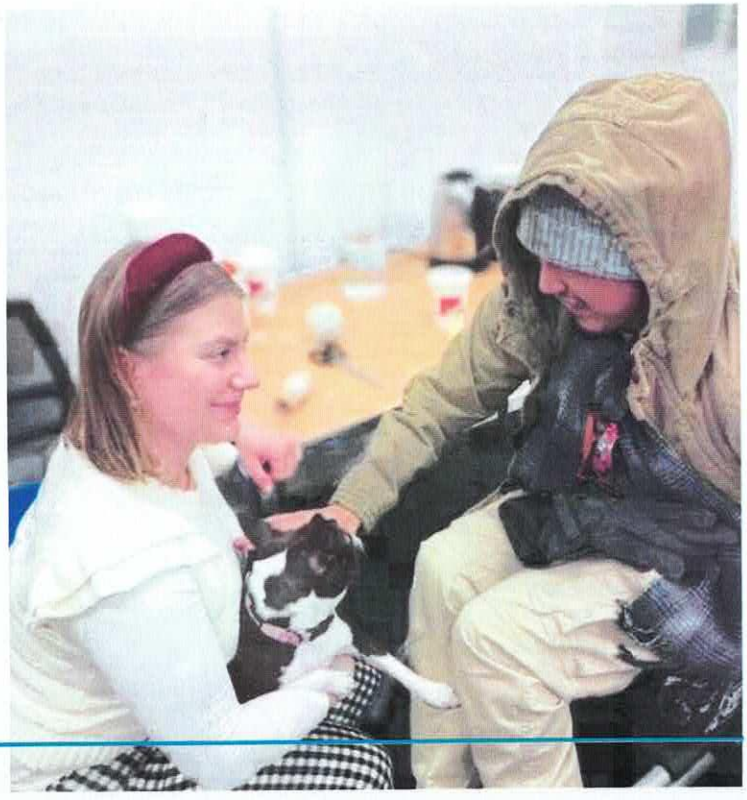
S moved to the UK from Europe in 2015 with her husband and her new-born son. She came to the Volunteer Centre at the end of February 2022 - she wanted help finding employment working as a teaching assistant, and planned to work with Ola. Unfortunately, S didn't have the qualifications in Childcare that she would need, or a CV, as she didn't feel that she could build a compelling CV using only her experience as a full-time mother. S began working with Jason after Ola passed away. They worked on her CV, then approached a number of primary schools in Kensington and Chelsea, sending the CV and a cover letter to see if they would support S as a voluntary teaching assistant whilst she studied a work-based qualification (NVQ) funded by VCKC. None of the schools we approached were willing to give S the chance she needed to get into the career that would allow her to manage two young children whilst working in line with her vocation.

S really needed to find employment, as her family was struggling financially, so we changed our approach. We focused on getting S employed in a retail company that would allow S to secure a paid role that was flexible enough that she could work while her two children were at school. Jason told S about a jobs fair taking place in Shepherd's Bush. She went along and spoke to staff from Lacoste, who were very impressed with her CV and how she presented herself. They offered her a part-time role working around her husband's schedule and child care.

This was a great short-term fix, S did some research and found a funded level one childcare qualification. S has come back to Jason for continued support in finding her a teaching assistant role.

"Thank you some much for all of your support and time continuing to supporting me!"

- "S" (a local resident)



An Employment Support Hub Meeting

INFRASTRUCTURE

Recent crises in our borough, including the Grenfell Tower fire, the pandemic, three distinct rounds of new arrivals, and the sharply increased inflation and poverty of the last two years, have highlighted the critical role of small informal groups/networks and charities in identifying and meeting needs quickly, resulting in an increased reliance of statutory services on them. This has in turn increased the importance of the Volunteer Centre's role as a local infrastructure organisation, with statutory services asking us to participate in the coordination of crisis responses involving these groups, while helping them to make sure they have their basic volunteering systems in place, including volunteering policies, safeguarding practice, and training). VCKC was particularly active in two areas this year: Cost of Living and New Arrivals

The Grenfell Tower Fire

The immediate and longer-term effects of the disaster at Grenfell Tower from the limited perspective of VCKC are described in previous annual reports, and in much broader and more comprehensive terms in "A Journey of Recovery", the Public Health report following the fire. The period of this report includes the fifth anniversary of the fire, and key stages of the public enquiry. The disaster response literature makes clear this period of time after a disaster is often very hard on those directly affected, the wider community, and the people trying to provide support to those people.

The trustees are conscious at all times of the need to act transparently, with compassion, and to take as much time and flexibility as necessary to deliver value for money, to those affected directly by the fire, the wider community, and the public in general, as well as to specific funders. The Volunteer Centre has a continuing role in supporting community advocates and their voluntary involvement in the strategic and tactical response to the fire, in the social and economic context in which the fire happened. This includes the demands of local people that money allocated and spent in the name of those affected by the disaster should deliver value for money to those affected, and that it should be spent in a way that improves their long-term outcomes, and their ability to direct and improve their own lives for years to come.

Cost Of Living

In August, our CEO, Michael Ashe, agreed to chair a newly created workstream of the Community Resilience Group, the multi-sector coordination space we helped establish in March 2020 to respond to the pandemic. This new sub-group focused on the combination of rising costs and shrinking incomes which has been dubbed the Cost of Living Crisis, as poverty and inequality rose sharply nationwide. We have referred in

previous annual reports to the social determinants of health and the effect they have on people's ability to maintain a normal existence, including their ability to give their care and time to people around them as volunteers, to manage long-term health conditions, secure paid work, and avoid isolation and loneliness.

Meeting fortnightly, the Cost of Living group (CoL) has explored a number of delivery models, electing ultimately to build on the capacity of a small number of existing food banks and connecting them with advice services, recording all the interactions and feedback from people using the services to see what difference the approach was making and for whom. The action of the CoL partnership was supported by many others, including our colleague from Kensington and Chelsea Social Council, Catherine Watling, who coordinated the borough's food banks and the major food donors – Felix Project and City Harvest – or schemes such as Cash First initiative, jointly funded by the K&C Foundation and RBKC.

The CoL worked in partnership with RBKC to hold a Cost of Living Summit in December, co-chaired by their Director of Communities, Moira Ugoji, and our CEO. By bringing together multi-sector partners, and attended by the Council's new Chief Executive, Maxine Holdsworth, and their lead member for Communities, Sof McVeigh, the Summit was a chance to emphasise the centrality of poverty and inequality as key to resident outcomes, the necessity of a partnership approach to tackle structural problems, and the importance of the voluntary sector in bringing people and institutions together in a common effort.

New Arrivals

Our work with people in the asylum system, and with a range of other groups newly arrived in the UK because of a crisis in their country of origin, changed again this year. Owing to differences in funding streams, the successful multi-sector borough response to the Afghan evacuation was unfortunately not replicated to address the arrival of large numbers of Ukrainians in our borough, drawn in particular to the trusted Ukrainian Social Club and St Mary's Supplementary School, which are located in K&C.

After months of helping to chair and coordinate multi-sector meetings around these new arrivals, and with the capacity of parts of the local authority lower than the voluntary sector at times, we found that we could not sustain our involvement and had to step back from our role, after discussions with RBKC and VCS colleagues and Ukrainian volunteers. We continued to support the K&C Clothes Bank and other groups helping newly arrived Ukrainians, and we provided insight to statutory decision-makers.

This was not a step that we took lightly, but we note with satisfaction that the Council has now addressed this under-resourced situation, investing substantially in a new "No Recourse to Public Funds" team and providing capacity to work directly in hotels and with newly arrived populations and the community organisations supporting them.

Restructuring

The Volunteer Centre has grown organically from its core brokerage offer in response to the demands of local people and organisations, within the constraints of the funding available, since it opened in 1969. As described above in the Specialist Services section, we now have three projects - InsideOut, Employment and Wellbeing, which target people with relatively complex requirements. All three share a methodology (the creation and implementation of a development plan with the client, built around volunteering and experiential learning, backed by an offer of practical support that includes training, mentoring, coaching and advice) and expect to work with most of their clients over a period of months.

The combination of events described under Employment in this report enabled us to give more consideration this year to a multi-disciplinary structure for case work programmes (outside of Community Champions) which would increase opportunities for joined-up working and enhance the resilience of our organisation. We instigated a process of collective reflection which resulted in the decision not to appoint a Head of Employment to succeed our departed colleague. Instead, we decided to recruit an Employment Officer to meet our contractual obligations and minimise disruption. We will report next year on the design and implementation of the new multi-disciplinary Specialist Services team.

When we considered the future of our specialist services, we also looked at the effectiveness and efficiency of other parts of the organisation. This led to a review of the Communications function, and a consultation on the size of the role. When it was agreed to reduce the role to a part-time one, reflecting the resources available and our communications priorities, the full-time role became redundant and our long-serving Communications Lead, Eunice Ackerson, left for pastures new. Moska Saidy joined us to make the transition to the part-time Communications role and brought her own innovative approach to the post, going from strength to strength in the second half of the year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Charity's income was £533,752 in the year ended 31 March 2023 (£491,840, 31 March 2022). The total expenditure was £487,100 in the year to 31 March 2023 (£506,669, 31 March 2022). The general fund balance (unrestricted funds) carried forward on the 31 March 2023 was £246,945, whilst £20,300 of restricted funds were also carried forward. This compares to an unrestricted balance of £209,038 carried forward on 31 March 2022, and a restricted balance of £11,555.

As trustees we take seriously our responsibility to deploy the funds we hold in trust in support of our charitable objectives. As set out in detail in the earlier sections of our report, a key challenge this year has been filling professional vacancies for which we had secured funding. This is the principal cause of the increase in both our restricted and unrestricted reserves. A significant amount of our restricted reserve represents funds received from RBKC for the delivery of our Supported Access project, some milestones of which we were not able to meet because of these professional vacancies. We set out below our developing approach to mitigating this risk. We remain committed to investing in our capacity to deliver our charitable objectives, in particular in our people, but also our systems and resources, and will designate funds accordingly as appropriate.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board reviews risks to the effective operation and sustainability of the Volunteer Centre regularly, assessing the major risks that the charity is exposed to at the finance committee meeting prior to every trustee meeting as we address existing (or identify new) risks. The risk register is updated at least twice annually and appropriate systems and procedures are established to mitigate the internal and external risks that the charity faces. Our policies are updated to reflect internal processes and legal and regulatory changes as and when they occur. Our core policies - safeguarding, data protection - are reviewed annually and our others at least every other year. Outside of disaster response, principal risks and mitigation strategies are:

Staff Recruitment

Along with many employers in Kensington and Chelsea, the Volunteer Centre is facing a difficult recruitment market. We are therefore seeking to capitalise on the success of recent new hires, paying particular attention to candidate targeting, the attractiveness of the position being offered and the activation of personal networks. We will also consider the use, as appropriate, of short-term contracts and intermediaries like recruitment agencies in order to mitigate this risk. We recognise that there is a balance to be struck between adapting our recruitment practice in order to reduce disincentives to applicants and the need to ensure we follow processes that ensure equality of opportunity and safe recruitment.

Core and Programme Funding

The Volunteer Centre maintains good working relationships with a range of current and prospective funders, building mutual understanding and helping to identify shared objectives. The Board's sub-committee charged with the co-ordination of the development of funding convenes in advance of, and reports its work to the trustees at, each full Board meeting.

System capacity to deliver the information necessary to enable managers and trustees to perform effectively

The Volunteer Centre gathers data on its performance from regular monitoring of its work with clients, from periodic generation of case-studies based on client and staff experience, from surveys of staff and trustees, and from its routine financial processes. It retains this data (in compliance with its regulatory obligations) and reports it internally to staff and trustees, and externally to funders, regulators and the wider public (again subject to compliance with regulatory obligations). The Volunteer Centre

is currently simplifying and integrating its systems, and investing in resources to support this process.

Succession Planning

The Volunteer Centre regularly reviews its organisational structure to promote collaboration between all programmes and organisational resilience. Following the successful recruitment of an Operations Manager, central record keeping practice (including supervision and appraisal) has been enhanced as have our processes to give easy access to information to all staff, including more individual empowerment for decision making.

Disintermediation and changes in the volunteering environment

As noted above, our data, and that of national and regional actors in volunteering, suggests that there has been a fundamental shift in regular volunteering post pandemic, with many older people not returning to volunteer, many younger people not yet volunteering regularly, and many potential volunteers seeking much more flexible or specific roles in order to manage constraints in their lives like work, childcare, and education. One-off and event-based volunteer numbers have recovered much more quickly post-pandemic, emphasising the importance of flexibility to volunteers, and perhaps also reflecting the nature of much of the pandemic volunteering. With the Cost of Living crisis, financial barriers to volunteering have also become more apparent.

In mitigation, the Volunteer Centre has made considerable structural improvement to its communications planning, with greater clarity of objectives and audiences, better matching of audiences to channels, and regularity of content, all of which enable our Communications Officer and wider team to be more proactive and to take opportunities at a hyper-local level. We are more methodical in platforming our partners and ensuring we have mutually supportive endorsements. Next steps include developing the capacity of our Core team to adapt further the range and accessibility of local volunteering placements.

Safeguarding

We note that changes in the external environment have led to more clients reporting thoughts, intentions or abuse which our policies and procedures mandate we deal with

as safeguarding incidents. Responding appropriately to each incident is often intensive and urgent work, which can be very challenging for our small team. Both staff and trustees have received additional training around safeguarding, our policy has been externally audited by colleagues from our local authority safeguarding team, and we have arranged monthly clinical supervision for the members of the team whose work frequently involves responsibility for cases with a significant safeguarding element. We are also involved in collective work on VCS Safeguarding capacity and practice with our VCS and statutory partners.

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE 31

Following a detailed Theory of Change development process set out in our previous report, the Volunteer Centre's strategy this year tracked the three outcomes derived from its mission, namely ensuring that volunteering is:

- Accessible to everyone
- Enriches the lives of volunteers
- Enriches our local community

This led us to four areas in which to concentrate our efforts:

1. Tailoring delivery in response to a mutual understanding of individual needs and circumstances
2. Meeting people and groups where they are in ways that prioritise and respect those with limited capacity
3. Developing and maintaining simple systems and tools that connect and combine easily and effectively
4. Making and taking opportunities for collaboration within our team

As demonstrated in this report, we have continued to make progress in the areas we identified last year:

a) An enhanced drive on identifying and collaboratively supporting people with barriers to volunteering
b) A more proactive approach to training identification and delivery through individual supervision

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE 32

c) More social opportunities, including with the trustees, to enrich the environment for internal collaboration
d) A collective process of systems development for the new CRM, integrating staff and trustees, keeping things simple and centring on effectiveness
e) Distribution of partnership development and outreach work across the whole team

RESERVES POLICY 32

The Board has examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be equal to at least 3 months of the charity's total expenditure. This reserve is intended to ensure that the charity can continue to operate in the event of an emergency, or a sudden cut in funding. The level of reserves available to the charity at 31 March 2023 was above the target. The Board keeps under review the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed, should circumstances require such action.

INVESTMENT POLICY 32

The unrestricted funds in reserve fluctuate and can be called upon temporarily to meet immediate cash flow needs. They are held in higher yield savings accounts with UK banks at levels protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

To achieve success in our multi-year strategy, we committed to five specific objectives:

- Develop our "Volunteer Journey" model to offer a tailored, flexible, personalised service to potential volunteers across all our programmes and provide them with opportunities with local organisations which correspond to their goals and needs. As our legacy systems for supporting client journey have become less useable, it has taken us more time to review and record our impact. Correcting this will be a very high priority for the year ahead, building on the selection of a digital system provider this year. Our 1:1 support for individual volunteers and organisations continues to be of a high standard, providing excellent qualitative feedback, but this needs to be supplemented, consistently and efficiently, with enhanced quantitative data to give us a clearer picture of our achievements and priorities for improvement.

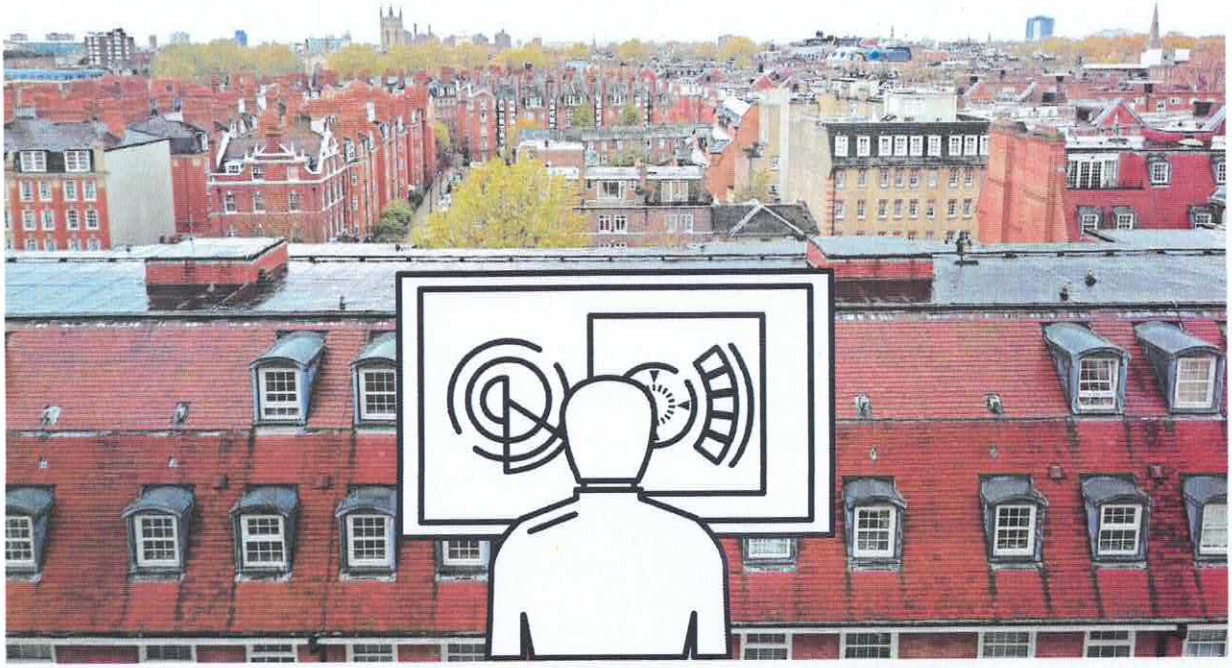
- Offer resources and training to, and develop and manage relationships with, local organisations to improve their capacity to involve volunteers and shape targeted and rewarding volunteer roles. Enhance connections with and between hyper-local organisations to this end. We made some concrete steps by re-starting direct training for our volunteer-involving partners, and we stepped up our 1:1 support to increase the number of volunteering roles as well as the accessibility of some of them. Our peer-group involvement, convening and facilitation work, raised our profile, generating more requests for volunteering support and more referrals.

- Continue to (i) offer dedicated long-term specialist support to ensure access for all to life changing experiences through volunteering and (ii) build a track record around employment and community contribution as a result of volunteering. Having made good progress in the previous year around employment, we found this year more difficult due to recruitment challenges. We promptly adapted our organisation structure, but our other services couldn't wholly make up for this gap in capacity. They continued to enable clients to overcome barriers to both volunteering and paid work in significant numbers, and influenced statutory services to take a more joined up approach, too.

- Provide volunteering best practice advice and training to individuals and organisations. Participate in local groups and forums, acting as an advocate of voluntary action as well as a connector, a facilitator of partnerships, a trusted intermediary and contributor to social capital. We are delighted to have been asked to take a leading role in the borough's response to the Cost of Living crisis, to have been able to bring our partners together to create shared recommendations around healthcare, to have facilitated the co-design of RBKC's

Service Standards, and most of all to have delivered our first best practice training course since the pandemic! We are proud of the many collaborations we are part of, learning with and from our peers and partners, and the opportunities thus created to tackle the structural barriers to wellbeing, access and inclusion.

- Aim to be a high trust learning environment, supported by accredited systems, with open communication and effective feedback between team members, such that Volunteer Centre team members understand their roles, how they connect to our strategy and feel motivated, supported and valued. Improving our appraisal process so that it connects more directly with our organisational strategy and objectives, and provides a systematic input to understand where team members are at, has helped us move this objective forward, as has the introduction of a digital HR system. Both staff and volunteer handbooks have been updated to further develop the systems to underpin our high trust culture. Team members have been encouraged and supported to take a leading role internally, and to represent the Volunteer Centre externally, demonstrating the organisation's trust in them



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND GOING CONCERN

At the time of writing this report, and having given consideration to internal and external factors, the financial position of the charity (including the level of its reserves), the ability to continue to raise sufficient funding for its operations, and the uncertain economic situation, the Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is financially sustainable and a going concern.

While inflation levels not seen in decades are making it harder to plan and to operate, the charity continues to attract funders thanks to the concrete benefits it brings to the local community. Some funders are also making adjustments for inflation. At the time of writing we expect to finish the year to 31 March 2024 with a surplus, partly on account of some extra fundraising successes and opportunities, but primarily because of delays in hiring as a result both of the organisational restructuring and a difficult recruitment market. The restructuring, when completed, will result in a more cohesive way of working and better results for local people and organisations.

Hiring is the primary risk to the organisation at the moment, as general recruitment market conditions as well as the high costs of living in London and the salary constraints of charities, are proving to be challenges in recruiting people of the right experience.

As mentioned above, we have a robust risk management process in place: we review the changes to the risk register at Board meetings twice each year at a minimum and update it as necessary as we address existing, or identify new, risks. Our core policies are updated to reflect internal processes and/or legal and regulatory changes, and reviewed at least annually.

We have robust processes in place to continue to offer services if there was to be another lockdown due to a pandemic or other unforeseen circumstance. The IT updates made in the last couple of years are making it possible for the team to work and interact with each other and with local people remotely.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also directors of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' Annual 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, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and 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;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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 auditor is 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 auditor is aware of that information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. Approved by the Board of Trustees on 13 December 2024 and signed on its behalf, by:

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan
Chair



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023, 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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 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 other information comprises the information included in the trustees report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the trustees report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of 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.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

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 trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report 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 directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which 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 directors' 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 prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 38, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance about actual and potential litigation or claims and the identification of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Auditing the risk of management override of controls, including testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- Professional scepticism in course of the audit and with audit sampling in material audit areas.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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

Use of our report

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

Stephen Jones FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Myrus Smith
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors
Norman House, 8 Burnell Road
Sutton, Surrey
SM1 4BW

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Income					
Donations and grants	2	300	-	300	49
Charitable activities	3	262,157	268,556	530,713	490,910
Investments	4	2,739	-	2,739	881
Total		265,196	268,556	533,752	491,840
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	5	176,413	306,687	483,100	506,669
Total		176,413	306,687	483,100	506,669
Net income/(expenditure)	9	88,783	(38,131)	50,652	(14,829)
Transfer between funds	14	(46,876)	46,876	-	-
Net movement in funds		41,907	8,745	50,652	(14,829)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	14	209,038	11,555	220,593	235,422
Total funds carried forward	14	£250,945	£20,300	£271,245	£220,593

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

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

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31ST MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible fixed assets	11		-		278
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	45,233		38,918	
Cash at bank and in hand		275,288		222,840	
		320,521		261,758	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	13	49,276		41,443	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			271,245		220,315
NET ASSETS	15		£271,245		£220,593
FUNDS					
Restricted	14		20,300		11,555
Unrestricted	14				
General Funds			247,389		204,038
Designated Funds			3,556		5,000
	14		£271,245		£220,593

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on **2023/12/13** and signed on its behalf by:



Anne-Helene Biosse Duplan – Chair

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net movement in funds		50,652	(14,829)
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation	9	278	279
Interest receivable	4	(2,739)	(881)
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors		(6,315)	(17,699)
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors		7,833	16,916
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities		49,709	(16,214)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received	4	2,739	881
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-	-
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities		2,739	881
Change in cash and cash equivalents		52,448	(15,333)
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward		222,840	238,173
Cash and cash equivalents carried forward		£275,288	£222,840
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents			
Cash at bank and in hand		£275,288	£222,840

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting
The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income recognition
Items of income are recognised in the financial statements when all of the following criteria are met:
- The charity has entitlement to the funds;
- Any performance conditions have been met or are fully within the control of the charity;
- There is sufficient certainty that receipt of the income is considered probable; and
- The amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure recognition
Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure on charitable activities comprises the costs associated with delivering volunteering services and activities.

Expenditure includes those costs of a direct nature which can be allocated to a specific activity. It also includes indirect costs, including governance costs that do not relate to a specific activity but are necessary to support those activities. Support costs are apportioned on the basis of staff time.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted general funds are freely available for use in furtherance of the objects of the charity and which have not been designated for particular purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside by the trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which can only be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor or which have been raised for a particular purpose.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation
Tangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. Depreciation is provided so as to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life at the following annual rates:

Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line
Computer equipment	25% straight line

Leases
Operating lease rentals are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Pensions
The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable under the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year to which they relate.

Debtors and creditors
Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
/contd...

DONATIONS AND GRANTS	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
Donations	£300	£Nil	£300	£49

All of the £49 recognised in 2022 related to unrestricted funds.

INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Volunteer Brokerage				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	133,287	-	133,287	128,287
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	-	-	-	6,328
The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation	11,667	-	11,667	-
National Lottery Awards For All	-	-	-	-
Consulting and training fees	1,607	-	1,607	1,000
Camden Charities	3,120	-	3,120	-
Employment				
Camden Charities	60,000	-	60,000	108,000
Well-being				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	-	30,000	30,000	30,000
Tudor Trust	-	-	-	30,000
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	-	46,268	46,268	43,841
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	-	7,500	7,500	-
Other	-	-	-	1,000
Resettlement Scheme				
City Bridge Trust	-	-	-	35,500
Henry Smith	-	51,600	51,600	-
Charles Hayward	-	10,000	10,000	-
Ambassadors				
Kensington & Chelsea Foundation	-	-	-	28,333
Good Neighbours				
Community Champions				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	52,476	24,000	76,476	56,000
Kensington & Chelsea Social Council	-	11,554	11,554	6,026
West London Clinical Commissioning Group	-	-	-	5,000
Training and Consultancy	-	-	-	-
Other	-	2,884	2,884	1,002
Covid Related Grants	-	-	-	10,593
SEND Volunteering Project				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	-	84,750	84,750	-
	£262,157	£268,556	£530,713	£490,910

Of the £490,910 recognised in 2022, £301,208 related to unrestricted funds and £189,702 to restricted funds.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
/contd...

4. INVESTMENT INCOME	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
Bank interest	£2,739	£Nil	£2,739	£881

All of the £881 received in 2022 related to unrestricted funds.

5. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Direct costs	Support costs	Total 2023	Total 2022
Volunteering services	£345,157	£137,943	£483,100	£506,669

Of the £506,669 expenditure recognised in 2022, £265,341 was charged to unrestricted funds and £241,328 was charged to restricted funds.

6. ANALYSIS OF DIRECT COSTS	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	305,768	342,879
Other direct costs	39,389	21,653
	£345,157	£364,532

7. ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	66,063	65,215
Office costs	38,936	47,636
Premises costs	25,178	22,239
Governance costs (see Note 8)	7,766	7,047
	£137,943	£142,137

8. GOVERNANCE COSTS	2023 £	2022 £
Audit and accounts fees	3,288	2,909
Trustees meetings and insurance	783	495
Staff costs	3,695	3,643
	£7,766	£7,047

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
/contd...

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR

The net income for the year is stated after charging:

	2023	2022
Operating lease rentals	£25,178	£22,239
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	£278	£279
Auditor's remuneration – audit services	£2,500	£2,409
– non audit services	£788	£500

During the year Trustees received no remuneration (2022: £Nil) or reimbursed expenses (2022: £Nil).

10. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

Staff costs were as follows:	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	309,890	340,240
Social security costs	26,499	29,223
Pension costs	16,807	18,611
	£353,196	388,074
Recruitment and training costs	2,717	2,232
Freelance fees	19,613	21,431
	£375,526	£411,737

The average monthly number of employees during the year was 10 (2022: 11).

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was as follows:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Charitable activities	7.9	9.4
Support activities	0.8	0.8
	8.7	10.2

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

Total employee benefits received by key management amounted to £55,295 (2022: £62,343). Under FRS 102, employee benefits includes gross salaries, employer's national insurance, employer's pension contributions and benefits in kind.

A redundancy payment of £5,493 (2022 : £Nil) is included in wages for one employee.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
/contd...

11. FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £
Cost:	
Balance at 1 April 2022	1,114
Additions	-
Balance at 31 March 2023	1,114
Depreciation:	
Balance at 1 April 2022	836
Charge for the year	278
Balance at 31 March 2023	1,114
Net book value:	
At 31 March 2023	£Nil
At 31 March 2022	£278

12. DEBTORS

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	43,610	38,017
Prepayments and accrued income	1,623	817
Other debtors	-	84
	£45,233	£38,918

13. CREDITORS – Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	8,134	320
Accruals and deferred income	41,142	41,123
	£49,276	£41,443

Deferred income analysis

	2023 £	2022 £
As at 1 April 2022	36,828	18,500
Additions during the year	25,443	36,828
Amounts released to income	(36,828)	(18,500)
As at 31 March 2022	£25,443	£36,828

Deferred income of £25,443 included above relates to grant income received during the year but relating to future accounting periods.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
/contd...

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers Between Funds £	Carried Forward £
2023					
Restricted funds					
Community Champions	922	38,438	107,977	68,617	-
Well-being	10,633	83,768	114,932	20,531	-
Resettlement Scheme	-	61,600	72,528	10,928	-
SEND Volunteering Project	-	84,750	11,250	(53,200)	20,300
Total restricted funds	11,555	268,556	306,687	48,876	20,300
Unrestricted funds					
General	204,038	265,196	176,413	(45,432)	247,389
Designated	5,000	-	-	(1,444)	3,556
	209,038	265,196	176,413	(48,876)	250,945
TOTAL FUNDS	£220,593	£533,752	£483,100	£Nil	£271,245

Each of the above restricted funds is described in detail in the Trustees' Annual Report. Transfers have been made from general funds to cover deficits on restricted funds.

Comparative information for the previous financial year is as follows:

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers Between Funds £	Carried Forward £
2022					
Restricted funds					
Community Champions	-	21,028	68,106	48,000	922
Well-being	982	104,841	95,190	-	10,633
K&C Ambassadors	-	28,333	28,333	-	-
Grenfell response	-	-	-	-	-
Resettlement Scheme	-	35,500	49,699	14,199	-
Total restricted funds	982	189,702	241,328	62,199	11,555
Unrestricted funds					
General	209,440	302,138	245,341	(62,199)	204,038
Designated	25,000	-	20,000	-	5,000
	234,440	302,138	265,341	(62,199)	209,038
TOTAL FUNDS	£235,422	£491,840	£506,669	£Nil	£220,593

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023
/contd...

15. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Fixed assets	-	-	-
Current assets	274,778	45,743	320,521
Current liabilities	(23,833)	(25,443)	(49,276)
At 31 March 2023	£250,945	£20,300	£271,245

Comparative information for the previous financial year is as follows:

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Fixed assets	278	-	278
Current assets	213,375	48,383	261,758
Current liabilities	(4,615)	(36,828)	(41,443)
At 31 March 2022	£209,038	£11,555	£220,593

16. COMPANY STATUS

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is a private company (No. 03725459) incorporated in Great Britain and registered in England and Wales. The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Each member is liable to contribute a sum not exceeding £1 in the event of the Company being wound up. The address of the registered office is given in the Legal and Administrative Information on page 4.

17. TAXATION

As a registered charity, Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is exempt from taxation under Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992.

18. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

Total future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable operating leases amount to £Nil (2022: £2,869), all of which falls due within one year.

19. RELATED PARTIES

There were no transactions with related parties during the year or the previous year.

20. CONTINGENT ASSETS

The charitable company has been awarded multi-year grants with specified or implied timeframes which preclude recognition of the full amount.

The total amount of contingent assets at 31 March 2023 was £453.570.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

England & Wales - Charity number 1076392

Accounts

2021-22

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

ANNUAL REPORT





Empowering our community to realise their full potential

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Chair's Foreword

The Volunteer Centre's ability to adapt and respond to rapid shifts in its operating environment was tested further this year, as was that of many of our partners. This put considerable pressure on our paid staff and volunteers, including the trustees who provide strategic direction and accountability, and encouraged us to make the most of wider support networks: the local people we do it all for, the great partners we lean on, and the donors who help us pay for it all. I'm really proud of the way we made the most of our resources and what we achieved together.

The pandemic continued to cast a long shadow throughout the reporting year – it's easy to forget that non-essential shops were still closed at the start of April 2021. We were able to reopen the office more regularly with a skeleton staff from that point, exploring the balance between being accessible for some of the most marginalised parts of the community and keeping our team safe and well, both physically and psychologically.

It became increasingly apparent that our challenges were widely shared and there would be long-term consequences, including in the extent to which people feel able to make and sustain volunteering commitments. One-off and short-term volunteering did decrease compared to the same points in the first year of the pandemic, but remained high compared to pre-pandemic levels, in contrast with longer-term placements which have remained significantly lower. We continued working with the Institute of Volunteering Research and local pandemic volunteers in an effort to understand motivations, barriers and future challenges to volunteering in the borough and regularly reviewed the Volunteer Centre's strategy (including in formulating our own Theory of Change) to respond to those and other changes in our environment. Externally, we were pleased to be involved at all levels of our borough's response to the pandemic, as demonstrated by vaccine-related commissions from both our local NHS and Public Health colleagues.

Our team built new relationships with organisations keen to support our work while developing those with existing funders. The Henry Smith Charity agreed to fund our support for people with criminal records and forensic mental health diagnoses until 2025. The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea increased its contribution to volunteering infrastructure via its new Voluntary Sector Support Fund, and we won their tender to be the Community Champions provider for Notting Dale ward until 2026. Our local NHS partners, through the Kensington & Chelsea Social Council, invested further in our wellbeing expertise, funding yoga and walking groups, gardening and play-reading in support of the ability of people living in North Kensington to maintain and improve their mental and physical health themselves. I wish to thank all of them, along with the City Bridge Trust, the Tudor Trust, the Kensington & Chelsea Foundation and Campden Charities, for their fantastic support and contributions to the results we enabled people to achieve this year.

Chair's Foreword

We said goodbye to the longest serving member of our team, Andrew Croxford, our Chief Operating Officer, after almost 25 years. Andrew had a huge influence on our organisation and the people that work in and with it. He was the first person to raise his hand to organise a major event, like the 50th anniversary at the V&A that was such a success in 2019. InsideOut, the programme Andrew developed that champions the resettlement of people with criminal records continues to be a jewel in the Volunteer Centre's crown, and a great legacy for Andrew. We were deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Ola Omikunle, another long-serving staff member and the leading light of our New Opportunities programme, who was a mentor, a coach, a teacher and a friend to her many clients, and us all. The Volunteer Centre is a unique team – thank you to all those who made it that way during the year.

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Legal and Administrative Information

CHARITY NUMBER
1076392

COMPANY NUMBER
03725459

REGISTERED OFFICE
1, Thorpe Close
London W10 5XL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan	Chair
Joseph Carim	
Victoria Clark	(resigned 10 March 2022)
Jennifer Clarke	
Maria-Iuliana Dinu	
Bashir Hassan	
Muskaan Khurana	Vice-Chair
Michael Pearson	
Rossana Rocchini	Treasurer

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Michael Ashe	Company Secretary

BANKERS
CAF Bank
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4TA

SOLICITORS
Russell-Cooke Solicitors
2 Putney Hill
London SW15 6AB

AUDITORS
Myrus Smith
Norman House,
8 Burnell Road,
Sutton SM1 4BW

Report of Trustees

The trustees present their annual report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022. The trustees confirm that the financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the recommendations in 'Accounting & Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice' (issued in October 2019).

The Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (abbreviated 'VCKC' and known as the 'Volunteer Centre') was founded in 1969 and incorporated under a memorandum of association on the 5th of July 1999. It is governed under its articles of association.

Role

The trustees, for purposes of the Companies Act, are also the Directors of the charity. During the year the trustees have had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the VCKC.

Trustee Appointment, Induction and Training

The Board of Trustees makes appointments to the Board at its discretion. The Board endeavours to ensure that its membership contains people with a broad mix of skills and experiences and that the backgrounds of the members reflect a balance that is appropriate to the charity's mission and activities. Trustees receive induction and training, and both formal and informal opportunities for learning during their term.

In addition to the opportunities for skills and knowledge development provided by scheduled meetings of the Board and its committees, specific training sessions are arranged as required.

Organisational Structure

The organisation is overseen by a voluntary Board of Trustees who are responsible for strategic planning and reviewing policy and are accountable for the Volunteer Centre's resources. The Board has three committees: Finance; Policy, Procedure and Personnel; and Funding Development. Each committee has specific terms of reference and can co-opt non-trustee members possessing relevant skills and experiences. The respective Chairs are appointed by the Board. Day-to-day running of the Charity is delegated to the Chief Executive who operates within defined terms of reference and authority, leading a team of paid staff and volunteers.

Pay and Remuneration of Staff

VCKC's pay policy aims to offer fair pay to attract and retain appropriately qualified staff to lead, manage, support and deliver its aims. VCKC's trustees are responsible for setting remuneration levels for its senior staff - the Chief Executive Officer and Operations Manager. In order to inform the setting of appropriate pay for these staff, VCKC commissioned an independent benchmarking report in 2017. It has implemented the recommendations made in the report. Staff salaries are increased annually, as far as possible in line with inflation. They are formally revised where it is appropriate to reflect changes in their professional responsibilities.

Involvement of Volunteers

As restrictions related to the pandemic eased, the Volunteer Centre was able gradually to return its face-to-face services to something close to the pre-pandemic levels. This began with our Community and Maternity Champions, running and supporting activities in Notting Dale as well as supporting other Champions projects with one-off events. A couple of our administrative volunteers were able to return in person, and they were joined by some excellent new recruits. Operation Cup of Tea ran more frequently, deploying volunteers at regular venues and in support of specific events. The Volunteer Centre collaborated with Mutual Aid K&C in coordinating and recruiting volunteers for events in support of new arrivals in the borough, developing and growing this element of our work that began in the previous reporting period.

Related Parties

VCKC does not have branches or subsidiaries.

Principal Objectives

The Volunteer Centre's main objectives, in accordance with its governing document, are:

- To promote the value and impact that volunteering and community involvement can have in responding to the needs of local communities
- To encourage people to volunteer from all walks of life and backgrounds
- To encourage volunteering and work experience in the voluntary sector as a way of facilitating employment and combating social exclusion
- To undertake and arrange voluntary work in education, social services and similar charitable activities that benefit residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and other parts of London

Vision

Volunteering that is accessible to everyone and that enriches the lives of the volunteers and their local communities.

Mission

To connect volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations and support them in order to build experiences that are mutually rewarding.

Core Values

Respect	To treat people with care and integrity
Innovation	To be creative in order to make the biggest impact
Partnership	To work with others for change and social good
Empowerment	To help people realise their potential

Activities

Activities

The Volunteer Centre is both an infrastructure organisation working with other public benefit organisations and a direct delivery organisation supporting individuals directly on a one-to-one basis through its own programmes. The main activities and programmes are:

Core Services • Wellbeing • Community Champions • Resettlement • Employment

Measuring Effectiveness

Currently, measures of success vary significantly from programme to programme, based in each case on the design of the programme (including input from clients, staff, trustees, partners and the corpus of good practice) in light of any requirements specified by a programme's funder(s) and negotiation with them during any application process. VCKC is working towards setting a handful of outcomes, underpinned by its Theory of Change framework, that will be common across all its programmes, one benefit of which will be to enable trustees and staff to assess more easily the changes achieved by VCKC as a whole. We engaged an Office Systems Consultant in January to create a specification for our system requirements, taking account of our pandemic experience and learning, and to review the alternative approaches to provision of a monitoring, evaluation and learning system that would meet those requirements affordably. We are busy turning that specification into a new system.

Our primary measures are set in terms of outcomes - did clients achieve the positive change anticipated when they joined the programme - with targets for the number of clients achieving the outcomes over a particular reporting period. Secondary measures are set in terms of outputs - did clients complete a process or get to a milestone that we consider necessary to achieve a desirable outcome. For example, an output measure common to all our programmes is that a client is placed as a volunteer with an organisation of their choosing. Tertiary measures are sometimes used at the specific request of a funder; for example, the number of clients recruited to a particular programme, or recruited from a particular catchment.

Core Services

With funding from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, our Core Services team of paid staff and volunteers, led by Sheona Alexander, our Operations Manager, until December 2021, delivers a wide range of support to the local community and its voluntary sector.

Our brokerage service, led by our Volunteer Services Administrator, Angela Weir, offers support to people who want to give their time, while working closely with organisations seeking to increase their volunteering capacity and develop inclusive and supportive volunteering programmes. During the pandemic we suspended delivery of volunteer management training and our more formal group learning forums, pivoting to facilitated networking backed by 1:1 tailored advice, as this was a better fit for the demands of our community. We made some gradual progress towards re-establishing training provision and forums during the year, including an Introduction to Volunteering workshop and a Volunteer & Jobs Fair in November, in partnership with the Kensington & Chelsea Social Council.

Many charities were still far from business as usual as far as volunteering was concerned during this period. As waves of vaccine campaigns that had started in the previous period continued, the Volunteer Centre developed new relationships with different parts of our local NHS, particularly our GP Federation, and recruited hundreds of suitable volunteers for vaccine clinics with local GP surgeries and health centres. By the time that work had become somewhat routine at the end of summer 2021, we had to shift our sights to the three hotels accommodating around 800 Afghan evacuees, and to building an impressively integrated approach with local residents, charities, RBKC and the NHS. Once again, the demands of rapid learning and innovation had barely had time to become part of the new normal when, at the start of March 2022 we became aware that the Ukrainian Social Club on Holland Park Avenue was a magnet for displaced Ukrainians from all over the UK. Their incredible volunteers were in need of considerable support. Central government policy in this area encouraged RBKC to try to handle the large numbers of desperate new arrivals as part of business as usual, rather than as a new programme of work with dedicated human and financial resources, an approach that had worked so well for the Afghan evacuees. Combined with a lack of reliable data about the numbers of arrivals, and the need to help the Ukrainian volunteers to stay afloat as much as the people they were supporting, this made the borough's response more fraught and disjointed than it might have been, given our successful collaborations of a few months earlier. Working across the bi-borough, resources have since been found to support a team responding to these new arrivals in a strategic and holistic way.

We are streamlining the process of gathering data to enable us to manage our programmes more effectively by establishing a new client relationship management system. It continues to be very labour intensive to follow up on placements, both with volunteers and the organisations we have brokered placements with, in order to confirm the match is a success. Where we can't reliably determine a placement has taken place we don't count it in our statistics, creating a constant risk of under-reporting which we are keen to minimise with more efficient and systematic capturing of data. Despite reduced long-term placements, a range of mass mobilisations, including the K&C Christmas Collective and new arrivals initiatives, enabled the Core team to broker 808 placements this year.

Over the past 12 months the number of advertised roles has increased, with more face-to-face roles and a substantial reduction in virtual volunteering, but numbers of people looking for regular voluntary roles and the number of roles available remain well short of pre-pandemic levels. We believe that being able to restart face-to-face appointments for enquirers has increased our capacity to include those parts of the community who experience barriers to volunteering, though it has not had a great impact on placement numbers overall. This mirrors feedback from our sister Volunteer Centres both in London and beyond.

Flexible Volunteering and Community Development

Street-based outreach, led during the year by Outreach Officer, Terry Kabengele, was a key part of our work, which we've adapted over time to support major events and respond to the latest exceptional challenges faced by local people. These have included the 2011 riots, 2012 Olympics and the fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017. Street-based outreach enables us to meet and connect with people who might otherwise experience significant barriers to volunteering, linking with public services, or even building and maintaining relationships. We offer people the time and space to talk on their own terms, the opportunity to give some of their time on a low-commitment basis, as well as signposting to sources of help and support. Our work continued to be funded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the Kensington & Chelsea Foundation's Isolation and Loneliness programme this year.

Our K&C Ambassadors - a team of volunteers that are passionate about the borough, its community, diverse history and culture, and support local events, campaigns and celebrations across RBKC, were largely unable to work in their usual way during the pandemic. Our much loved Saturday programme on Portobello Road and Golborne Road markets restarted in December 2021. Operation Cup of Tea, our street-based intervention for local people to stop, decompress and talk about local issues and opportunities over a hot drink, ran at a range of venues across the borough, both on a regular basis at locations including Chelsea Library and Tavistock Square, and at specific events (like the clothing distribution in Earl's Court in July). We were willing to adapt our approach to suit the circumstances, taking the intervention wherever we might meet people disconnected from the wider community and have a chance to make that initial contact that might lead to a volunteering opportunity, support from a public service, or simply an improvement in wellbeing.

Case Study

G was having a difficult time after the pandemic. He suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder following the loss of a loved one to Covid-19, compounded by the loss of his job. During an Operation Cup of Tea session, he was approached by one of our experienced volunteers who spoke with him at length. According to the survey he filled in, G was feeling lonely and isolated. He signed up for volunteering and, after discussing his options with us, decided to seek help from two of our local partners, Mind and Turning Point. G started to volunteer with us at Operation Cup of Tea and at a local food bank. At his last supervision as a volunteer, G said he felt better and relieved, and that Operation Cup of Tea had helped him greatly. He added that he thought it should never stop its activities.

We work with every client to understand their requirements and help them to develop clear goals, then to review their experience and learn from them. We work on individual development plans, build skills and support recovery through volunteering placements. We provide an ongoing, comprehensive package of support to clients, tailored to each individual's needs, designed and delivered with them. Training, workshops, community events and other types of group work run in parallel with one-to-one support. Clients are able to work together to evaluate and improve the programme, and contribute to designing and delivering wellbeing interventions for other clients.

We work with people who have mental health needs or are physically or learning disabled. Many participants have diverse support needs; most live in Kensington and Chelsea, a few in its immediate environs. We receive referrals from a network of partners, including GPs, social prescribing navigators, VCS organisations, Adult Social Care, and local NHS mental health trusts, as well as accepting self-referrals.

The Wellbeing programme is delivered by our Head of Wellbeing, Louisa Schepes, and our Wellbeing Officer, Etty Dunn-Howe (who started in September 2021, succeeding our previous Wellbeing Officer, Iona Sutherland). The programme was supported this year by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's Adult Social Care department, the North West London Clinical Commissioning Group (NWLCCG), and the Tudor Trust.

Clients develop their soft and workplace skills, improve their knowledge and confidence, reduce isolation and improve social networks; they increase their independence, secure volunteering placements and some work towards employment. This year we supported 97 people with mental health needs to build their self-care capacity.

We work in partnership to help build the capacity of not-for-profit organisations to engage and support volunteers with additional needs and to create and adjust opportunities for them. Since the start of the pandemic we have worked with a growing number of clients who are experiencing increasing poverty, food insecurity and homelessness, making it harder for them to improve their health and to maintain their involvement in our programmes. Our team has developed their knowledge and skills in providing practical support to clients in these circumstances, and in connecting them to sources of relevant expertise, which helps them maintain their process of recovery while addressing their other needs.

Throughout the year we have maintained a flexible approach, adapting our service delivery to take account of changing Covid-19 regulations and of local infection peaks. Our programme includes:

- **Welfare check calls**: We have continued welfare calls to clients who feel isolated and/or anxious, particularly over the months when there were more Covid-19 restrictions
- **Telephone befrienders**: We have continued to recruit and train volunteer telephone befrienders. These are matched with clients who are feeling particularly lonely and isolated. Befrienders can now see some clients face-to-face

- **Volunteering Placements:** We have continued to match clients to tailored and supportive volunteering placements with external organisations. Due to the pandemic, some of our established placements were not available for part or all of this year. As a result, we have continued to create more opportunities within our own organisation for people to volunteer – for example, facilitating online workshops and Wellbeing Walks. This has involved taking time to work with clients to develop an idea, and then to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence, and ongoing supervision. We have now started to reconnect with organisations who offered pre-pandemic volunteering opportunities. We have facilitated 60 volunteering placements this year for disabled people and people with mental health needs

- We now have a mixed in-person and online programme of Wellbeing and Self-Care workshops, linking up with other organisations to develop and deliver joint sessions. We have delivered workshops to help build self-care skills and aid recovery, such as Healthy Eating, Stress Management, and Mindfulness and Relaxation Tips, and plan to continue with our blended learning and activity programme

- **Online Social and Creative Workshops:** To counteract our clients' isolation and anxiety, we have also continued with our creative and social workshops, including Wellbeing Art and Cook and Chat, to help people to maintain their physical as well as mental health. We now have in person art workshops once per month

- **Gardening Groups:** In partnership with W11, the Lancaster West Estate team, and Residents Association we have started two gardening groups. Wellbeing volunteers help to keep a community space looking welcoming and beautiful while learning about plants and gardening techniques from an experienced gardener. This is also a space for people to get to know each other and build connections in a positive, safe, low pressure environment

- **Wellbeing for Interviews Workshops:** Etty has created a series of workshops with a self-care approach to job hunting and interviews, focussing on confidence-building and stress management, delivered face-to-face at the Volunteer Centre

- **Digital Connection Support:** We were able to provide some of our clients with smart phones and/or internet access. We have also provided clients with help over the phone and face-to-face to use their phones, tablets and laptops to access and use email, Zoom and Microsoft Teams, enabling them to stay in touch with loved ones and with opportunities near and far

- **Wellbeing Walks:** We have continued with our Mindfulness in Nature walks, group walks in local parks and along the canal, and with summer picnics

- **English National Opera:** We have started to develop a partnership with ENO Engage, taking clients to see Così Fan Tutte in March this year. For many in the group it was their first experience of a live opera, and they said they found it a wonderful and uplifting experience. We were offered wheelchair accessible seats and additional support for learning disabled clients, and are planning to visit again in the autumn

- Additional support: Phone calls to those with additional mental health needs to provide them with self-care tips, build resilience and help them keep engaged with counselling services, and also to remind them to attend activities they have expressed an interest in; signposting and forward referrals for housing, debt and job-seeking advice

Case Study

K came into our Wellbeing programme as a self-referral. Their friend called ahead with K's permission, to find out what support and volunteering was available. K was struggling with a lot of anxiety, finding phone calls particularly difficult at that time.

During this phone call, we reassured K's friend that our programme would be supportive of K's additional needs. We explained the workshops we had on offer and the empathy and understanding we employ to support clients to engage with our programme on their own terms. We agreed that K's friend would pass on our email and the information and reassurance we had shared, to empower K to contact us if they wanted to get involved.

Later that evening K sent us an email and we organised a registration appointment at our offices as they felt more comfortable face-to-face. A key part of our Wellbeing programme involves adapting to support the needs of our clients, rather than trying to get them to fit in with us. In this case, this included saying yes when K asked if their friend could accompany them to the registration meeting.

K was very nervous during the registration, seeking support from their friend at several points. We talked about the support they would like so that they could apply for jobs and how their anxiety affected them. K was told about some upcoming workshops we would be running to help people with anxiety prepare for interviews, which K wanted to get involved in. We also talked about referrals we could make, if K would like some additional mental health support from Community Living Well and a peer support charity.

K shared how anxious they had been about coming to the registration meeting, and the anxiety they had experienced on the journey that day. We ended the meeting by re-focussing on what an achievement it was that K had attended the meeting; it was a big step and we thanked K for sharing some emotional context to the struggles they were experiencing.

K attended the Wellbeing Approach to Interviews Workshops and sent this message a few weeks later:

"...I now have a job since Monday. I'm doing admin for a company in the City so I can't attend weekday appointments between 9am-7pm. I wanted to give you the good news tomorrow after my first week was complete, but at this point I'm giving it to you now. What I achieved is also thanks to you and the approach to interviews course. Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart...".

Community Champions

The Community Champions programme recruits and supports volunteers to identify barriers to health and wellbeing in the places they live. They work together and in partnership with public services to develop ways to overcome these barriers and deliver sustainable solutions to health, housing and social care issues. Champions show how local people can work with statutory services and voluntary organisations to improve outcomes.

The Volunteer Centre's Community Champions project, led by Ewa Kasjanowicz, our Community Champions Manager, supported by Project Coordinator Jaya Murray, working with the residents of Lancaster West and Silchester estates in Notting Dale ward, is one of six across Kensington and Chelsea.

Most of Champions' regular activities continued, including yoga, origami and art classes, a diabetes support group facilitated by local GPs and several very popular groups focusing on mental wellbeing.

The Community Champions project continues to be very well received in Notting Dale and beyond, building on existing strong relationships with local organisations and residents. These relationships are based on mutual trust, respect and, in many cases, on genuine friendship, which enables the project to deliver its outcomes in a way that is both impactful and enjoyable.

This year 16 Champions, enabled and empowered by our professional team, worked with 1262 residents across all age groups, through a number of events, outings and regular activities. Ewa was involved in shaping two local public health campaigns - Community Protects, which focuses on a better understanding of Covid-19 and other vaccination options, and Better Care, promoting more effective use of NHS services. Both campaigns are still being run through sharing information and collecting feedback from residents.

The project successfully applied for additional funding from Public Health, KCSC and Change4Life, which made it possible to hire a project coordinator one day a week and run some new activities, such as women-only yoga and an outdoor walking and exercise group. We are especially proud of the yoga class, which is attended by a group of very vulnerable women recruited from Lancaster West estate or referred to the project by their GPs. It is heart-warming to see how they benefit from weekly practice. Following the fantastic feedback received, Champions were offered even more funding to run an additional class, which started in April 2022.

It's a great privilege to work with inspiring and charismatic people, paid and unpaid, who make the project effective and dynamic. One of them, Robert, was formally recognised this year, receiving a Mayor's Award for his individual contribution to the community. As part of his work with Community Champions, he runs popular monthly events, bringing people together and mixing nature, poetry, music, stories and meditation.

Case Study

Each team member has a unique mixture of strengths, quirks and challenges. This combination of traits inevitably shape the projects we deliver, so being managed in a way that feels supportive is key. Ewa says:

I have anxiety. Sometimes it's a real challenge, but it also helps me to be better at my job, as I have lived experience to draw on and I can empathise without making too many assumptions. The support I receive from my manager is invaluable. As there is no stigma involved, I feel that I can talk openly and if I struggle, simply ask for help without the fear of judgement. It is not only about me overcoming certain barriers. It is in fact turning difficulties into superpowers. Many residents of Notting Dale ward, the area I serve, struggle with various mental health problems. Often by sharing my own experience, I manage to normalise it for them and I know that of several people who decided to seek medical help as a result. Perhaps I would not have had courage to do it if I had experienced stigma and hostility in my work environment.

Our InsideOut programme, funded this year by the City Bridge Trust, helps people with criminal convictions re-integrate into the local community. We prioritise ex-offenders with complex needs and at higher risk once released from custody, including older people, those living with addiction, institutionalised offenders, and people with mental health issues. We offer a tailored, one-to-one service – every client makes a Personal Development Plan, identifying their needs and the personal and professional goals they want to achieve. With the support we provide clients gain skills, knowledge and confidence, access to a wide range of essential services, work experience and employment, and so increase their capacity to re-integrate into their local community.

Our InsideOut Coordinator, Jason Hudson, has spent a lot of time this year promoting the InsideOut project to the probation service and others that are working with people in custody. It has been a very slow process, as prison and probation services have just been completely restructured. The new CFO4 contracts mean that a lot of the larger providers of support for our clients are competing rather than collaborating, disrupting effective partnerships and making it harder to work holistically. Despite these challenges, we have made new relationships with partner charities like the Bounce Back Foundation and renewed old ones with, for example with Fine Cell Work and the NHS wellbeing hub in Euston.

Jason maintained regular contact with all our InsideOut clients and provided a lot of emotional support. In addition to tackling isolation and loneliness amongst our clients, Jason also helped them focus on practical activities; updating and improving their CVs and doing mock interviews, signing up with GPs and dentists, arranging eye tests, ensuring all clients have key documents like birth certificates and driving licences.

The response of HM Prison Service to the pandemic – moving to skeleton staffing of prisons, locking prisoners in their cells for as long as possible, and preventing external support from entering – created additional long-term wellbeing issues for those confined and those working with them, and prevented pre-release activities that can make a big difference to our clients' resettlement goals. A huge backlog of security and identity checks for anyone who wants access to prisons or offender-management systems was also created. Most support services were still operating on a very limited basis a year after the initial lockdown. Various Prison Service resettlement teams are, nonetheless, very keen to make referrals to InsideOut and pathways have been established with various organisations including CRC, National Probation Service, NHS OXLEAS Foundation Trust, North West London NHS, UTurn Recovery, The Nehemiah Project, and the Forward Trust.

Training opportunities have increased a lot this year in comparison with last. InsideOut has a partnership with Bounce Back and the No Going Back programme. We work with the clients they refer, enabling them to become ready for work, and we refer clients to them that fit their criteria. Working in partnership in this way enabled five of our clients to start new paid jobs in the last quarter. Bounce Back has offered some of our clients funding for training that is normally beyond their means, including PTS training, 360 digger, banksman training, painting and decorating, drylining, and HGV driver training, together with information around funding and courses available to them after going through the criminal justice system. Disclosure advice was as important as ever, as some clients have no knowledge of the process for disclosing their offences, but cannot make progress towards paid work and independence without taking this fundamental step.

In spite of the continuing pandemic lockdown when both the Prison Service and Probation were largely closed to us, Jason worked with 68 clients during the year. He enabled 24 clients to secure volunteering placements appropriate to their developmental goals and licensing conditions, and supported 13 to gain and retain paid jobs. The year ahead will be one in which we revivify key networks used previously to connect prepared and well-motivated clients to skills, knowledge and confidence development, work experience, and vacancies for paid employment.

Case Study

SC was referred to InsideOut after being released from custody and offered a placement in a rehabilitation centre in south west London. There SC started to get his life back together free of addiction and with the right level of support and guidance around him. SC went through a three-month programme and graduated with flying colours, but then he had to make some more decisions. SC referred himself to InsideOut for support in career advice and volunteering. He used to be a bricklayer and had had his own company, but lost them when he was sent to prison. He wasn't sure if he could return to his trade - health problems meant that it would be extremely difficult for him, his Blue Bricklaying CSCS card had expired and would be difficult to get back due to the course criteria, and he would also have to be in work on site to be assessed which he couldn't do without the CSCS card so he was stuck in a vicious circle.

We approached some charity shops in his local area and secured a volunteering position as soon as the lockdown lifted enough for shops to open. SC "liked having something productive to do at long last" and took on a key role in the shop. He was well liked by all, which gave SC a lot of confidence to grow while continuing to progress in recovery. We met every week to discuss his options and his progress. The restrictions of the pandemic and its long tail made it hard going, so we set small targets and worked on finding support to strengthen his recovery. We started by setting up a WhatsApp group for anyone in recovery who could just join the chat and get support, recovery tips and information despite the challenges of being isolated by pandemic restrictions. We also had sessions where we would work on confidence building, CV and disclosure letters and then started to move onto more work-related sessions. We looked at starting a new business, not as a bricklayer, but something new. We explored the options open to him, drawing on the existing skills he had in the building industry. After some months working together, SC was approached to do some part-time work as a handyman. This really gave him the push to make some choices around what kind of work he wanted.

SC started his own glazing company toward the end of 2021 and his company is growing from strength to strength. We keep in touch, and he knows he has support he can rely on if he should need it.

Employment

The New Opportunities Project, led by our Head of Employability, Ola Omikunle, assisted during the year by our Employment Support Administrator, Mohamud Mohamud, is a high quality, individually tailored programme that supports local residents into work, training, volunteering or work experience, delivered in partnership with the Campden Charities. Our clients' circumstances vary widely, from teenagers to those close to retirement, people who have been unemployed for many years or have never worked, those without the qualifications or experience who need to secure sustainable employment, including recently qualified graduates and people wanting to move into management jobs. Some clients have experienced chronic ill health that has kept them out of the workforce for a long time.

This was the second year in which we worked to adapt our practice to substantial periods of pandemic restrictions and the dislocating effects that have persisted after the primary restrictions were removed. Where job vacancies were still available, we assisted with sourcing them and gave clients hands-on help, when possible, with applications. We were able to get 16 residents into paid work. 9 clients were supported into new volunteering and work-experience placements. We enabled 24 clients get into education, and 66 to take up training opportunities.

New Opportunities clients are amongst the most marginalised members of the local community and have less resilience than most as a result of surviving on very low incomes for long periods of time. This affects their physical and psychological health and the strength of their relationships and social networks. When key assets like the fridge, cooker or bed wear out, it means not being able to replace them. It means that many small things that make life worth living are rare or impossible – a day at the seaside, or a trip to Kew Gardens. So, as well as helping clients to make steps towards paid work by enabling them to develop their skills, knowledge and confidence in a work environment, or be ready with a solid CV or good interview technique, New Opportunities often works first with clients and their families to raise self-esteem and widen horizons by taking them out of the borough for a few hours, showing rather than telling them that they have as much worth as anyone else, and as much to contribute to the economic and social life of the borough. We delivered 11 COVID-compliant educational or wellbeing trips during the year, both within London and beyond.

This complex of challenges is typical for New Opportunities clients. This is one of the reasons that our partnership with Campden Charities is so vital – the Charities not only fund New Opportunities, they also work with each household themselves, providing grants for white goods, beds and carpets, tools for a new job, or help with transport to work costs to help with cashflow until the first earnings arrive. This holistic approach which builds the capacity of the whole household, rather than fixing just one of their symptoms at a time, has been a key driver of our shared success over many years. The Campden Charities graciously supported 15 of our clients in this reporting period, enabling people to work towards greater independence backed with grants tailored to their individual and family circumstances. We agreed to deepen our partnership in 2022-23 by welcoming the Charities' staff to work alongside us at our offices, making it easier for us to refer clients to them, and for the clients to take steps towards independence more rapidly.

We are deeply saddened to be writing this year's report on the programme without its leading light. Ola passed away suddenly at the end of April having worked on the programme since joining VCKC in 2006. She enabled and empowered hundreds and hundreds of people affected by poverty, inequality and marginalisation to develop themselves, secure and maintain paid and unpaid work, create new, nourishing relationships, and so build better lives for themselves and their loved ones. The foundation of Ola's method was an understanding that we need love and self-esteem to grow.

We can increase our self-esteem by setting goals for ourselves and achieving them, and when we start from a difficult position we might need a mentor, a coach, a teacher, or a friend to take the journey with us. Ola was able to be all of those things when that was what the person she was working with needed, showing that she had faith in each person's ability to change their life for the better, and committed to sticking with them through the challenges and set-backs we all experience.

The immediate and longer-term effects of the disaster at Grenfell Tower from the limited perspective of VCKC are described in previous annual reports, and in much broader and more comprehensive terms in "A Journey of Recovery", the Public Health report following the fire.

The trustees are conscious at all times of the need to act transparently and to take as much time as necessary to deliver value for money, to those affected directly by the fire, the wider community, and the public in general, as well as to specific funders.

The direct and indirect effects of the pandemic have highlighted to local people and institutions the ongoing consequences of inequalities of income and wealth in the borough. These effects have included: the digital divide, preventing some people making the transition to online activity, including in education, because they lack the means to do so; large scale food insecurity; homelessness and inadequate housing. All these effects have in turn contributed to stark health inequalities, with poor people dying decades before their more affluent neighbours and much more likely to live in poor health in the meantime.

In responding to the pandemic and now the "cost of living" crisis, our team has tried to remember and apply some of the lessons from the fire and its aftermath, for example, the importance of early planning in which local people are involved and in which the reality of their experience is reflected. The urgency of focusing on these social determinants of health, and doing so in a way that empowers local people, allied with positive feedback from local people and organisations, has encouraged us to invest more of our time and resources in convening, facilitation and support for co-production. Consensus has been built around the crucial role of the community itself as both the fount of prevention and early intervention work, and of poverty and inequality as both causes of poor health and of barriers to improvement. The Volunteer Centre is pleased to have been able to play a role in developing this consensus across community, voluntary and statutory partners, and to have found a wide range of opportunities to advocate for and to make these changes alongside those same partners.

New Arrivals

As we described in our previous annual report, the role that the Volunteer Centre played in enabling local volunteers to support people newly arrived in Kensington & Chelsea and seeking asylum was both a source of immediate results for those people and the volunteers supporting them, and also an investment in our skills, knowledge and relationships that had greater impact when people evacuated from Afghanistan began arriving in the borough in September 2021. This contribution helped us secure a crucial grant for both our infrastructural and direct delivery work from RBKC's Voluntary Sector Support Fund, starting in October 2021, which in turn enabled us to continue to make a difference and lend a hand when Ukrainians began arriving in earnest in March 2022.

Initially we helped connect leading volunteers and community organisations with relevant expertise – first in empowering people seeking or granted asylum status, and then with a wider range of knowledge around access to public services more generally. Then we worked to bring local authority officers on board and build relationships between them and the volunteers and community organisations. This increased the ability of the civil society actors to influence public policy and practice in ways that improved outcomes for very vulnerable people living out of suitcases – children and adults were more likely to get palatable, nutritious food regularly and less likely to be expected to drink contaminated water or see rodents in their bedrooms. It gave RBKC colleagues far greater insight into the reality of life in the contingency hotels in Earl's Court, helped get NHS colleagues involved in targeted vaccination work, and meant that families got access to health visitors and got their children into local schools after an extended period completely cut off from education.

In the late spring and summer of 2021, we were able to contribute in other ways – matching a donor with second-hand laptops to find families who could make use of them, and helping source volunteers for increasingly complex events. This led to a big clothing and essentials distribution event at St Luke's Earl's Court on 24 July which we helped to organise and at which we ran an Operation Cup of Tea session that encouraged the newly arrived to stop and talk and think about volunteering (as a way of connecting, staying mentally healthy, and developing skills, knowledge and confidence that could help them to live independently once their immigration status was regularised).

This was crucial preparation for the Afghan evacuation. As with the placement of new arrivals in Earl's Court in August 2020, the initial response to hundreds of evacuees arriving in Kensington & Chelsea was ad hoc and somewhat chaotic because the Council was not immediately aware, and then uncertain what its approach should be to around 760 evacuees in three Bridging Hotels, 262 of them children. Fortunately, the community-led coalition responding to new arrivals was clear about what was needed – a consistent, reliable, delivery of its statutory duties by the local authority, closely coordinated with the civil society coalition to do the rest – connecting evacuees with the community and its institutions, helping with practicalities like English classes for those that needed them, clothing and other essentials until welfare benefit payments were in place, and advice on housing and employment opportunities.

Happily, the Volunteer Centre, with trust earnt from work with good people on both sides, was able to play a key advocacy and advisory role, and then an ongoing one in amongst the best responses to the evacuees of any district in the UK. At the September clothing and essentials event, again at St Luke's, we helped oversee the mobilisation of 130 volunteers and saw members of almost every evacuee household in the borough.

By mid-November the coalition had largely completed its objective of helping evacuees to settle in their temporary accommodation, ensuring all their basic needs were being met consistently and that education, health and employment opportunities were in place. Although the intensity of the effort could be stepped down at that point, the work continued in other forms and led to a range of ongoing collaborations. Through dedication and bloody-mindedness, some of the volunteers were able to set up a clothes bank, first hosted as a temporary project for a month at the Church of Latter Day Saints (serving more than 1,400 people), and then in a disused part of the Town Hall's underground carpark, where it continues, despite the odds, to serve new arrivals, at least 100 people each week, now principally Ukrainians, as well as Afghans and people seeking asylum. We were able to help secure cash and in-kind donors for the clothes bank and be a suitable recipient for funds, since the clothes bank has no paid staff or bank account of its own. Distribution events have also continued, with 65 volunteers deployed at one on 5 March, this time combining clothing and essentials with wellbeing sessions, reaching a range of new arrivals as well as a small number of homeless local people.

This work also led directly to the first meeting coordinating support for new arrivals from Ukraine, held on 17 March. With the main Ukrainian Social Club, a Ukrainian supplementary school, and the consulate all based in the borough, Kensington & Chelsea became much more of a focal point for these displaced people than most of us had suspected. Our initial hope that the response would share a lot of features with the Afghan one was gradually extinguished, leaving many of the partners and many new Ukrainian volunteers disillusioned by the gap between public rhetoric and public policy. Central government did not back local authorities with substantial additional resources to deal with these new arrivals, leading RBKC decision-makers to take a "business-as-usual" approach wherever possible. Voluntary and community organisations, already overstretched by the pandemic, many of them unable to fill key vacancies and struggling to cope with the wellbeing needs of their teams, stepped forward to help, but weren't able to sustain a consistent involvement without additional resources. This included the Volunteer Centre, which chaired the coordinating meetings during the first weeks. This struggle was mirrored to a significant degree in the statutory sector, providing clear lessons about the importance not only of coordination of efforts by residents, voluntary and statutory actors, but the backing for these joint programmes with appropriate resources. Early coordination did achieve many benefits, helping to link the Social Club and its volunteers to a range of valuable partners, information and practical support.

Financial Review

The Charity's income was £491,840 in the year ended 31 March 2022 compared to £543,732 in the year ended 31 March 2021. The total expenditure was £506,669 in the year to 31 March 2022 compared to £495,584 in the year ended 31 March 2021. The general fund balance (unrestricted funds) carried forward on the 31 March 2022 was £209,038, whilst £11,555 of restricted funds were also carried forward. This compares to an unrestricted balance of £234,440 carried forward on 31 March 2021, and a restricted balance of £982.

As trustees we take seriously our responsibility to deploy the funds we hold in trust in support of our charitable objectives. We designated £25,000 of the surplus that we reported in our previous annual accounts for investment in the Charity's capacity to deliver those objectives in the current reporting year. £20,000 of that sum was invested in improving our IT systems, telephony and website (the remainder retained for investment in training). This planned reduction in our unrestricted reserves had the effect of moving our budget performance in this year from a small surplus to a small deficit.

Risk Management

The Board reviews risks to the effective operation and sustainability of the Volunteer Centre regularly, assessing the major risks that the charity is exposed to at the finance committee meeting prior to every trustee meeting as we address existing (or identify new) risks. The risk register is updated at least twice annually and appropriate systems and procedures are established to mitigate internal control risks and external risks that the charity faces. Our policies are updated to reflect internal processes and legal and regulatory changes as and when they occur. Our core policies, such as safeguarding and data protection, are reviewed annually and our others at least every two years.

Outside of disaster response, principal risks and mitigation strategies are:

Inability to Secure Core and Programme Funding

The Volunteer Centre invests appropriate time in performance management and quality assurance to ensure that it is effective. Demonstrable effectiveness is key to securing and sustaining funding for its work. Time is also invested in understanding the needs of our clients - volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations - supporting client participation, and reflecting this in our work. The Volunteer Centre maintains good working relationships with a range of current and prospective funders, building mutual understanding and helping to identify shared objectives. The Volunteer Centre also participates effectively in bidding consortia, a recent success being a Supported Access application, in partnership with RBKC, for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Board's sub-committee, charged with the co-ordination of the development of funding convenes in advance of, and reports, its work to the trustees at each full Board meeting.

Insufficient system capacity for effective performance

The Volunteer Centre gathers data on its performance from regular monitoring of its work with clients, from periodic generation of case-studies based on client and staff experience, from surveys of staff and trustees, and from its routine financial processes. It retains this data (in compliance with its regulatory obligations) and reports it internally to staff and trustees, and externally to funders, regulators and the wider public (again subject to compliance with regulatory obligations). The Volunteer Centre does not yet have a single integrated system for capturing, retaining and interrogating this data, making these processes inefficient and subject to more error than necessary. In order to reduce the risk of error or a material oversight, the Volunteer Centre is simplifying and integrating its systems, and investing in resources to support this process.

Lack of Succession Planning

Recent staff turnover has highlighted the need for the Volunteer Centre to put in place more robust processes and rely more on systems and less on individuals. Organisational structure and current reporting lines have been reviewed and a way forward identified which will deliver enhanced collaboration between all programmes and improved organisational resilience. Supported by the successful recruitment of an Operations Manager, central record keeping (for example, to ensure consistency of practice in relation to supervision and appraisal) is being put in place, as well as actions to document processes and give easy access to information to all staff, including more individual empowerment for decision making.

Disintermediation and changes in the volunteering environment

During the pandemic, the niche in which the Volunteer Centre operates as a broker – between individuals seeking volunteering and VCS organisations recruiting volunteers – was disrupted. Many local people got together at neighbourhood level and organised themselves using digital tools, raising questions about the centrality of VCS organisations as a conduit for local social action. In parallel, national NGOs and online start-ups sought to use the pandemic to increase their reputations and incomes, either by claims to scale, speed or to accessibility. The Volunteer Centre invested in its strengths – local relationships, local knowledge, the capacity to respond to individual requirements, and a commitment to local people and organisations – in order to maintain its niche. Providing a wide range of facilitation and enablement support to mutual aid associations helped us to cement our value to local people at a time when large campaigns led to hundreds of thousands of volunteers being registered nationally without any prospect of deployment. Likewise, our local relationships and knowledge allowed us to build new relationships quickly as different phases of the pandemic required mass volunteering while many traditional volunteer programmes were suspended, but to pivot to supporting the re-opening of those programmes as mass volunteering was no longer demanded. Nevertheless, the pandemic showed that the Volunteer Centre must also develop the systems to work flexibly and effectively (and the capacity to deploy, as well as to recruit, at scale) during a crisis, either alone or via robust partnership arrangements. The renewed commitment this year of local statutory funders such as RBKC and the NHS shows that the Volunteer Centre demonstrated its value to its ecosystem. We must however continue to consider our strategic response to the reduction in long-term volunteering placements, a challenge also experienced by our sister Volunteer Centres in London and beyond.

Risk Management

Staff Recruitment

The Volunteer Centre is facing a difficult recruitment market which makes it challenging to staff new programmes. We are, therefore, seeking to capitalise on the success of recent new hires, paying particular attention to candidate targeting, the attractiveness of the position being offered and the activation of personal networks.

Safeguarding

We recognise that changes in the external environment are increasing risk to the safety of both our clients and our team. A greater proportion of our clients, and people in their households, neighbourhoods and workplaces, are experiencing a gap between the resources available to them and the resources required to maintain wellbeing, dignity and independence. This creates additional risk for them directly, and indirectly as the pressure manifests in mental health and behaviour – for example, we have experienced an increase in clients reporting suicidal thoughts and intentions, and an increase in clients reporting abuse directed at them. Responding appropriately to each incident in line with our policies and procedures is often intensive and urgent work, and as a small team it can be very challenging to maintain high quality for our clients as a whole while supporting a person requiring direct emergency assistance and help to coordinate with several other agencies, for example, a learning disabled client requiring advocacy, immediate temporary accommodation and personal care following a report of domestic abuse. Both staff and trustees have received additional training around safeguarding, our policy has been externally audited by colleagues from our local authority safeguarding team, and we have arranged monthly clinical supervision for the members of the team whose work frequently involves responsibility for cases with a significant safeguarding element.

Strategic Performance

As the pandemic hit in 2020, the trustees worked with the whole staff team in an attempt at understanding the rapidly changing operating environment and responding to it both tactically and strategically. Having addressed its most immediate priority of securing income for its core programmes with multi-year grants and contracts, the Volunteer Centre set out to analyse the changed landscape, in particular the impact of new actors such as local mutual aid associations. This was achieved in collaboration with the Institute of Volunteering Research at the University of East Anglia, leading to a detailed report for discussion by the trustees at their regular meeting in March 2021. The trustees' response to that report has driven a process of discussion and discovery, analysis and reflection throughout the current year, regularly reviewing the outputs with the staff team.

The Board elected to frame the findings of this exercise by focusing on the three cornerstones of the Volunteer Centre's mission, namely ensuring that volunteering:

- is accessible to everyone
- enriches the lives of volunteers
- enriches our local community

This was done through the development of a Theory of Change for the Volunteer Centre, encompassing each of the above three drivers of our activities, as well as identifying key outputs and outcomes. This analysis was supported by an assessment and mitigation scheme for our strategic risks. The majority of elements in both the Theory of Change and risk documents were, happily, already either in place or being developed, and we worked collectively in small joint staff/trustee groups to consider how improvements could best be made, gaps filled, and opportunities taken. This led us to four areas in which to concentrate our efforts:

1. Tailoring delivery in response to a mutual understanding of individual needs and circumstances
2. Meeting people and groups where they are in ways that prioritise and respect those with limited capacity
3. Developing and maintaining simple systems and tools that connect and combine easily and effectively
4. Making and taking opportunities for collaboration within our team

Examples of actions taken immediately in response to this strategic planning process include: an enhanced drive on identifying and collaboratively supporting people with barriers to volunteering; a more proactive approach to training identification and delivery through individual supervision; more social opportunities, including with the trustees, to enrich the environment for internal collaboration; a collective process of systems development for the new CRM, integrating staff and trustees, keeping things simple and centring effectiveness; distribution of partnership development and outreach work across the whole team.

Reserves Policy

The Board has examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be equal to at least 3 months of the charity's total expenditure. This reserve is intended to ensure that the charity can continue to operate in the event of an emergency, or a sudden cut in funding. The level of reserves available to the charity at 31 March 2022 was above the target. The Board keeps under review the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed, should circumstances require such action.

Investment Policy

The unrestricted funds in reserve fluctuate and can be called upon temporarily to meet immediate cash flow needs. They are held in higher yield savings accounts with UK banks at levels protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Future Plans

To achieve success in our multi-year strategy, we committed to five specific objectives:

- Develop our "Volunteer Journey" model to offer a tailored, flexible, personalised service to potential volunteers across all our programmes and provide them with opportunities with local organisations which correspond to their goals and needs. The impact of the pandemic on external partners slowed our progress on this objective, but we have taken decisive steps towards having the basic systems we need in place to track and manage performance and support an effective, integrated volunteer journey for all our clients

- Offer resources and training to, and develop and manage relationships with, local organisations to improve their capacity to involve volunteers and shape targeted and rewarding volunteer roles. Enhance connections with and between hyper-local organisations to this end. We have achieved a lot in respect of this objective this year, led principally by our Chief Executive. In welcoming a highly experienced Operations Manager to the Volunteer Centre, we have increased the team's capacity to share in this valuable work, helping to ensure the Chief Executive retains sufficient capacity to discharge his other duties, and to manage the risk of his incapacity or departure

- Continue to (i) offer dedicated long-term specialist support to ensure access for all to life changing experiences through volunteering and (ii) build a track record around employment and community contribution as a result of volunteering. The Volunteer Centre was able to build on its rapid adaptation during the pandemic to achieve this objective this year, offering a hybrid model of remote and face-to-face services to those of its clients facing higher barriers. While delivery was affected by the sudden loss of a dear staff member and a difficult recruitment environment, this rapid adaption allowed the Centre to secure an important new contract, supporting young disabled people and those with mental health needs

- Provide volunteering best practice advice and training to individuals and organisations. Participate in local groups and forums, acting as an advocate of voluntary action as well as a connector, a facilitator of partnerships, a trusted intermediary and contributor to social capital. This is another objective that we excelled at this year and the arrival of our new Operations Manager has ensured that those critical activities are now shared with our Chief Executive

- Aim to be a high trust and learning environment, supported by accredited systems, with open communication and effective feedback between team members, such that Volunteer Centre team members understand their roles, how they connect to our strategy and feel motivated, supported and valued. After a year dedicated to supporting our vulnerable clients and our local ecosystem, we made the decision to shift management time to internal priorities in the short-term, rebuilding relationships and systems dislocated by largely remote working and the prioritisation of delivery at the cost of maintaining our back office. This temporary focus has paid off with most of our staff now happily re-engaged with daily office life

While this has been another year of successes for the Volunteer Centre, we must continue to learn and adapt to the state of "permacrisis" we seem destined to live in for the foreseeable future, rebuilding and preserving the strength of our staff and volunteers and the resilience of our organisation. Only then can we deliver in the role our clients and community need us to play to enable and empower their individual futures and collective social action.

At the time of writing this report, and having given consideration to internal and external factors (including the financial position of the Charity and its level of reserves, the ability to continue to raise sufficient funding for the operations and the changes to the operating environment), the trustees of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea have concluded that it is financially sustainable and able to continue to operate on a going concern basis for the foreseeable future.

Allowing for the investment of designated funds raised during the pandemic into the modernisation of our IT and telephony systems, both to make them more effective and to reduce ongoing operating costs, the Charity made a small surplus in this reporting year. While inflation levels not seen in decades are certainly making it harder to plan and to operate, the charity continues to attract funders thanks to the concrete benefits it brings to the local community. At the time of writing we expect to be able to cover the small budgeted deficit through additional fundraising opportunities and cost efficiencies. Investment in our capacity continues. The trustees have prioritised the team's wellbeing and skills, recognising that they are the Charity's major assets. The trustees have also prioritised the Charity's monitoring, evaluation and learning systems, and improvements in support for the client journey. The staff, led by the CEO, are continuing to look at ways to become more effective and some recent changes in the team have created the opportunity to integrate the way the team operates and interacts, which we believe will result in a more cohesive way of working and better results for local people and organisations.

We have robust processes in place to continue to offer services if there was to be another lockdown due to a pandemic or other unforeseen circumstance. The IT updates made in the last couple of years are making it possible for the team to work and interact with each other and with local people remotely.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and 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;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

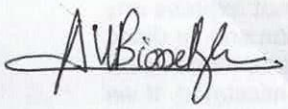
The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding 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 auditor is 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 auditor is aware of that information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. Approved by the Board of Trustees on 28 November 2022 and signed on its behalf, by:

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan
Chair



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 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 other information comprises the information included in the trustees report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the trustees report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of 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.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022

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 trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report 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 directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which 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 directors' 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 prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 29, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance about actual and potential litigation or claims and the identification of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Auditing the risk of management override of controls, including testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- Professional scepticism in course of the audit and with audit sampling in material audit areas.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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

Use of our report

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

Stephen Jones FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Myrus Smith
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors
Norman House, 8 Burnell Road
Sutton, Surrey
SM1 4BW

15 December 2022

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Income					
Donations and grants	2	49	-	49	218
Charitable activities	3	301,208	189,702	490,910	543,413
Investments	4	881	-	881	101
Total		302,138	189,702	491,840	543,732
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	5	265,341	241,328	506,669	495,584
Total		265,341	241,328	506,669	495,584
Net income/(expenditure)	9	36,797	(51,626)	(14,829)	48,148
Transfer between funds	14	(62,199)	62,199	-	-
Net movement in funds		(25,402)	10,573	(14,829)	48,148
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	14	234,440	982	235,422	187,274
Total funds carried forward	14	£209,038	£11,555	£220,593	£235,422

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

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

The notes form part of the financial statements.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31ST MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible fixed assets	11		278		557
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	38,918		21,219	
Cash at bank and in hand		222,840		238,173	
		261,758		259,392	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	13	41,443		24,527	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			220,315		234,865
NET ASSETS	15		£220,593		£235,422
FUNDS					
Restricted	14		11,555		982
Unrestricted	14				
General Funds			204,038		209,440
Designated Funds			5,000		25,000
	14		£220,593		£235,422

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 28th November 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



Anne-Helene Biosse Duplan – Chair

The notes form part of the financial statements.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net movement in funds		(14,829)	48,148
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation	9	279	2,502
Interest receivable	4	(881)	(101)
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors		(17,699)	10,239
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors		16,916	5,624
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities		(16,214)	66,412
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received	4	881	101
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-	-
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities		881	101
Change in cash and cash equivalents		(15,333)	66,513
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward		238,173	171,660
Cash and cash equivalents carried forward		£222,840	£238,173
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents			
Cash at bank and in hand		£222,840	£238,173

The notes form part of these financial statements.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting
The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income recognition
Items of income are recognised in the financial statements when all of the following criteria are met:
- The charity has entitlement to the funds;
- Any performance conditions have been met or are fully within the control of the charity;
- There is sufficient certainty that receipt of the income is considered probable; and
- The amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure recognition
Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure on charitable activities comprises the costs associated with delivering volunteering services and activities.

Expenditure includes those costs of a direct nature which can be allocated to a specific activity. It also includes indirect costs, including governance costs that do not relate to a specific activity but are necessary to support those activities. Support costs are apportioned on the basis of staff time.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted general funds are freely available for use in furtherance of the objects of the charity and which have not been designated for particular purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside by the trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which can only be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor or which have been raised for a particular purpose.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation
Tangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. Depreciation is provided so as to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life at the following annual rates:

Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line
Computer equipment	25% straight line

Leases
Operating lease rentals are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Pensions
The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable under the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year to which they relate.

Debtors and creditors
Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022
/contd...

2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
Donations	£49	£Nil	£49	£218

All of the £218 recognised in 2021 related to unrestricted funds.

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Volunteer Brokerage				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	128,287	-	128,287	135,066
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	6,328	-	6,328	7,700
National Lottery Awards For All	-	-	-	-
The Greater London Authority	-	-	-	-
Westway Trust	-	-	-	-
Consulting and training fees	1,000	-	1,000	400
Employment				
Campden Charities	108,000	-	108,000	129,500
Well-being				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	-	30,000	30,000	30,000
Tudor Trust	-	30,000	30,000	30,000
West London Clinical Commissioning Group	-	-	-	-
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	-	43,841	43,841	27,190
Other	-	1,000	1,000	-
Resettlement Scheme				
City Bridge Trust	-	35,500	35,500	57,500
Ambassadors				
Kensington & Chelsea Foundation	-	28,333	28,333	-
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	-	-	-	10,000
Community Champions				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	47,000	9,000	56,000	62,146
The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation	-	-	-	10,410
Kensington & Chelsea Social Council	-	6,026	6,026	-
West London Clinical Commissioning Group	-	5,000	5,000	5,000
Training and Consultancy	-	-	-	-
Other	-	1,002	1,002	-
Covid Related Grants	10,593	-	10,593	38,501
	£301,208	£189,702	£490,910	£543,413

Of the £543,413 recognised in 2021, £384,813 related to unrestricted funds and £158,600 to restricted funds.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022
/contd...

4. INVESTMENT INCOME	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
Bank interest	£881	£Nil	£881	£101

All of the £101 received in 2021 are unrestricted funds.

5. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Direct costs	Support costs	Total 2022	Total 2021
Volunteering services	£364,532	£142,137	£506,669	£495,584

Of the £495,584 expenditure recognised in 2021, £236,034 was charged to unrestricted funds and £259,550 was charged to restricted funds.

6. ANALYSIS OF DIRECT COSTS	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs	342,879	356,854
Other direct costs	21,653	15,613
	£364,532	£372,467

7. ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS	2022 £	2021 £
Staff costs	65,215	66,799
Office costs	47,636	27,950
Premises costs	22,239	20,555
Governance costs (see Note 8)	7,047	7,813
	£142,137	£123,117

8. GOVERNANCE COSTS	2022 £	2021 £
Audit and accounts fees	2,909	3,545
Trustees meetings and insurance	495	542
Staff costs	3,643	3,726
	£7,047	£7,813

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022
/contd...

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR

The net income for the year is stated after charging:

	2022	2021
Operating lease rentals	£22,239	£19,332
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	£279	£2,502
Auditor's remuneration – audit services	£2,409	£2,845
– non audit services	£500	£700

During the year Trustees received £Nil remuneration (2021: £Nil) or reimbursed expenses (2021: £Nil).

10. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

Staff costs were as follows:	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	340,240	356,090
Social security costs	29,223	30,722
Pension costs	18,611	19,429
	388,074	406,241
Recruitment and training costs	2,232	1,249
Freelance fees	21,431	19,889
	£411,737	£427,379

The average monthly number of employees during the year was 11 (2021: 12).

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was as follows:

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Charitable activities	9.4	10.1
Support activities	0.8	0.8
	10.2	10.9

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

Total employee benefits received by key management amounted to £62,343 (2021: £104,904). Under FRS 102, employee benefits includes gross salaries, employer's national insurance, employer's pension contributions and benefits in kind.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022
/contd...

11. FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £
Cost:	
Balance at 1 April 2021	13,298
Additions	-
Disposals	(12,184)
Balance at 31 March 2022	1,114
Depreciation:	
Balance at 1 April 2021	12,741
Charge for the year	279
Depreciation on disposal	(12,184)
Balance at 31 March 2022	836
Net book value:	
At 31 March 2022	£278
At 31 March 2021	£557

12. DEBTORS

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	38,017	20,400
Prepayments and accrued income	817	819
Other debtors	84	-
	£38,918	£21,219

13. CREDITORS – Amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	320	2,624
Accruals and deferred income	41,123	21,833
Other creditors	-	70
	£41,443	£24,527

Deferred income analysis

	£
As at 1 April 2021	18,500
Additions during the year	36,828
Amounts released to income	(18,500)
As at 31 March 2022	£36,828

Deferred income of £36,828 included above relates to grant income received during the year but relating to future accounting periods.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022
/contd...

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers Between Funds £	Carried Forward £
2022					
Restricted funds					
Community Champions	-	21,028	68,106	48,000	922
Well-being	982	104,841	95,190	-	10,633
K&C Ambassadors	-	28,333	28,333	-	-
Grenfell response	-	-	-	-	-
Resettlement Scheme	-	35,500	49,699	14,199	-
Total restricted funds	982	189,702	241,328	62,199	11,555
Unrestricted funds					
General	209,440	302,138	245,341	(62,199)	204,038
Designated	25,000	-	20,000	-	5,000
	234,440	302,138	265,341	(62,199)	209,038
TOTAL FUNDS	£235,422	£491,840	£506,669	£Nil	£220,593

Each of the above restricted funds is described in detail in the Trustees' Annual Report. Transfers have been made from general funds to cover deficits on restricted funds.

Comparative information for the previous financial year is as follows:

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers Between Funds £	Carried Forward £
2021					
Restricted funds					
Community Champions	-	15,410	96,846	81,436	-
Well-being	-	87,190	86,208	-	982
K&C Ambassadors	10,000	10,000	20,000	-	-
Grenfell response	-	-	1,739	1,739	-
Resettlement Scheme	-	46,000	54,757	8,757	-
Total restricted funds	10,000	158,600	259,550	91,932	982
Unrestricted funds					
General	177,274	385,132	236,034	(116,932)	209,440
Designated	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
	117,274	385,132	236,034	(91,932)	234,440
TOTAL FUNDS	£187,274	£543,732	£495,584	£Nil	£235,422

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022
/contd...

15. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Fixed assets	278	-	278
Current assets	213,375	48,383	261,758
Current liabilities	(4,615)	(36,828)	(41,443)
At 31 March 2022	£209,038	£11,555	£220,593

Comparative information for the previous financial year is as follows:

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Fixed assets	557	-	557
Current assets	239,910	19,482	259,392
Current liabilities	(6,027)	(18,500)	(24,527)
At 31 March 2021	£234,440	£982	£235,422

16. COMPANY STATUS

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is a private company (No. 03725459) incorporated in Great Britain and registered in England and Wales. The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Each member is liable to contribute a sum not exceeding £1 in the event of the Company being wound up. The address of the registered office is given in the Legal and Administrative Information on page 4.

17. TAXATION

As a registered charity, Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is exempt from taxation under Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992.

18. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

Total future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable operating leases amount to £2,869 (2021: £4,767), all of which falls due within one year.

19. RELATED PARTIES

There were no transactions with related parties during the year or the previous year.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE
KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A Company Limited By Guarantee)

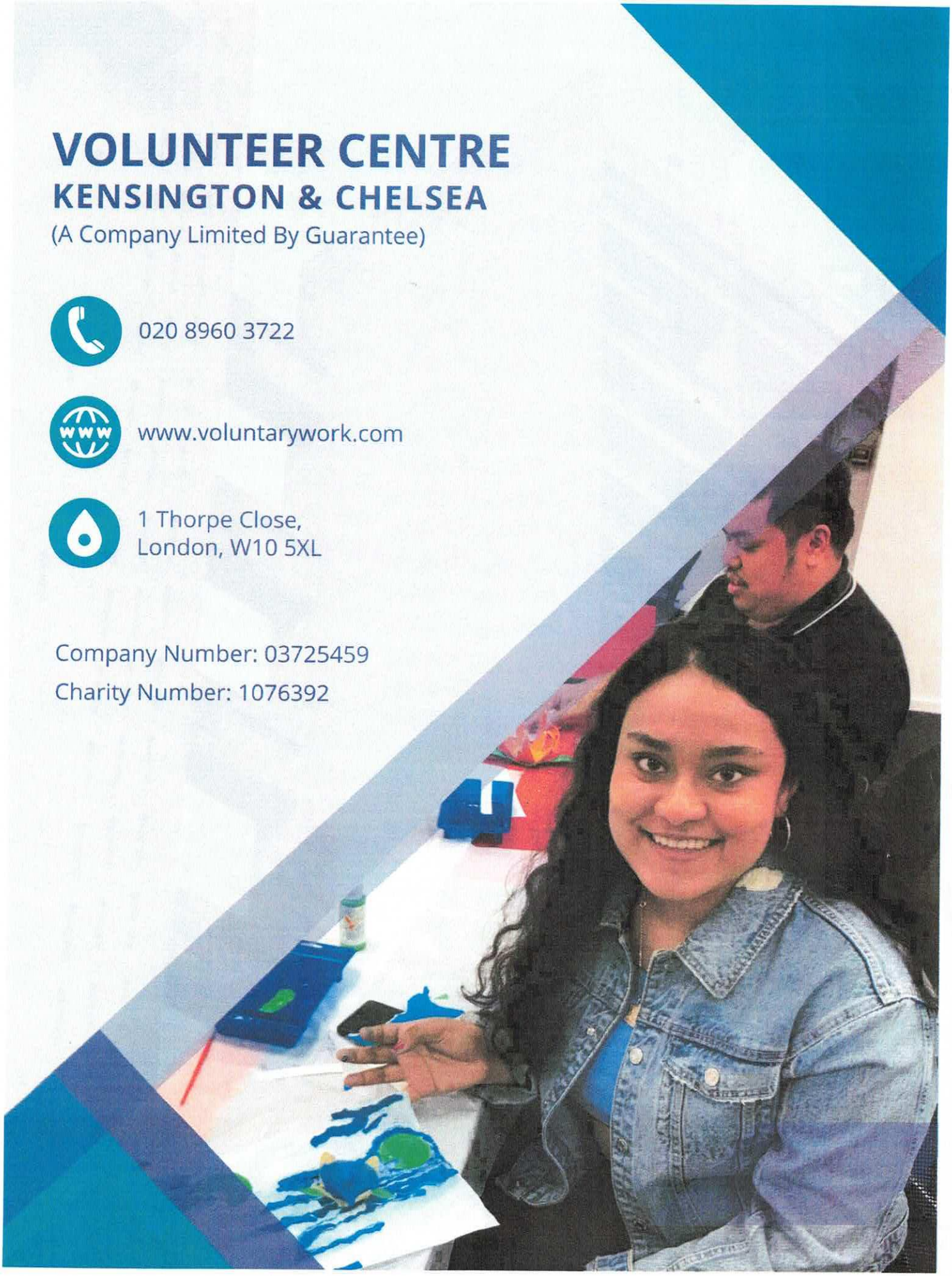
020 8960 3722

www.voluntarywork.com

1 Thorpe Close,
London, W10 5XL

Company Number: 03725459

Charity Number: 1076392



VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

England & Wales - Charity number 1076392

Accounts

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



volunteer centre
kensington & chelsea
est. 1969

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Chair's Foreword

For the Volunteer Centre, just as for the rest of the planet, this year was extraordinary. Little did we know that our 50th anniversary, a chance to reflect and think about how we work best with people and organisations to make a difference, would be followed by a year in which we had to break new ground almost every day, adapt ourselves and our work to completely new circumstances, and learn from and with our partners and our community what was required of us all during a pandemic.

I am delighted to report that the Volunteer Centre has navigated the challenges imposed by the pandemic with a good deal of success, continuing to adapt to serve the needs of the people of Kensington & Chelsea. Although some of our work (for example, street-based volunteering) had to stop completely for long periods, and some (for example, brokerage) had to adapt significantly as partner organisations suspended their operations, some (for example, Community Champions) were able to support more local residents by moving online. We also took on a substantial amount of more demanding work. For example, the closure of prisons to outsiders, and the effective suspension of probation services, created enormous problems for people with criminal records (and projects like our InsideOut programme that stayed open), setting back their journeys towards resettlement and increasing their vulnerability. We also picked up additional responsibilities including enabling a joined-up response to the pandemic across voluntary, community and statutory services, and worked hard to ensure that informal volunteering structures such as Mutual Aid featured in this coordinated response. This enhanced role gave us tremendous opportunities to make both short- and long-term impacts in the interests of local people, while being extremely testing of personal and organisational resources.

We are proud of our collective achievements. Although it was strange to have a whole year in which all our board and team meetings were remote, and particularly challenging for our frontline team, we nevertheless recruited and inducted new members of the team, professionals, volunteers and trustees. We adapted our working practices successfully to both strengthen our role as a key voluntary sector organisation within the Royal Borough and our collaboration with local people. We have already taken steps to ensure that we have both the strategy and the systems to build on those achievements next year and beyond.

Despite the many challenges of the pandemic, the combination of exceptional support from our funders and savings resulting from our enforced office closure meant a substantial unbudgeted increase in reserves. This was welcome in the expectation of an increasingly difficult fundraising environment, and the need to designate reserves to invest in our people and our systems now in order to be ready for post-pandemic operation.

I would like to thank the funders of our main services, particularly the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, North West London Clinical Commissioning Group, City Bridge Trust, the Tudor Trust, the Kensington & Chelsea Foundation and Campden Charities. Without exception, all our funders provided additional support and flexibility during a very challenging time – some were able to contribute to the adaptation of our services to remote working, or to digital inclusion for our clients. Funders paid for additional hours so we could help co-ordinate the many new volunteers and partnerships during the first lockdown, and some gave us the opportunity to support staff wellbeing and respond to the effects of the pandemic on team cohesion. We could not have achieved so much this year without each and every one of them. I would also like to thank our dedicated team for the creativity, resilience, good humour and hard work that allowed us to adapt to extraordinary circumstances and continue making a difference with and for local people.

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Legal & Administrative Information

CHARITY NUMBER
1076392

COMPANY NUMBER
03725459

REGISTERED OFFICE
1, Thorpe Close
London W10 5XL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan	Chair
Joseph Carim	
Victoria Clark	(appointed 25 January 2021)
Jennifer Clarke	
Bashir Hassan	(appointed 25 January 2021)
Muskaan Khurana	
Michael Pearson	
Rossana Rocchini	Treasurer (Appointed 28 September 2020)
Maria-Iuliana Dinu	(appointed 20 July 2020)
Srishti Mahhajan	(resigned 18 August 2020)
Gail Le Coz	(resigned 25 January 2021)
Roger Lintern	(resigned 28 September 2020)
Michael Locke	(resigned 25 January 2021)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Michael Ashe	Company Secretary (appointed 22 March 2021)

BANKERS
CAF Bank
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4TA

SOLICITORS
Russell-Cooke Solicitors
2 Putney Hill
London SW15 6AB

AUDITORS
Myrus Smith
Chartered Accountants
Norman House
8 Burnell Road
Sutton SM1 4BW

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

The trustees, present their annual report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. The trustees confirm that the financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the recommendations in 'Accounting & Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice' (issued in October 2019).

The Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (abbreviated 'VCKC' and known as the 'Volunteer Centre') was founded in 1969 and incorporated under a memorandum of association on the 5th of July 1999. It is governed under its articles of association.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Role
The trustees, for purposes of the Companies Act, are also the Directors of the charity. During the year the trustees have had no beneficial interests in, or contracts with, the VCKC.

Trustee appointment, induction and training
The Board of Trustees makes appointments to the Board at its discretion. The Board endeavours to ensure that its membership contains people with a broad mix of skills and experiences and that the backgrounds of the members reflect a balance that is appropriate to the charity's mission and activities. Trustees receive induction and training, and both formal and informal opportunities for learning during their term.

Three new trustees were appointed during the year to 31 March 2021 – one via a local community organisation and two others via third party recruitment. The normal assessment and induction processes, and opportunities for learning with existing trustees and the VCKC staff took place, as did regular meetings of the Board and its committees to oversee the adaptation of VCKC to the rapidly changing external environment during the pandemic and its performance in that new context.

Organisational structure
The organisation is overseen by a voluntary Board of Trustees who are responsible for strategic planning and reviewing policy and are accountable for the Volunteer Centre's resources. The Board has three committees: Finance; Policy, Procedure and Personnel; and Funding Development. Each committee has specific terms of reference and can co-opt non-Trustee members possessing relevant skills and experiences. The respective Chairs are appointed by the Board. Day-to-day running of the Charity is delegated to the Chief Executive who operates within defined terms of reference and authority, leading a team of paid staff and volunteers.

Pay and remuneration of staff
VCKC's pay policy aims to offer fair pay to attract and retain appropriately qualified staff to lead, manage, support and deliver its aims. VCKC's Trustees are responsible for setting remuneration levels for its senior staff - the Chief Executive Officer and Operations Manager. In order to inform the setting of appropriate pay for these staff, VCKC commissioned an independent benchmarking report in 2017. It has implemented the recommendations made in the report. Staff salaries are increased annually in line with inflation. They are formally revised where it is appropriate to reflect changes in their professional responsibilities.

Involvement of volunteers
Prior to the pandemic the Volunteer Centre's paid staff were supported by approximately 25-30 volunteers, based at our office and undertaking a range of administrative, communication, advice and outreach tasks, with some volunteers focussed on supporting one of the specialised delivery programmes. During the reporting period, public health measures implemented by the Volunteer Centre and our landlord in response to the pandemic meant that all of our programmes had to adapt significantly to continue to deliver for our community. Some of our administrative volunteers, while not able to attend our offices during periods when it was unstaffed, were supported to volunteer remotely, which helped our brokerage service to respond to and place some of the hundreds of new volunteers who registered to support their neighbours during lockdown. Our Wellbeing programme recruited and supervised new volunteers to offer Wellbeing clients in need of support regular check-in and chat and peer support opportunities to help them cope with the isolation of lockdown. The Volunteer Centre also developed effective relationships with local self-organising volunteer networks, providing advice and support to enable them to contribute to the multi-sectoral partnerships co-ordinating the borough's response to the pandemic.

Related parties
VCKC does not have branches or subsidiaries.

OBJECTIVES, VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Principal Objectives
The Volunteer Centre's main objectives, in accordance with its governing document, are:

- To promote the value and impact that volunteering and community involvement can have in responding to the needs of local communities
- To encourage people to volunteer from all walks of life and backgrounds
- To encourage volunteering and work experience in the voluntary sector as a way of facilitating employment and combating social exclusion
- To undertake and arrange voluntary work in education, social services and similar charitable activities that benefit residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and other parts of London

Vision
Volunteering that is accessible to everyone and that enriches the lives of the volunteers and their local communities.

Mission
To connect volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations and support them in order to build experiences that are mutually rewarding.

Core Values

- Respect To treat people with care and integrity
- Innovation To be creative in order to make the biggest impact
- Partnership To work with others for change and social good
- Empowerment To help people realise their potential

ACTIVITIES

The Volunteer Centre is both an infrastructure organisation working with other public benefit organisations and a direct delivery organisation supporting individuals directly on a one-to-one basis through its own programmes. The main activities and programmes are:

- Core Services
- Well-Being
- Community Champions
- Resettlement
- Employment

Measuring effectiveness

Currently, measures of success vary significantly from programme to programme, based in each case on the design of the programme (including input from clients, staff, trustees, partners and the corpus of good practice) in light of any constraints imposed by a programme's funder(s) and negotiation with them during any application process. VCKC is working towards setting a handful of outcomes that will be common across all its programmes, one benefit of which will be to enable trustees and staff to assess more easily the changes achieved by VCKC as a whole. Our partnership with Do-It, the national volunteering platform, to develop a Customer Relationship Management application as the basis for an integrated performance monitoring system, experienced a significant delay this year due to the effects of the pandemic on both organisations, but the project continues to progress.

Our primary measures are set in terms of outcomes - did clients achieve the positive change anticipated when they joined the programme - with targets for the number of clients achieving the outcomes over a particular reporting period. Secondary measures are set in terms of outputs - did clients complete a process or get to a milestone that we consider necessary to achieve a desirable outcome. For example, an output measure common to all our programmes is that a client is placed as a volunteer with an organisation of their choosing. Tertiary measures are sometimes used at the specific request of a funder; for example, the number of clients recruited to a particular programme, or recruited from a particular catchment.

Core Services

With funding from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and this year from City Bridge Trust via London Funders' pandemic response programme, our Core Services team of paid staff and volunteers, led by our Chief Operating Officer, Andrew Croxford, until the recruitment of our new Operations Manager, Sheona Alexander in February 2021, delivers a wide range of support to the local community and its voluntary sector. The brokerage element of our Core Services, run by our Volunteer Services Administrator, Angela Weir together with a team of volunteers, offers support to people who want to volunteer, while working closely with organisations seeking to increase their volunteering capacity. We work with organisations to develop inclusive and supportive volunteering programmes, delivering volunteer management training, convening forums for group learning, facilitating networking opportunities, and providing 1:1 tailored advice.

On 16 March 2020, the Volunteer Centre had closed its offices and moved online in anticipation of the national lockdown. By 1 April, our Communication Lead, Eunice Ackerson, had already created a simplified COVID-19 volunteer registration process for both individuals offering their time and organisations requesting volunteers. Core Services quickly registered more than 2,000 people seeking roles in the pandemic response, far more than the number of volunteering opportunities that were available. This included hundreds of volunteers from the newly created Mutual Aid network in the borough, with which we began an ongoing close and fruitful partnership. We developed new relationships with different parts of our local NHS and put forward hundreds of suitable volunteers for roles from drivers to porters to administrators. As the nature of the response changed, we helped to set up and staff mass testing sites and then vaccination clinics. This enabled us to place at least 863 people into rewarding voluntary roles this year. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the pressures on our whole society, we found it quite challenging to get data on placements back from some of our partners, especially those parts of the NHS under most pandemic pressure, and so we have elected only to count as placed those volunteers about whom we received positive confirmation even though we know this is probably under-reporting.

Many of our local partners had suspended their volunteering programmes due to lockdown – by the time of our Board's first meeting of 2020-21 only 14 organisations were advertising new roles. This, along with the national NHS volunteering campaign that could only place some of the hundreds of thousands it recruited, meant that we were both at the centre of an incredible amount of effective volunteering and yet a number of enthusiastic local people were frustrated because they were not offered a placement. This combination of a dramatic increase in the number of people offering themselves as volunteers, but a much more modest increase in volunteer placements, leading to disappointment and frustration, is something we experienced during the response to the fire at Grenfell Tower and something we worked to address proactively through our communications, both directly and in concert with RBKC, KCSC and other partners.

As well as brokering people into voluntary roles in not-for-profit organisations, the Volunteer Centre would usually run a programme of workshops, training sessions, forums and one-to-one consultations to maintain and improve the quality of volunteer management and the inclusivity of volunteering across the borough. During the pandemic, especially during lockdowns when many of our partners suspended their programmes altogether, we altered our support activities significantly to respond to changing local needs, helping to set up and run a range of new networks and meetings to co-ordinate the various parts of the community response. Much of this programme occurred under the aegis of the Community Resilience Group, a partnership of voluntary organisations, RBKC and WLCCG set up in advance of the first lockdown. The structure provided daily opportunities to support self-organising volunteers – both those active in North Kensington that had formed in the wake of the fire, and more recent borough-wide mutual aid associations that overlapped and integrated pre-existing networks. We enabled a high degree of co-ordination between these flexible and effective unconstituted groups and both statutory and voluntary organisations, connected them with safeguarding resources, provided advice on volunteering-related issues and one to one support to help people manage their experiences on the front line.

Flexible Volunteering & Community Development
Street-based outreach, led by Outreach Officer Terry Kabengele, is a key part of our work, which we've adapted over time to support major events and respond to the latest exceptional challenges faced by local people. These have included the 2011 riots, 2012 Olympics and the fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017. Street-based outreach enables us to meet and connect with people who might otherwise experience significant barriers to volunteering, public services, or even building and maintaining relationships. We offer people the time and space to talk on their own terms, the opportunity to give some of their time on a low-commitment basis as well as signposting to sources of help and support. This year our work was funded by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the Kensington & Chelsea Foundation's Isolation and Loneliness programme.

Our K&C Ambassadors - a team of volunteers that are passionate about the borough, its community, diverse rich history & culture who support local events, campaigns and celebrations across RBKC were largely unable to work in their usual way during the pandemic. Our much loved Saturday programme on Portobello Road and Golborne Road markets was suspended throughout the year, and Operation Cup of Tea, our street-based intervention for local people to stop, decompress and talk about local issues and opportunities over a hot drink, was severely constrained as to when it could operate. It was difficult to organise in-person events and source volunteers to continue on socially-distanced street volunteering, but some of the normal activities were replaced through the provision of volunteers to the Venture Centre to help with packaging, distributing and organising emergency food deliveries. Staff and volunteers were also able to help with the launch and first weeks of The Platform in Earl's Court – a community kitchen and advice project which Mutual Aid K&C members started running in June 2020. Some volunteers were asked to contact people in the shielded or vulnerable groups, via phone or e-mail, in case they need essentials, food or other services such as laundry. Staff and volunteers were on hand to provide information to local residents about the pandemic and where to get help – this included leaflet drops in some wards.

The IT and other system changes we made in preparation for the first lockdown continued during the year, but at a very limited pace, due in part to the impact of the pandemic on our CRM partner, Do-it, and to the other demands on our limited resources.

Case Study
Because of a heart condition, H could no longer work as a security guard. When we met, shortly before the pandemic, he was experiencing depression and feeling very isolated. After a long initial chat, H started volunteering as a K&C Ambassador. He also started to attend Wellbeing workshops and community volunteering taster days.

When the pandemic started, H found things very difficult and, at the same time, meeting people in person via his volunteering placement was no longer possible. We stayed in touch, helped H to access the internet and to use his phone for video calls. This enabled him to continue to give his time to others, attend positive activities and get support from the Volunteer Centre team when it could make the most difference, and also stay connected to other services that he relied on before lockdown.

"I felt isolated and alone before I came here. I felt useless. If you live alone, you never talk to anyone for nearly one month - so it's difficult. My room is like prison. I sat there sometimes and cried. Then I met the Volunteer Centre and volunteered with the Ambassadors team, and I feel more hopeful about the future and I feel happy. It's like a new dawn of life."

Wellbeing
We work with people who have a range of disabilities to help them succeed in an environment that is not adapted to their physical, psychological and educational requirements. Our clients are a diverse range of residents in Kensington and Chelsea and its immediate environs and many face more than one issue. We use volunteering as a method of building self-efficacy through achievement, a sense of belonging and greater independence. We enable people through placements that support them and are compatible with their health issues, skills and interests. We invest in developing local organisations to be able to take on volunteers with particular requirements, providing them with training and advice. We also provide a range of self-care, creative and social workshops and events.

The programme is led by our Head of Wellbeing Louisa Schepes, assisted this year by our Wellbeing Programme Officer, Iona Sutherland. Wellbeing was supported this year by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's Adult Social Care department, the North West London Clinical Commissioning Group (NWLCCG) via Kensington & Chelsea Social Council, the Tudor Trust and the Kensington & Chelsea Foundation. Despite the restrictions of the pandemic, we facilitated 61 volunteering placements for people experiencing poor mental health and/or with a physical or learning disability.

In April we moved our programme of Wellbeing and Self-Care workshops online and have since then linked up with other organisations such as the Grenfell Health and Wellbeing service to develop and deliver joint webinars. We delivered online workshops to help build self-care skills and aid recovery, such as Healthy Eating, Maintaining Wellbeing in a Pandemic, and Relaxation Techniques.

To counteract our clients' isolation and anxiety, we also developed some creative and social workshops and delivered them online, including Wellbeing Art, Cook and Chat, and Wellbeing coffee mornings. As soon as it was safe to do so, we started taking small groups for activities in parks and outdoor spaces, to help maintain their physical as well as mental health. For example, Mindfulness in Nature walks in local parks and along the canal, and a summer walk and picnic on Hampstead Heath.

Throughout the year we provided welfare calls to those with additional mental health needs to provide them with self-care tips, build resilience and help them to remain engaged with counselling services, and also to remind them to attend activities in which they had expressed an interest. We also recruited and trained telephone befrienders for some of our most isolated clients. We supported 91 people with mental health needs to build their self-care capacity.

Our team has worked hard to adapt to the needs of clients and the external environment as both have shifted and changed over the course of an incredible year. Our initial priority was to help those clients at greatest risk to adapt to lockdown and stay connected and psychologically stable. At the beginning of lockdown, we made welfare calls to clients to check how they were and to assess their needs. We noted who was living alone, who was shielding, whether they had access to information and support via phones and computers with internet access, and what additional support needs they had in light of those resources. Some of our clients were very isolated, so we started to recruit and train telephone befriender volunteers. We began to help people to access Zoom and WhatsApp and to get connected to the Internet at home for the first time. This priority gave way to a normalisation phase, as we tried to keep people creative and active in different way. We developed online workshops and social events, to help to keep people connected and active and to support their wellbeing in isolation. Our activities adapted again as the focus moved to vaccination preparedness and to thinking about the opportunities offered by an easing of restrictions, alongside the challenges of transitioning people into yet another stage without much confidence that this would be the last such transition. Despite all this, and the emotional health and wellbeing issues the pandemic has raised for our team members, the level of support for clients, and the achievement of targets, has been consistently high.

Case Study
AF has a learning disability and was referred to us by Balance. He wanted to have something to occupy him during the Covid-19 national lockdown, and was also hoping to build his skills to be able to apply for paid employment.

It was clear from AF's initial assessment that he was able to carry out tasks like sorting and packing if given clear instruction and some supervision. AF was finding the social isolation and inactivity of lockdown difficult. He also hoped to find a job eventually, and wanted to have some customer service experience to add to his previous experience of sorting and packing. Wellbeing found a placement for him in a food bank and arranged to go along with him to help him to settle in and explain tasks to him. We also started to invite him to online creative and social workshops, and added him to our Wellbeing Walks group.

AF enjoyed volunteering at the food bank and the organisers found him to be capable and helpful. Part of his volunteering involved talking to the food bank clients and seeing what they needed. When he obtained an interview for a paid sales assistant position, he found it very helpful to be able to say that he had had some relevant customer service experience. We were able to role play the job interview with him beforehand, so that he could practise what he wanted to say. AF found volunteering a positive experience, and found that he also felt less lonely and that his mood improved as a result.

Community Champions
The Community Champions programme recruits and supports volunteers to identify barriers to health and wellbeing in the places they live. They work together and in partnership with public services to develop ways to overcome these barriers and deliver sustainable solutions to health, housing and social care issues. Champions show how local people can work with statutory services and voluntary organisations to improve outcomes.

The Volunteer Centre's Community Champions project, led by Ewa Kasjanowicz, our Community Champions Manager, supported by Project Officer Matan Sowatskey, working with the residents of Lancaster West and Silchester estates in Notting Dale ward, is one of 15 across Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster.

This year the project reached 2,013 residents and continues working very closely with the Lancaster West Residents Association, North West London CCG, various health and wellbeing organisations and other local stakeholders. The number of active Champions varied slightly with the pressures of the pandemic, finishing the year on 17.

Most of Champions' regular activities continued, despite the pandemic, via Zoom. They offered yoga, origami and art classes, a diabetes support group facilitated by local GPs and several very popular groups focusing on mental wellbeing. After some initial struggles with technology, many residents became comfortable with it, and some online classes, such as the chair-based exercise class for over 55s, were better attended compared to similar ones delivered face to face before the pandemic.

In December 2020, Champions delivered their established Winter Warmth campaign, distributing over 150 goodie bags including gloves, scarves, hand warmers as well as information on flu jabs, 111 service and support available in the area over the winter months, to local residents particularly at risk at this time of year.

During periods when the Covid-19 restrictions were partially relaxed the project moved to a hybrid model, retaining online activities, but adding more outdoor activities, such as walking and exercise group, buggy walks for parents and yoga in Kensington Memorial Park. Additionally, many residents were supported individually in response to their needs, with examples including phone befriending, assistance with accessing services or supporting mothers with breastfeeding (Maternity Champions).

The main focus of Champions' work this year was sharing public health messages around Covid-19 and especially the vaccine. They took part in hosting and promoting the Community Conversations series online, run in partnership with North West London NHS, where residents could ask questions and receive information on vaccination from their local health professionals. The feedback suggested that most participants were more likely to get vaccinated as a result of attending the sessions. Volunteers also supported the vaccination site at the Science Museum, a pop-up clinic on Lancaster West estate and several vaccine bus events in the area, and they were an invaluable source of community intelligence that was used to respond to local people's questions, improve communications, and target resources.

Case Study
M is a local resident, who joined 'Good News Chat' online weekly sessions delivered by one of the Champions. Like many others, he struggled with the emotional impact of the pandemic and benefited from the consistent empathetic support the group provided. Here he shares his experience:

"I had really no idea what to expect when I started, but I've found it surprisingly rewarding and have participated in every session. I've found some aspects positively helpful. Recalling how things felt in May, when normal social contact had been suspended and no-one knew when it might resume, it would have been all too easy to fall into a state of lethargy and depression. Having the Good News Chat Group, and a small number of other things, to look forward to at a regular time each week was something I found surprisingly helpful in giving the week some sense of structure. It's also offered social contact, in a relaxed and friendly way, which was very welcome for someone like me who lives on their own. Lais has managed to find intriguing and thought-provoking topics to discuss, that I wouldn't otherwise have encountered. A lot of thought and effort went in to choosing and introducing the videos each week, for no material reward, by L, who is a volunteer. That kind of unselfish altruism is in itself inspirational and has helped refresh my faith in human nature".

We were delighted to secure the contract for the Notting Dale Community Champions programme for a further five years when it was tendered by the Public Health department in 2020. We secured a very high percentage of the marks available, based on our understanding of local people and our ability to work relationally and developmentally with a wide variety of people and partners. As the funding does not cover the full cost of the programme, we have applied for further funding for work on the estates from independent funding sources.

Resettlement
Our InsideOut programme, funded this year by the City Bridge Trust, helps people with criminal convictions re-integrate into the local community. We prioritise ex-offenders with complex needs and at higher risk once released from custody, including older people, those living with addiction, institutionalized offenders, and people with mental health issues. We offer a tailored, one-to-one service – every client makes a Personal Development Plan, identifying their needs and the personal and professional goals they want to achieve. With the support we provide clients gain skills, knowledge and confidence, access to a wide range of essential services, work experience and employment, and so the capacity to re-integrate into their local community.

Our InsideOut Co-ordinator, Jason Hudson, joined us in April 2020, shortly after the initial lockdown began, so his first challenge was getting to know our team, culture, systems, and clients, despite having to do this almost entirely online. Jason maintained regular contact with all our InsideOut clients and provided a lot of emotional support, which was particularly critical because probation services were suspended, leaving many vulnerable people without any specialist support at an extremely difficult time. In addition to tackling isolation and loneliness amongst our clients, Jason also helped them focus on practical activities; going over their CV's and doing mock interviews. Probation services did eventually restart, but they remained online, handicapping their ability to build essential trust with ex-offenders, a pre-requisite for any chance of enabling greater independence and wellbeing.

The response of HM Prison Service to the pandemic - moving to skeleton staffing of prisons, locking prisoners in their cells for as long as possible, and preventing external support from entering - created additional long-term wellbeing issues for those confined and those working with them, and prevented pre-release activities that can make a big difference to our clients' resettlement goals. A huge backlog of security and identity checks for anyone who wants access to prisons or offender-management systems was also created. Most support services were still operating on a very limited basis a year after the initial lockdown. Various Prison Service resettlement teams are, nonetheless, very keen to make referrals to InsideOut and pathways have been established with various organisations including CRC, National Probation Service, NHS OXLEAS Foundation Trust, NHS West London CCG, UTurn Recovery, The Nehemiah Project, and the Forward Trust.

Training opportunities proved to be popular amongst the clients, together with information around funding and courses available to them after going through the criminal justice system. CV updating and review continued to be offered. Disclosure advice was as important as ever, as some clients have no knowledge of the process for disclosing their offences, but cannot make progress towards paid work and independence without taking this fundamental step.

In spite of being new to the Volunteer Centre and having to get up to speed during a pandemic lockdown when both the Prison Service and Probation were largely closed to us, Jason worked with 62 clients during the year. He enabled 11 clients to secure volunteering placements appropriate to their developmental goals and licensing conditions, and supported six to gain and retain paid jobs. The year ahead will be one in which we revivify key networks used previously to connect prepared and well motivated clients to skills, knowledge and confidence development, work experience, and vacancies for paid employment.

Case Study
ED was released from custody two days before the first lockdown was announced. He had educated himself in custody, gained two degrees, and developed The ONE programme, a course designed to help young people break free from gang culture. He was looking forward to moving in with his wife who he had been visiting in the run up to his release, one weekend each month. On release, his probation officer had declined his new address without providing a reason and ordered him to stay at alternative Approved Premises. Approved Premises significantly increase the risk of a breach of licensing condition or re-offending because they are often poorly supervised and isolating, with a high incidence of violence and self-medication with alcohol or drugs. When he arrived, he was told they didn't have a reliable space for him and advised he go to the local authority, despite this being breach of the licence conditions set by Probation (meaning could be sent back to prison for the rest of his 10 year sentence).

ED made contact with his NHS practitioner, who referred him to InsideOut. Our assessment, based on information from Probation, deemed him a risk to staff, so we used the People Safe app for the first few meetings until a relationship of trust had been formed. For our first face to face contact we arranged to meet in a COVID-19 safe space. Together we drew up a care plan for ED and prioritised his needs, starting with a safe home as he felt at significant risk in the insecure and volatile Approved Premises. He also wanted to find a company that would enable him to implement The ONE programme, and help to make a complaint against the Probation Service for failing him. We met a couple of times to discuss options for space to run The ONE programme and introduced him to the Harrow Club and to Morley College where his programme was met with a lot of interest, but both organisations wanted him to run the programme for free, which he was not willing to do.

We then introduced him to Wilmott Dixon, a building company who are working in K&C and ED convinced them to offer work placement trials for the young people he was getting out of gangs. We put him in touch with a company that had empty offices close to our own and ED was given a large, temporary space for free, enabling him to start his own company and begin running the programme. ED has held two job fairs in K&C, both of which have been well received. ED is determined not to allow the Probation Service to treat others as they treated him, and his complaint is ongoing.

Employment

The New Opportunities Project, led by our Head of Employability, Ola Omikunle, assisted by our Employment Support Administrator, Mohamud Mohamud, is a high quality, individually tailored programme that supports local residents into work, training, volunteering or work experience, delivered in partnership with the Campden Charities. Our clients' circumstances vary widely, from teenagers to those close to retirement, people who have been unemployed for many years or have never worked, those without the qualifications or experience who need to secure sustainable employment, including recently qualified graduates and people wanting to move into management jobs. Some clients have experienced chronic ill health that has kept them out of the workforce for a long time.

We recognise the challenges inherent in trying to reach our target audience (long-term unemployed people experiencing the effects of poverty, typically with mild to moderate mental health needs) and to build and maintain sufficient trust to enable them to improve their lives, even in normal times. Substantial additional challenges were posed by the lack of access to the weekly Job Club sessions and frequent workshops during the pandemic, plus the isolation of lockdown, and how this affected the process of engagement and scrutiny that Campden Charities go through before they accept a new referral. As trustees, our aim is to make sure that we have a shared understanding of the Head of Employment's plans to make the best adjustments possible to a difficult situation, that we analyse the impact of those plans, and that we review any changes made based on their relative success.

During the pandemic some of our clients lost their jobs, some were furloughed and others were unable to continue with their volunteering as a lot of charities were closed or working remotely. We contacted our clients by phone, text, and via social media to get an understanding of their needs, and help them to cope. We helped more than 200 families in this way during the year

We began the year as we ended the last, in lockdown, by continuing to support clients and their families to connect with, or continue to benefit from, key crisis resources like food banks, key anti-poverty opportunities like education and employment, and to key wellbeing services helping with issues like mental health and social care. We did this by funding a range of physical assets that our clients need in order to manage complex lives under sometimes enormous pressures – for example, laptop computers, software or broadband access made a big difference to families who could otherwise not connect to home-schooling, stay on top of job-seeking with so few vacancies to apply for, or take online exercise or cooking classes to stay physically and mentally active.

We continued to act as a broker for access to our local food bank, arranged food deliveries to be made for those returning home from hospital or self-isolating, and helped some clients set up their first online shopping account. We also supported clients in need by helping them with their utilities, college materials, and both repairing and purchasing essentials. We advised on next steps for the increasing number of clients who were made unemployed, talked through practical challenges like managing debt, tackled isolation with regular befriending and welfare calls and did all we could to keep people connected and positive.

Where job vacancies were still available, we assisted with sourcing them and gave clients assistance, when possible, with applications. We were able to get 14 residents into jobs. We also got 17 people into volunteering and work-experience placements. We assisted 18 others with training and education.

During periods where restrictions were eased and we could meet our clients in small groups, we prioritised activities for those who were under particular pressure, for example, those who had spent lockdown in overcrowded housing or were in ill-health, to get them out of the house and get active. Such interventions were important before the pandemic, particularly for those people whose journey to securing paid work starts the furthest from their goal, as they are often isolated, anxious when their routine is challenged, and have very poor self-esteem resulting from long experience of rejection. Feeling secure in new places and trying new things can be key in overcoming their barriers to regular work. We delivered 11 COVID-compliant educational or wellbeing trips during the year, both within London and beyond.

The Campden Charities graciously supported 27 of our clients, enabling people to work towards greater independence backed with grants tailored to their individual and family circumstances.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Charity's income was £543,732 in the year ended 31 March 2021 compared to £531,726 in the year ended 31 March 2020. The total expenditure was £495,584 in the year to 31 March 2021 compared to £501,450 in the year ended 31 March 2020. The general fund balance (unrestricted funds) carried forward on the 31 March 2021 was £234,440, whilst £982 of restricted funds were also carried forward. This compares to an unrestricted balance of £177,274 carried forward on 31 March 2020, and a restricted balance of £10,000.

The surplus is primarily due to extra income raised reflecting the value that the Volunteer Centre provides to the community, as well as work done to find efficiencies, supplier discounts, and other cost savings.

Risk Management

The Board reviews risks to the effective operation and sustainability of the Volunteer Centre regularly, assessing the major risks that the charity is exposed to. The risk register is updated at least annually and appropriate systems and procedures are established to mitigate internal control risks and external risks that the charity faces. Outside of disaster response, principal risks and mitigation strategies are:

- Inability to secure core and programme funding

  The Volunteer Centre invests appropriate time in performance management and quality assurance to ensure that it is effective. Demonstrable effectiveness is key to securing and sustaining funding for its work. Time is also invested in understanding the needs of our clients - volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations - supporting client participation, and reflecting this in our work. The Volunteer Centre maintains good working relationships with a range of current and prospective funders, building mutual understanding and helping to identify shared objectives. The Board's sub-committee charged with the co-ordination of the development of funding convenes in advance, and reports its work to the Trustees at, each full Board meeting.

- Insufficient system capacity to deliver management the information necessary to enable managers and governors to perform effectively

  The Volunteer Centre gathers data on its performance from regular monitoring of its work with clients, from periodic generation of case-studies based on client and staff experience, from annual surveys of staff and Trustees, and from its routine financial processes. It retains this data (in compliance with its regulatory obligations) and reports it internally to staff and Trustees, and externally to funders, regulators and the wider public (again subject to compliance with regulatory obligations). The Volunteer Centre does not have a single integrated system for capturing, retaining and interrogating this data, making these processes inefficient and subject to more error than necessary. In order to reduce the risk of error or a material oversight, the Volunteer Centre is taking steps to simplify and integrate its systems, and to invest in resources to support this process.

- Lack of Succession Planning

  Recent staff turnover has highlighted the need for the Volunteer Centre to put in place more robust processes and rely more on systems and less on individuals. The need to review the organisational structure and the current reporting lines as well as a central record keeping (for example, to ensure consistency of practice in relation to supervision and appraisal) has been prioritised. Actions are being put in place to document processes and give easy access to information to all staff, including more individual empowerment for decision making.

- Disintermediation

  During the pandemic, the niche in which the Volunteer Centre operates as a broker – between individuals seeking volunteering and VCS organisations recruiting volunteers – was disrupted. Many local people got together at neighbourhood level and organised themselves simply and quickly using WhatsApp and similar digital tools, raising questions about the centrality of VCS organisations as a conduit for local social action. In parallel, both national NGOs like Royal Voluntary Service, and online start-ups sought to use the pandemic to increase their reputations and so incomes, either by claims to scale, speed or to accessibility. The Volunteer Centre invested in its strengths – local relationships, local knowledge, the capacity to respond to individual requirements, and a commitment to local people and organisations – in order to maintain its niche. Providing a wide range of facilitation and enablement support to mutual aid associations helped us to cement our value to local people at a time when national campaigns led to hundreds of thousands of volunteers registered without any prospect of deployment. Likewise, our local relationships and knowledge allowed us to build new relationships quickly as different phases of the pandemic required mass volunteering while many traditional volunteer programmes were suspended, but to pivot to supporting the re-opening of those programmes as mass volunteering was no longer demanded. Nevertheless, the pandemic showed that the Volunteer Centre must also develop the systems to work flexibly and effectively (and the capacity to deploy, as well as to recruit, at scale) during a crisis, either alone or via robust partnership arrangements.

The Grenfell Tower fire and the Covid-19 pandemic

The immediate and longer-term effects of the disaster at Grenfell Tower from the limited perspective of VCKC are described in previous annual reports, and in much broader and more comprehensive terms in "A Journey of Recovery", the Public Health report following the fire.

The trustees are conscious at all times of the need to act transparently and to take as much time as necessary to deliver value for money, to those affected directly by the fire, the wider community, and the public in general, as well as to specific donors.

The direct and indirect effects of the pandemic have highlighted to local people and institutions the ongoing consequences of inequalities of income and wealth in the borough. These effects have included: the digital divide, preventing some people making the transition to online activity, including in education, because they lack the means to do so; large scale food insecurity; homelessness and inadequate housing. All these effects have in turn contributed to stark health inequalities, with poor people dying decades before their more affluent neighbours and much more likely to live in poor health in the meantime.

For Kensington and Chelsea, the pandemic is the second crisis in recent years, and in responding to the current one our team has tried to remember and apply some of the lessons from the fire and its aftermath, for example, the importance of early planning in which local people are involved and in which the reality of their experience is reflected. The urgency of focusing on these social determinants of health, and doing so in a way that empowers local people, has come to the fore in many of the collaborations we have undertaken this year. For example, in chairing the borough's Emotional Health & Wellbeing group throughout the pandemic, or contributing to the Health Partners initiative in North Kensington, consensus has been built around the crucial role of the community itself as both the fount of prevention and early intervention work, and of poverty and inequality as both causes of poor health and of barriers to improvement. The Volunteer Centre is pleased to have been able to play a role in developing this consensus across community, voluntary and statutory partners, and to have found a wide range of opportunities to advocate for and to make these changes alongside those same partners.

New Arrivals

During the autumn of 2020 we began to get increasing reports from our partners in Mutual Aid K&C, in foodbanks, and in community kitchens, that they were supporting a rising number of people newly arrived in the borough and apparently subject to the Asylum system. In mid-December we were approached for advice by a very active volunteer with Care4Calais who was supporting a young man who had been placed in an Earl's Court hotel by the Home Office. We introduced the volunteer to some of our partner organisations who specialise in support for new arrivals, staying in touch to make sure we made a good connection. It quickly became apparent that the young man was one of nearly 700 people in Earl's Court hotels, placed by the Home Office, but unreported to the local authority.

We were asked to facilitate a meeting of volunteers, charities and Council officers to help get a handle on the number, experience and needs of the newly arrived, which we did in early January. From there regular meetings were convened by Natasha Bishop, Head of Early Help in RBKC's Children & Families directorate, connecting her colleagues with the Home Office's contractor and those delivering (very poor services) on their behalf, as well as with the volunteers providing direct support to the newly arrived in very difficult circumstances. We attended these regular meetings to provide advice and support, which was much needed in the early weeks when the Home Office contractor's initial tactics were to dispute every complaint, even when photographs and video were available to substantiate them. *"The Volunteer Centre was instrumental in connecting us with sympathetic community organisations like SMART, and we would never have had the critical engagement we needed with RBKC without your credibility behind us."* – Becky Brook, local resident and Mutual Aid K&C lead for new arrivals.

This work was another example of the Volunteer Centre using its relationships and reputation to convene and facilitate voluntary action in the borough, and while it has become very much a part of everyday activity during the pandemic, it has been largely unfunded and has been delivered in addition to our team's already substantial commitments. In the case of the new arrivals it formed the foundation for outcomes that continue to be achieved many months later, including improvements in food and hygiene in the hotels, mass volunteer-led clothing distributions, and ultimately created the basis for an outstanding response to the needs of newly arrived Afghans in 2021-22.

Vaccine Volunteering

In September 2020 we were approached by our local GP Federation to recruit and deploy volunteers in two local flu vaccination clinics once the annual vaccination promotion began. We scoped and costed a twelve-week programme and sent our proposal to the Federation. Over the following six months we were repeatedly challenged to adapt our approach as the Federation lost and replaced the staff we were working with several times, and as the focus of their attention moved to COVID-19 vaccination. Over the period they invested in staffing and IT as their model moved to insourcing (so removing both the potential funding for recruitment and deployment and the opportunity to recoup our planning and partnership management costs) and additional partners like AgeUK K&C joined the effort. Nevertheless, we were able to help them recruit hundreds of volunteers, and to support them with advice on avoiding volunteer burnout and high drop-out rates by rotating their entire cohort rather than working continuously with their most initially enthusiastic and reliable recruits.

In parallel, since GP practices are independent businesses and not required to follow the Federation's lead, we were also asked to recruit vaccine volunteers for a practice in Earl's Court, which we did in partnership with Mutual Aid K&C. Working at the front line with NHS colleagues was a learning experience for all of us, demonstrating that it is sometimes the norms and expectations that are hardest to adapt to, rather than tactical or logistical challenges. For example, volunteers might sign up to work without payment, but things like being valued in the same way as paid team members, and being able to finish their shift at the agreed time, can be crucial to maintaining motivation and commitment and yet are often overlooked by organisations for whom volunteers are a novelty.

As local clinics were supplemented or replaced by mass vaccination centres we were asked to help test the Science Museum's capacity to use volunteers to handle thousands of people arriving for vaccinations each day. We were able to include a wide range of local people in the test, including some of the new arrivals we were supporting, providing opportunities to deliver additional local services to them as well as an occasion for them to contribute. This implicit reciprocity is at the heart of our vision of a borough in which everyone has a role to play and a contribution to make and no one should be made to feel badly about drawing from our collective resources when they need them.

Strategic Performance
The success criteria for our current strategic plan require that the Volunteer Centre will be:

- the "go-to" volunteering organisation in RBKC, using its unique combination of expertise, local knowledge and network to create and shape rewarding placements for individuals, organisations and the local community
- Viewed as the local solution to helping vulnerable people gain achieve life-changing experience through volunteering
- Recognised as the voice of volunteering in the borough and the champion of voluntary action in strengthening the community

In our last report we said that it was too early to evaluate our performance against our current strategy, but that the work done in the early stages of the community response to the pandemic suggested good progress. That progress continued in the year to March 2021. Our ability to prepare for and adapt to the first lockdown, our effectiveness in supporting a wide range of new work while enabling our pre-pandemic clients to navigate pandemic challenges, and our central role in the community response to COVID-19 suggested that our strategy remained appropriate, our goals relevant and proportionate, and that a key ongoing risk would be the maintenance of our team's effectiveness and resilience as we stretched to encompass additional areas of responsibility.

In the spring and summer of 2020 staff and trustees collaborated on a programme by programme review of our tactical response to the pandemic in light of the changes in our operating environment, the personal and other resources available to the organisation, and the risks thus identified. Key next steps identified were:

- securing resources to maintain our communications capacity on at least a part-time basis
- securing donors such that the core programmes of the Volunteer Centre are sustained in the medium-term
- analysing the impact on the Volunteer Centre of local mutual aid associations and understanding the threats and opportunities the changed environment provides

In the autumn the Board, in responding to the first two points, developed and reviewed some likely financial scenarios for the year ahead and the decisions that resulted from that review were implemented in Funding Development committee deliberations and in the budget making process in the final quarter of the year. In respect of the third point, the Volunteer Centre collaborated with the Institute of Volunteering Research at the University of East Anglia in looking at the experiences of people who took part in the mutual aid associations in the borough, their reasons for getting involved and both the upsides and downsides of that involvement, with a view to informing strategic development in 2021.

Reserves Policy
The Board has examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be equal to at least 3 months of the charity's total expenditure. This reserve is intended to ensure that the charity can continue to operate in the event of an emergency, or a sudden cut in funding. The level of reserves available to the charity at 31 March 2021 was above the target. The Board keeps under review the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed, should circumstances require such action.

Investment Policy
The unrestricted funds in reserve fluctuate and can be called upon temporarily to meet immediate cash flow needs. They are held in higher yield savings accounts with UK banks at levels protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Future Plans
To achieve success in our strategy, we committed to five specific objectives:

- Develop our "Volunteer Journey" model to offer a tailored, flexible, personalised service to potential volunteers and provide them with opportunities with local organisations which correspond to their goals and needs. *The impact of the pandemic on Do-It, and also on the Volunteer Centre's capacity, slowed rather than stopped progress on this objective. We remain fully committed to achieving both an effective, integrated volunteer journey for all our clients, and to having the basic systems we need in place to track and manage performance.*
- Offer resources and training to, and develop and manage relationships with, local organisations to improve their capacity to involve volunteers and shape targeted and rewarding volunteer roles. Enhance connections with and between hyper-local organisations to this end. *We have achieved a lot in respect of this objective this year, led principally by our Chief Executive. We believe that this valuable work needs to be shared more equitably across our professional team, both to ensure the Chief Executive retains sufficient capacity to discharge his other duties, and to manage the risk of his incapacity or departure.*
- Continue to (i) offer dedicated long-term specialist support to ensure access for all to life changing experiences through volunteering and (ii) build a track record around employment and community contribution or responsibility as a result of volunteering. *With rapid adaptation and solutions tailored to individual circumstances the Volunteer Centre was able to achieve this objective this year, though the greater intensity of support required by clients to do so meant that we could not maintain our pre-pandemic scale, and will need to be ready and able to adapt again as the external environment alters.*
- Provide volunteering best practice advice and training to individuals and organisations. Participate in local groups and forums, acting as an advocate of voluntary action as well as a connector, a facilitator of partnerships, a trusted intermediary and contributor to social capital. *This is another objective that we exceled at this year, but which we will now work towards empowering our wider team to share more with our Chief Executive.*
- Aim to be a high trust learning environment, supported by accredited systems, with open communication and effective feedback between team members, such that Volunteer Centre team members understand their roles, how they connect to our strategy and feel motivated, supported and valued. *We believe that rapid, successful adaptation, alongside excellent performance in the external environment and intensive support for clients most affected by the pandemic, means that management time has been focused on the community and local ecosystem and needs to shift decisively to internal priorities in the short-term, rebuilding relationships and systems dislocated by a year of largely remote working and the prioritisation of delivery at the cost of maintaining our back office capacity.*

This has been amongst the most successful years in the Volunteer Centre's history, but also one of the most taxing, so while we keep our eyes on the prize and press to complete the strategic objectives we have set for the organisation, we recognise the coming years as ones in which we must rebuild some of the strength we spent during this exceptional time, while also preparing for further changes in our operating environment and in the role our community needs us to play to enable and empower their social action.

Financial Sustainability and Going Concern
At the time of writing this report and having given consideration to internal and external factors (including the financial position of the Charity and its level of reserves, the ability to continue to raise sufficient funding for the operations and the changes to the operating environment in relation to the pandemic), the trustees of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea have concluded that it is financially sustainable and able to continue to operate on a going concern basis for the foreseeable future.

Despite the pandemic, the Charity continues to attract funders thanks to the concrete benefits it brings to the local community and at time of writing we expect to be able to cover a small, budgeted deficit for the coming year through additional fundraising opportunities and cost efficiencies. We are investing in a more modern IT / telephone infrastructure that will deliver some modest cost savings and, more importantly, will generate efficiencies that will allow management to better focus on fundraising and service delivery.

We have a robust risk management process in place. We review and revise the risk register at the finance committee meeting prior to every trustee meeting as we address existing (or identify new) risks. Our policies are updated to reflect internal processes and legal and regulatory changes as and when they occur. Our core policies – safeguarding, data protection – are reviewed annually and our others at least every two years.

We have been able to continue to provide most of our services either in person or online throughout the pandemic and have set up robust processes in case of further pandemic restrictions. We have been and continue to be able to attract volunteers to take part in our work. We are regularly assessing staff wellbeing, capabilities and capacities so that we can support them in a challenging environment, improve our service delivery and continue to have a motivated workforce. To achieve this, we have designated an appropriate reserve for training and coaching activities.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also directors of Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and 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;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that 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 auditor is 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 auditor is aware of that information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. Approved by the Board of Trustees on 17 December 2021 and signed on its behalf, by:

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan
Chair

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2021

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021, 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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 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 other information comprises the information included in the trustees report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the trustees report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of 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 trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and

- the directors' report 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 directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which 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 directors' 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 prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 18, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance about actual and potential litigation or claims and the identification of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Auditing the risk of management override of controls, including testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.
- Performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- Professional scepticism in course of the audit and with audit sampling in material audit areas.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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

Use of our report

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

Stephen Jones FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Myrus Smith
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditors
Norman House, 8 Burnell Road
Sutton, Surrey
SM1 4BW

17 December 2021

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating Income and Expenditure Account)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
Income					
Donations and grants	2	218	-	218	249
Charitable activities	3	384,813	158,600	543,413	531,187
Investments	4	101	-	101	290
Total		385,132	158,600	543,732	531,726
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	5	236,034	259,550	495,584	501,450
Total		236,034	259,550	495,584	501,450
Net income/(expenditure)	9	149,098	(100,950)	48,148	30,276
Transfer between funds	14	(91,932)	91,932	-	-
Net movement in funds		57,166	(9,018)	48,148	30,276
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	14	177,274	10,000	187,274	156,998
Total funds carried forward	14	£234,440	£982	£235,422	£187,274

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

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

The notes form part of the financial statements.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31ST MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible fixed assets	11		557		3,059
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	21,219		31,458	
Cash at bank and in hand		238,173		171,660	
		259,392		203,118	
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	13	24,527		18,903	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			234,865		184,215
NET ASSETS	15		£235,422		£187,274
FUNDS					
Restricted	14		982		10,000
Unrestricted	14				
General Funds			209,440		177,274
Designated Funds			25,000		-
	14		£235,422		£187,274

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 17 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Anne-Helene Biosse Duplan – Chair

The notes form part of the financial statements.

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
(A company limited by guarantee)

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net movement in funds		48,148	30,276
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation	9	2,502	2,501
Interest receivable	4	(101)	(290)
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors		10,239	(22,716)
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors		5,624	(17,507)
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities		66,412	(7,736)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received	4	101	290
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-	(1,114)
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities		101	(824)
Change in cash and cash equivalents		66,513	(8,560)
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward		171,660	180,220
Cash and cash equivalents carried forward		£238,173	£171,660
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents			
Cash at bank and in hand		£238,173	£171,660

The notes form part of these financial statements.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting
The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income recognition
Items of income are recognised in the financial statements when all of the following criteria are met:
- The charity has entitlement to the funds;
- Any performance conditions have been met or are fully within the control of the charity;
- There is sufficient certainty that receipt of the income is considered probable; and
- The amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure recognition
Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure on charitable activities comprises the costs associated with delivering volunteering services and activities.

Expenditure includes those costs of a direct nature which can be allocated to a specific activity. It also includes indirect costs, including governance costs that do not relate to a specific activity but are necessary to support those activities. Support costs are apportioned on the basis of staff time.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted general funds are freely available for use in furtherance of the objects of the charity and which have not been designated for particular purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside by the trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which can only be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor or which have been raised for a particular purpose.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation
Tangible assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised. Depreciation is provided so as to write off the cost of each asset over its estimated useful life at the following annual rates:

Fixtures and fittings	25% straight line
Computer equipment	25% straight line

Leases
Operating lease rentals are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Pensions
The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable under the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year to which they relate.

Debtors and creditors
Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

2. **DONATIONS AND GRANTS**	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
Donations	£218	£Nil	£218	£249

All of the £249 recognised in 2020 related to unrestricted funds.

3. **INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Volunteer Brokerage				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	135,066	-	135,066	163,563
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	7,700	-	7,700	-
National Lottery Awards For All	-	-	-	10,000
The Greater London Authority	-	-	-	10,130
Westway Trust	-	-	-	2,500
Consulting and training fees	400	-	400	2,342
Employment				
Campden Charities	129,500	-	129,500	132,500
Well-being				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	-	30,000	30,000	30,000
Tudor Trust	-	30,000	30,000	30,000
West London Clinical Commissioning Group	-	-	-	25,131
Kensington and Chelsea Social Council	-	27,190	27,190	10,463
Other	-	-	-	593
Resettlement Scheme				
City Bridge Trust	11,500	46,000	57,500	11,500
Ambassadors				
Kensington & Chelsea Foundation	-	-	-	20,000
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	-	10,000	10,000	-
Community Champions				
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	62,146	-	62,146	67,146
The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation	-	10,410	10,410	10,000
West London Clinical Commissioning Group	-	5,000	5,000	5,000
Training and Consultancy	-	-	-	319
Covid Related Grants	38,501	-	38,501	-
	£384,813	£158,600	£543,413	£531,187

Of the £531,187 recognised in 2020, £413,312 related to unrestricted funds and £117,875 to restricted funds.

4.	**INVESTMENT INCOME**	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	Bank interest	£101	£Nil	£101	£290

All of the £290 received in 2020 was unrestricted funds.

5.	**EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**	Direct costs	Support costs	Total 2021	Total 2020
	Volunteering services	£372,467	£123,117	£495,584	£501,450

Of the £501,450 expenditure recognised in 2020, £289,936 was charged to unrestricted funds and £211,514 was charged to restricted funds.

6.	**ANALYSIS OF DIRECT COSTS**	2021 £	2020 £
	Staff costs	356,854	337,602
	Other direct costs	15,613	35,208
		£372,467	£372,810

7.	**ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS**	2021 £	2020 £
	Staff costs	66,799	68,576
	Office costs	27,950	29,194
	Premises costs	20,555	23,257
	Governance costs (see Note 8)	7,813	7,613
		£123,117	£128,640

8.	**GOVERNANCE COSTS**	2021 £	2020 £
	Audit and accounts fees	3,545	3,350
	Trustees meetings and insurance	542	738
	Staff costs	3,726	3,525
		£7,813	£7,613

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR

The net income for the year is stated after charging:

	2021	2020
Operating lease rentals	£19,332	£22,234
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	£2,502	£2,501
Auditor's remuneration – audit services	£2,845	£2,650
– non audit services	£700	£700

During the year Trustees received £Nil remuneration (2020: £Nil) or reimbursed expenses (2020: £Nil).

10. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

Staff costs were as follows:	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	356,090	337,038
Social security costs	30,722	28,905
Pension costs	19,429	17,175
	406,241	383,118
Recruitment and training costs	1,249	1,606
Freelance fees	19,889	24,979
	£427,379	£409,703

The average monthly number of employees during the year was 12 (2020: 12).

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was as follows:

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Charitable activities	10.1	10.3
Support activities	0.8	0.8
	10.9	11.1

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

Total employee benefits received by key management amounted to £104,904 (2020: £97,882). Under FRS 102, employee benefits includes gross salaries, employer's national insurance, employer's pension contributions and benefits in kind.

11. FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £
Cost:	
Balance at 1 April 2020	13,298
Additions	-
Balance at 31 March 2021	13,298
Depreciation:	
Balance at 1 April 2020	10,239
Charge for the year	2,502
Balance at 31 March 2021	12,741
Net book value:	
At 31 March 2021	£557
At 31 March 2020	£3,059

12. DEBTORS

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	20,400	30,752
Prepayments and accrued income	819	706
	£21,219	£31,458

13. CREDITORS – Amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	2,624	350
Accruals and deferred income	21,833	15,709
Other creditors	70	2,844
	£24,527	£18,903

Deferred income analysis

	£
As at 1 April 2020	10,410
Additions during the year	18,500
Amounts released to income	(10,410)
As at 31 March 2021	£18,500

Deferred income of £18,500 included above relates to grant income received during the year but relating to future accounting periods.

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers Between Funds £	Carried Forward £
2021					
Restricted funds					
Community Champions	-	15,410	96,846	81,436	-
Well-being	-	87,190	86,208	-	982
K&C Ambassadors	10,000	10,000	20,000	-	-
Grenfell response	-	-	1,739	1,739	-
Resettlement Scheme	-	46,000	54,757	8,757	-
Total restricted funds	10,000	158,600	259,550	91,932	982
Unrestricted funds					
General	177,274	385,132	236,034	(116,932)	209,440
Designated	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
	117,274	385,132	236,034	(91,932)	234,440
TOTAL FUNDS	£187,274	£543,732	£495,584	£Nil	£235,422

Each of the above restricted funds is described in detail in the Trustees' Annual Report. Transfers have been made from general funds to cover deficits on restricted funds.

Comparative information for the previous financial year is as follows:

	Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers Between Funds £	Carried Forward £
2020					
Restricted funds					
Community Champions	6,424	15,319	92,693	70,950	-
Well-being	-	71,056	77,597	6,541	-
K&C Ambassadors	-	20,000	10,000	-	10,000
Grenfell response	-	-	1,739	1,739	-
Resettlement Scheme	-	11,500	29,485	17,985	-
Total restricted funds	6,424	117,875	211,514	97,215	10,000
Unrestricted funds					
General	150,574	413,851	289,936	(97,215)	177,274
TOTAL FUNDS	£156,998	£531,726	£501,450	£Nil	£187,274

15. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Fixed assets	557	-	557
Current assets	239,910	19,482	259,392
Current liabilities	(6,027)	(18,500)	(24,527)
At 31 March 2021	£234,440	£982	£235,422

Comparative information for the previous financial year is as follows:

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Fixed assets	934	2,125	3,059
Current assets	184,833	18,285	203,118
Current liabilities	(8,493)	(10,410)	(18,903)
At 31 March 2020	£177,274	£10,000	£187,274

16. COMPANY STATUS

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is a private company (No. 03725459) incorporated in Great Britain and registered in England and Wales. The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Each member is liable to contribute a sum not exceeding £1 in the event of the Company being wound up. The address of the registered office is given in the Legal and Administrative Information on page 4.

17. TAXATION

As a registered charity, Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea is exempt from taxation under Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992.

18. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

Total future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable operating leases amount to £4,767 (2020: 5,711), all of which falls due within one year.

19. RELATED PARTIES

There were no transactions with related parties during the year or the previous year.

Volunteer Centre
Kensington & Chelsea

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Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
Company No: 03725459
Charity No:1076392