



VOLUNTEER CENTRE
KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

Annual Report

2024-25

Promoting positive
change in Kensington &
Chelsea, through
rewarding volunteering



LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

VOLUNTEER CENTRE KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

CHARITY NUMBER

1076392

COMPANY NUMBER

03725459

REGISTERED OFFICE

1 Thorpe Close, London W10 5XL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Michael Ashe	Company Secretary
--------------	-------------------

BANKERS

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

SOLICITORS

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

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

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

CONTENTS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION	1
CHAIR'S FOREWORD	3
REPORT OF TRUSTEES	5
STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT	5
OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS	7
OUR OBJECTS, VISION & MISSION	8
OUR VALUES	9
ACTIVITIES & MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS	10
MEASURING OUR IMPACT	11
CORE SERVICES	12
SPECIALIST SERVICES	17
WELLBEING	17
INSIDEOUT	23
EMPLOYMENT HUB	25
COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS	27
OUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY	31
STATEMENT ON PUBLIC BENEFIT	33
FINANCIAL REVIEW	33
RISK MANAGEMENT	33
STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE	35
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND GOING CONCERN	36
FUTURE PLANS	36
STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES	37
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES	38
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	39

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



REPORT OF TRUSTEES

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

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

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Legal Structure

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

Governance

Role

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

Trustee Appointment, Induction, and Training

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

Organisational Structure

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

Pay and remuneration of staff

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

Involvement of volunteers

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

Related Parties

VCKC does not have branches or subsidiaries.

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



In 2024-25, we supported **1,217** people, of whom **533** were residents of Kensington & Chelsea

Our Core Team **supported**

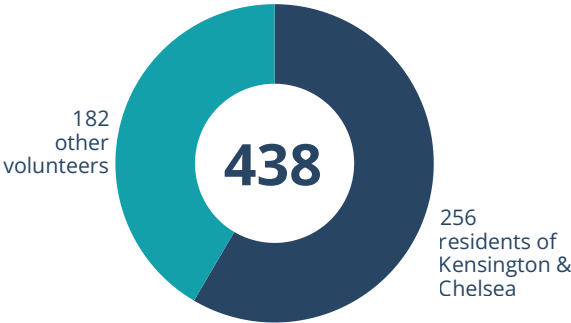
88

organisations to offer

148

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

Our teams **placed**



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

122

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

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



Longridge Road
Greening Day



Great Exhibition Road
Festival 2024



Trellick Tower Festival



Age UK's Valentine's
Gala 2025

OUR OBJECTS

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

- a) advice and support persons willing to volunteer promoting volunteering
- b) giving advice and support to organisations in the involvement of volunteers in furthering the organisations charitable purposes.

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

OUR VISION

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

OUR MISSION

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



Black History Month Walk, Nov 2024

OUR VALUES

VALUING PEOPLE

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

COLLABORATION

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

KNOWLEDGE

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

CATALYST

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



Valentine's Card Making, Feb 2025

ACTIVITIES & MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

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

Our work is divided into three key areas:

Core Services

Volunteer brokerage and support services for the voluntary sector

Specialist Services

Inclusive volunteering support for individuals who are disabled, have a long-term health condition, a criminal record, or other barriers to participation

Community Champions

This project enables local people in the Notting Dale ward to set their health priorities and work together to achieve them

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

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

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

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

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

MEASURING OUR IMPACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CORE SERVICES

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

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

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



CORE VOLUNTEERING EVENTS

Great Exhibition Road Festival 2024

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

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

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

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

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

One student volunteered to help overcome their shyness when speaking English

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



Great Exhibition Road Festival

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

“

I am really glad to be part of Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea today for the Great Exhibition Road Festival as a volunteer. It was my second experience with the festival and I enjoyed being there.

A massive thanks to you and the team at VCKC.

You gave me a chance to do something for the community.

”

Age UK's Valentine's Gala 2025

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

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



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

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

CORE KEY STATS

This year,



959

people engaged with our volunteering brokerage service.

On average, we offered



78

volunteering opportunities each month.

We placed



291

volunteers in at least one role.

MARKET AMBASSADORS

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

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

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



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



PLINTH CRM

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

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

Core Services

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

Specialist Services

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

Community Champions

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

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

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

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

SPECIALIST SERVICES

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

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

WELLBEING

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

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

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

Stan's Story

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



“

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

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

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

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

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

”

Bespoke Volunteering

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

CASE STUDY

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



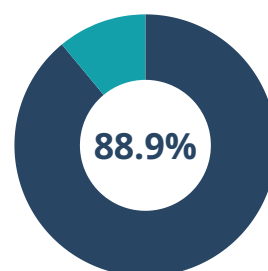
Community Connections

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

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



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



Stepping Stones

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

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

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

Registered

50

new clients.

Achieved

37

volunteering placements.

Met

100%

of set targets.

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

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

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

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



Canalside volunteers at an 'Are You Mad' workshop

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



Kai Lok cleaning up

“

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

”

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

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



Jaya, Amalia, and Kai Lok

Supported Access

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



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

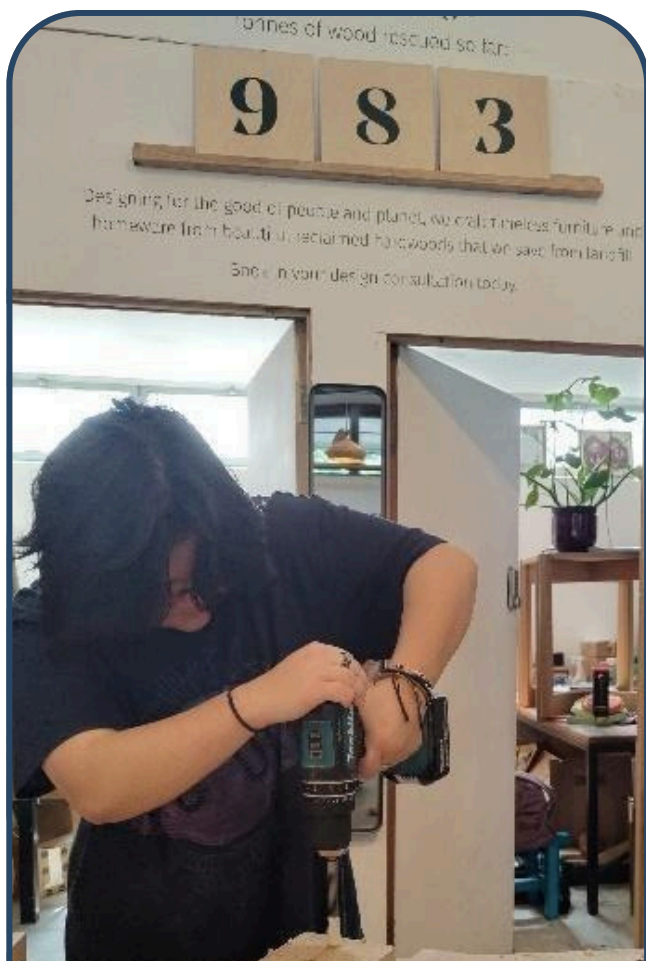
38 of whom successfully completed voluntary and paid placements, increasing their skills, knowledge, and confidence, building their CVs and making new friends.

MAIA'S STORY

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

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

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



Maia using a drill at 'Future Makers' workshop

INSIDEOUT

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

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

INSIDEOUT KEY STATS



48

clients received
tailored one-to-one
support



only
3

clients were
returned to custody
during the year



35

clients reported
improved wellbeing
and resilience



31

clients engaged in
vocational or
accredited training



25

clients began
volunteering
placements



23

clients moved into
employment



30

clients sustained
work or
volunteering for at
least a year

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

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

“

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

”

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

EMPLOYMENT HUB

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

EMPLOYMENT HUB KEY STATS



51

new clients
registered



30

new partnerships
established with employers
and volunteer-involving
organisations



50%

increase in referrals within
six months through new
outreach initiatives



38

Supported Access
clients received tailored
employability support



25

clients completed
skills-based training



33

clients began
volunteering
placements



5

clients moved into
employment

The Employment Hub developed dynamic new partnerships, including:

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

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

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

“

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

”

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

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



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

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

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



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



ACTIVITIES

Yoga Classes

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

“

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

”

Clothes Upcycling

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

Windows are designed for looking outside, but from the street, you can also peer through a window and see inside a room, getting a glimpse into someone else's life.

In this project, when a person creates a small window, they are symbolically expressing their inner feelings about external events in the community.

These windows then become not only portals to look outside but also mirrors into their own inner worlds and a way to communicate with the outside.



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

Fabulous Fridays with Friends

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

Seaside Trip

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

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

Black History Month Walks

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

Festive Community Event

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



Festive Community Event

“

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

”

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

“

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

”

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER - LEVEL 3 APPRENTICESHIP

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

“

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

”



Saghar and colleagues

OUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY

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

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

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

THE GRENFELL TOWER FIRE

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

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

Our commitment since the fire has been twofold:

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

POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

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

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

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

VCS PARTNERSHIPS

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

EMERGENCY AND RESILIENCE NETWORKS

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

STATEMENT ON PUBLIC BENEFIT

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

FINANCIAL REVIEW

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

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

RISK MANAGEMENT

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

Reporting and Monitoring

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

Resourcing and Funding

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

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

Changes in the volunteering environment

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

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

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE

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

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

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

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

Reserves Policy

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

Investment Policy

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

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND GOING CONCERN

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

FUTURE PLANS

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

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

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

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Signature: 

Date: 8 December 2025

Full Name: Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan

Position: Chair

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

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

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act").

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited for this year under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). In carrying out my examination, I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act).

Independent Examiner's Report

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

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

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

Shruti Soni

Shruti Soni FCCA FCIE

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

Date: 9 December 2025

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

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

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

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Company no. 03725459

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2025

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

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

Trustees' Responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476
- The trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

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

Anne-Hélène Biosse-Duplan

Trustee

Name

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025	2024	
		£	£	
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period		(13,808)	65,353	
Depreciation charges		–	–	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		49,370	(40,693)	
Increase/(decrease) in creditors		23,472	11,388	
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities		59,034	36,048	
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		59,034	36,048	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		311,336	275,288	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		370,370	311,336	
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents				
		At 31 March 2025 £	At 31 March 2024 £	
Cash in hand and at bank		370,370	311,336	
Total cash and cash equivalents		370,370	311,336	
Analysis of changes in net debt				
		At Start of year £	Cashflows £	At end of year £
Cash in hand and at bank		311,336	59,034	370,370

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

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

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

b) Public benefit entity

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

c) Going concern

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

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

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

d) Income

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

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

f) Interest receivable

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

g) Fund accounting

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

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

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

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Expenditure

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

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

i) Allocation of support costs

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

j) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible assets costing more than £1,000 are 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 |

k) Debtors

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

l) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account. Cash balances exclude any funds held on behalf of service users.

m) Creditors and provisions

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

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

2 Income from donations and legacies

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

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

3 Income from charitable activities

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

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

4 Analysis of expenditure

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

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

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

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

5 Net incoming resources for the year

This is stated after charging / crediting:

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

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

Staff costs were as follows:

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

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

The key management personnel of the Charity comprise the trustees ("Directors" for the purposes of the Companies Act) and Senior Management Team. The total amounts paid in respect of the key management personnel of the Charity (including employer's National Insurance contributions and employers pension contributions) were £138,032 (2024: £100,433). We have made decision to change the structure of the organisation so that the senior management team now includes three people, the CEO, the Operations Director (existing position upgraded from manager) and added a Head of Specialist Services. None of the trustees received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

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

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

7 Staff numbers

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

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Volunteering	4.2	11.9
Wellbeing	3.1	–
Resettlement Scheme	1.9	–
Community Champions	2.6	–
Employment	2.0	0.8
	<u>13.7</u>	<u>12.7</u>

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

8 Related party transactions

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

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

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

9 Taxation

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

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation		
At the start of the year	1,114	1,114
At the end of the year	1,114	1,114
Depreciation		
At the start of the year	1,114	1,114
Charge for the year	-	-
At the end of the year	1,114	1,114
Net book value		
At the end of the year	-	-
At the start of the year	-	-
All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.		

11 Debtors

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

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

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

13 Deferred income

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

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

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

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

Analysis of net assets between funds

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

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

15 Movements in funds

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

15 Movements in funds (continued)

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

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Transfer between funds

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

Purposes of restricted funds

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

16 Contingent assets or liabilities

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

17 Legal status of the charity

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