

DEVON AND CORNWALL REFUGEE SUPPORT



2023  
Financial  
Report



# Mission, Vision & Values

## DCRS Vision

**A fair, humane and safe asylum experience for all**

## DCRS Mission

**To promote independence, prevent destitution and support those seeking refuge to build their new home in the UK**

## DCRS Values

- **Welcoming** – being inclusive, accessible and safe; working with empathy, understanding and integrity
- **Experienced and persistent** – providing high quality advocacy and support to those seeking refuge, no matter how long the process takes
- **A lifeline** – helping people when they have no-one else to turn to
- **A place of hope** – fostering resilience and supporting people to use and develop their skills to become part of the wider community, keep active and build a new life
- **Connected** – providing the best possible service by collaborating with other organisations and supporters whilst sharing best practise
- **Responsive** – adapting to the evolving needs of our community
- **Well informed** – developing and maintaining excellent standards of knowledge for staff and volunteers

# Mission, Vision & Values

## DCRS Vision

**A fair, humane and safe asylum experience for all**

### **PRINCIPAL ADDRESS**

7 Whimble Street, Plymouth, Devon PL1 2DH

### **BANKERS**

The Co-operative Bank plc.

Head Office, PO Box 101

1 Balloon Street, Manchester. M60 4EP

### **Independent Examiner**

Mr John Gilding, 104 Lucas Lane, Plymouth PL7 4EY

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1130360**

**COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE, NUMBER: 06271122**

**DISC EXEMPTION NUMBER: N200100427**

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## Trustees

**Ian Gasper**

Chair of Trustees

**John Stephens**

Vice-Chair

**Jane Barkes**

Trustee Secretary

**Andrew Eccleston**

Interim Treasurer

**Alana Hunter**

Safeguarding Lead

**Poorna Dias Gunaswera**

**Azeb Mengisteab**

**Abbas Mohammed**

**Sana Murrani**

# DEVON AND CORNWALL REFUGEE SUPPORT

## Staff Members

<b>Alexander Vessis</b>	CEO
<b>Abimbola Adeosun</b>	Finance and Business Administrator
<b>Azza Gasim</b>	Communications & Fundraising Officer
<b>Maia Walton</b>	Volunteer Co-ordinator and Development Officer for Cornwall Refugee Resource Network
<b>Suvi Rehell</b>	Befriender Project Manager
<b>Craig Walker</b>	Activities Co-ordinator
<b>Tressa Thomas</b>	Activities Co-ordinator
<b>Waleed Abdallah</b>	Casework Manager and OISC Level 1 Casework Supervisor
<b>Camilla Bostock</b>	OISC Level 2 Asylum and Protection Caseworker
<b>Vincent Ibekwe</b>	Caseworker
<b>Tom Rose</b>	Caseworker
<b>Yeshi Adhanom</b>	Complex Asylum and Immigration Caseworker
<b>Henry Kong</b>	Complex Asylum and Immigration Caseworker

# Chair's Introduction

DCRS has had a year of meeting the challenges that a 'hostile environment' yields for asylum seekers and refugees. We have provided a space where individuals are safe and feel supported in their journey. This has been true of those who arrive in Plymouth whether sent by the Home Office or other ways or have been housed in hotels in Devon and Cornwall.


We started the year as an organisation reviewing our vision, aims and values. We recommitted ourselves to providing "A fair, humane and safe asylum experience" and "to promote independence, prevent destitution and support those seeking refuge to build their new homes in the UK".

A successful financial year in terms of grants received has allowed us to carefully expand to meet the organisation's needs.

Devon & Cornwall Refugee Support (DCRS) is managed by its trustees who meet regularly. Day to day administration is in the hands of the CEO. New recruits are found through local contacts or Reach Volunteering.

DCRS aims to ensure that asylum seekers and refugees receive the full benefit of their entitlements under UK and international law. We aim to provide a culturally sensitive and practical response to the needs of the community.

The board of trustees are satisfied that the service provided to a under-supported section of the population constitutes a public benefit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I. Gasper', is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Ian Gasper, Chair

# CEO Report

**2023 has been a year of change, growth and development for Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support with the year wrapping up in a strong financial and staffing position to enter 2024.**

**The organisation has seen a tripling of need across the region with 5 hotels opening to accommodate an additional 943 people. Staff had to adapt to the need and offer our support where possible with caseworker phone and email services being utilised more for service users in more remote regions. HealthPoint conducted over 500 health assessments to support the tenants in the hotel alongside the frontline GP practices and we offered training to external stakeholders looking to support those we commonly serve.**

There was a changing of the guard with Jackie Otunnu and Alex Miranda moving on to new adventures as we welcomed Waleed Abdallah, Abimbola Adeosun, Azza Gasim, Maia Walton, Rebecca Van Der Veer, Vincent Ibekwe and Tressa Thomas to our organisation. This has brought new opinions and ways of working to help grow the organisation into the coming years.

The Nationality and Borders Act and Illegal Migration Act came into existence changing the landscape of claiming asylum in the UK. This has made our organisation understandably uneasy as we try to understand what this will mean for those we serve.

We have forged strong partnerships to enhance our impact within our networks. Locally, collaborations with entities like the Pickwell Foundation and Torbay Community Development Trust (TCDT) have enabled us to provide training and assistance to our remote clientele. Additionally, securing a contract with the local authority has allowed us to work alongside the Olive Project and Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council, offering support to the tenants in the Exeter hotel.

On a broader scale, our involvement in NACCOM (The No Accommodation Network) links us with housing initiatives and organizations nationwide, facilitating both collaboration and training opportunities.

Similarly, as members of the South West Immigration Alliance (SWIA), we are collaborating with partners throughout the region to enhance OISC capacity. In Plymouth, participation in the Resettlement Contract, initiated by Plymouth City Council, strengthens our efforts in supporting the refugee community. Our partnership with Plymouth University is thriving, marked by the engagement of two social work students, three PhD students, and multiple trustees. Moreover, improved referral processes with the Law Clinic have bolstered our organization's efficacy. In Cornwall, our alliance with the Cornwall Refugee Resource Network (CRRN) has united community sponsorship groups under a single banner, amplifying our efforts. This collaboration, backed by Cornwall Council, enhances our ability to assist those we commonly serve.

We placed a large amount of work to training our caseworkers with Camilla and Georgia gaining their OISC Level 2 Asylum and Protection and have started representing clients. We are further developing our casework team to take on a legal aid contract with the hope that we will have the contract start date by September 2024.

Our wellbeing department developed the HealthPoint and Befriending Projects with HealthPoint seeing over 250 patients in 2023. We also recognised the value of our activities running through the winter as the days became shorter and with social isolation growing so continued to develop our music, creative clubs and indoor activities.

We believe all these developments are helping towards plugging a gap in the inhumane asylum system, opening more doors and opportunities. Everyone at DCRS remain humbled, honoured and lucky to serve and be a part of a community of people with the resilience, strength and courage to forge a new life here and we look forward to many more positive decisions and stories of success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Vessis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alex Vessis, CEO



# Financial Report

The financial status of DCRS in 2023 has remained strong, marked by the receipt of substantial grants resulting in a surplus for the year amounting to £136,652.

Key funders include The National Lottery Community Fund, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Blue Thread, Bristol Law Centre (JTI), the Postcode Lottery, and Ministry of Justice.

Expenditure for the year exceeded the budget slightly, totalling £329k compared to the budgeted £296k. This variance can be attributed to slightly higher than anticipated staff costs, offset by funding received from the Livewell Foundation and Cornwall Refugee Resource Network Project for activity and volunteer coordinator positions. Additionally, investments were made in new computer systems for both existing staff members and new additions to our team. In preparation for commencing advanced legal work and expanding our operations, we also incurred expenses for rent, repairs, and office furniture related to our new office location at 93 New George Street.

The charity's reserves policy dictates maintaining reserves equivalent to three months of operating costs and dissolution expenses. Currently, this amount stands at £69k and undergoes quarterly review.

The charity's annual reserve target is set at £100k, well above the mandated reserve level. This target will be subject to periodic review in alignment with updated official reserves requirements.

As of the year-end, the charity held £238k in unrestricted reserves and £322k in cash. The difference of £84k is restricted income which has not yet been used.

£466K

Gross Income at end  
of 2023

£329K

Gross Expenditure at  
end of 2023

£136K

Surplus

# Statement of Financial Activities

## For the period from 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds 2023	Restricted Funds 2023	Total Funds 2023	Total Fund 2022
	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
Incoming resources from generated funds	2,360	119,587	121,947	1,309
Voluntary income	241,252	72,030	313,282	214,604
Incoming resources from charitable activities	1,632		1,632	2,592
Other incoming resources	14,300	14,936	29,236	
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>259,544</b>	<b>206,553</b>	<b>466,098</b>	<b>218,505</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
Charitable activities	122,892	206,553	329,445	215,340
Governance costs				198
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	<b>122,892</b>	<b>206,553</b>	<b>329,445</b>	<b>215,538</b>
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>136,652</b>		<b>136,652</b>	<b>2,967</b>
<b>BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD AS AT 1ST JANUARY 2023</b>	<b>86,911</b>	<b>14,684</b>	<b>101,594</b>	<b>98,627</b>
<b>BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2023</b>	<b>223,563</b>	<b>14,684</b>	<b>238,247</b>	<b>101,594</b>

## Balance Sheet

For the period from 12 December 2022 to 31 December 2023

	As at 31/12/2023	As at 31/12/2022
<b>Current assets</b>		
6501: Bank current account	252,097.83	106,009.51
6505: BLF Bank account	-	-
6510: COIF deposit account	69,938.15	67,001.79
6590: Petty Cash	63.84	96.01
6595: Debtors	-	-
6600: Sports & Fitness Petty Cash	-	-
Z05: Accounts Receivable	(83,853.09)	(71,512.97)
<b>Total Current assets</b>	<b>238,246.73</b>	<b>101,594.34</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
6602: Wages Control Account	-	-
6699: Agency collections	-	-
Z04: Accounts Payable	-	-
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Asset surplus (deficit)</b>	<b>238,246.73</b>	<b>101,594.34</b>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Excess/(deficit) to date	136,652.39	2,967.29
Z01: Starting balances	101,594.34	98,627.05
Z03: Gains and losses own use	-	-
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>238,246.73</b>	<b>101,594.34</b>

### Represented by Funds

General (Unrestricted)	223,563.12	86,910.73
Designated	-	-
Restricted	14,683.61	14,683.61
<b>Total</b>	<b>238,246.73</b>	<b>101,594.34</b>

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**

### **TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE DEVON AND CORNWALL REFUGEE SUPPORT**

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 December 2023

### **RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES AND EXAMINER**

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 145(5)(b) Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the account under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions 2017 given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b)
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention

### **BASIS OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those record. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- which gives me a reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act ; and
- to which, in my opinion, attentions should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of accounts to be reached.

Dated: 10/04/2024

Signed: J. Gilding  
Independent Examiner

Mr John Gilding

104 Lucas Lane

# Our Partners

We couldn't do this without the help and support from our partners!



# Our Funders

We'd like to say a big thank you to all our supporters, both individuals and organisations, for the generous contributions.



# DEVON AND CORNWALL REFUGEE SUPPORT



## Follow us on Social Media

✉ [communications@dcrs-plymouth.org](mailto:communications@dcrs-plymouth.org)

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🌐 <https://dcrs-plymouth.org/>

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📍 7 Whimble Street PL1 2DH

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📘 @DevonandCornwallRefugeeSupport

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📷 @DCRSPlymouth

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🐦 @dcrsPlymouth

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Thank you for your  
ongoing support

