

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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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
Joseph Carim
Victoria Clark
Jennifer Clarke
Bashir Hassan
Muskaan Khurana
Michael Pearson
Rossana Rocchini
Maria-Iuliana Dinu
Srishti Mahhajan
Gail Le Coz
Roger Lintern
Michael Locke

Chair

(appointed 25 January 2021)

(appointed 25 January 2021)

Treasurer (Appointed 28 September 2020)
(appointed 20 July 2020)
(resigned 18 August 2020)
(resigned 25 January 2021)
(resigned 28 September 2020)
(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 excelled 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.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2021

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.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF:

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2021

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		<u>385,132</u>	<u>158,600</u>	<u>543,732</u>	<u>531,726</u>
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	5	<u>236,034</u>	<u>259,550</u>	<u>495,584</u>	<u>501,450</u>
Total		<u>236,034</u>	<u>259,550</u>	<u>495,584</u>	<u>501,450</u>
Net income/(expenditure)	9	149,098	(100,950)	48,148	30,276
Transfer between funds	14	<u>(91,932)</u>	<u>91,932</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		57,166	(9,018)	48,148	30,276
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	14	<u>177,274</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>187,274</u>	<u>156,998</u>
Total funds carried forward	14	<u>£234,440</u>	<u>£982</u>	<u>£235,422</u>	<u>£187,274</u>

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	£	£	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		
		<u>259,392</u>			<u>203,118</u>		
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>24,527</u>			<u>18,903</u>		
NET CURRENT ASSETS				234,865			184,215
NET ASSETS	15			<u>£235,422</u>			<u>£187,274</u>
FUNDS							
Restricted	14			982			10,000
Unrestricted	14						
General Funds				209,440			177,274
Designated Funds				25,000			-
	14			<u>£235,422</u>			<u>£187,274</u>

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		<u>66,412</u>	<u>(7,736)</u>
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		<u>101</u>	<u>(824)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents		66,513	(8,560)
Cash and cash equivalents brought forward		<u>171,660</u>	<u>180,220</u>
Cash and cash equivalents carried forward		<u><u>£238,173</u></u>	<u><u>£171,660</u></u>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u><u>£238,173</u></u>	<u><u>£171,660</u></u>

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 2021

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 2021
/contd...

2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
Donations	<u>£218</u>	<u>£Nil</u>	<u>£218</u>	<u>£249</u>
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	-
	<u>£384,813</u>	<u>£158,600</u>	<u>£543,413</u>	<u>£531,187</u>

Of the £531,187 recognised in 2020, £413,312 related to unrestricted funds and £117,875 to restricted funds.

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021
/contd...

4. INVESTMENT INCOME	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
Bank interest	<u>£101</u>	<u>£Nil</u>	<u>£101</u>	<u>£290</u>

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	<u>£372,467</u>	<u>£123,117</u>	<u>£495,584</u>	<u>£501,450</u>

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	<u>15,613</u>	<u>35,208</u>
	<u>£372,467</u>	<u>£372,810</u>

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)	<u>7,813</u>	<u>7,613</u>
	<u>£123,117</u>	<u>£128,640</u>

8. GOVERNANCE COSTS	2021 £	2020 £
Audit and accounts fees	3,545	3,350
Trustees meetings and insurance	542	738
Staff costs	<u>3,726</u>	<u>3,525</u>
	<u>£7,813</u>	<u>£7,613</u>

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021
/contd...

2020

£700

2020

£

17.175

383.118

24,979

£409,703

2020

No.

0.8

11.1

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.

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021
/contd...

11. FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £
Cost:	
Balance at 1 April 2020	13,298
Additions	-
	<hr/>
Balance at 31 March 2021	13,298
	<hr/>
Depreciation:	
Balance at 1 April 2020	10,239
Charge for the year	2,502
	<hr/>
Balance at 31 March 2021	12,741
	<hr/>
Net book value:	
At 31 March 2021	£557
	<hr/> <hr/>
At 31 March 2020	£3,059
	<hr/> <hr/>

12. DEBTORS

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	20,400	30,752
Prepayments and accrued income	819	706
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£21,219	£31,458
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

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
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£24,527	£18,903
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

Deferred income analysis

	£
As at 1 April 2020	10,410
Additions during the year	18,500
Amounts released to income	(10,410)
	<hr/>
As at 31 March 2021	£18,500
	<hr/> <hr/>

Deferred income of £18,500 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 2021
/contd...

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	<u>10,000</u>	<u>158,600</u>	<u>259,550</u>	<u>91,932</u>	<u>982</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General	177,274	385,132	236,034	(116,932)	209,440
Designated	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
	<u>117,274</u>	<u>385,132</u>	<u>236,034</u>	<u>(91,932)</u>	<u>234,440</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>£187,274</u>	<u>£543,732</u>	<u>£495,584</u>	<u>£Nil</u>	<u>£235,422</u>

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	<u>6,424</u>	<u>117,875</u>	<u>211,514</u>	<u>97,215</u>	<u>10,000</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General	<u>150,574</u>	<u>413,851</u>	<u>289,936</u>	<u>(97,215)</u>	<u>177,274</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>£156,998</u>	<u>£531,726</u>	<u>£501,450</u>	<u>£Nil</u>	<u>£187,274</u>

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021
/contd...

**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)
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>£234,440</u>	<u>£982</u>	<u>£235,422</u>

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)
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>£177,274</u>	<u>£10,000</u>	<u>£187,274</u>

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**

**Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
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United Kingdom**

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
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Charity No:1076392

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