



THE MILL @ COPPERMILL

## **DIRECTORS' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

For the year ended 31 March 2022



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## REFERENCE & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Registered charity name:** THE MILL @ COPPERMILL  
**Registered office:** 7–11 Coppermill Lane, London E17 7HA

**Charity No.:** 1143365  
**Company Reg. No.:** 07596426

### *Directors*

The trustees who served the charity as directors during the period were:

**Ms Alison Griffin**  
**Ms Ingrid Abreu Scherer**  
**Ms Valeria Bonfiglio (until 3 February 2022)**  
**Ms Vanessa Brightwell (until 12 August 2021)**  
**Mr Richard Bennett**  
**Ms Leanne Wightman**  
**Mr Laonikos Psimikakis Chalkokondylis**

### *Chair*

**Ms Ingrid Abreu Scherer (until 3 Feb 2021)**  
**Mr Richard Bennett (from 3 Feb 2021)**

### *Secretary*

**Mr Laonikos Psimikakis Chalkokondylis**

### *Treasurer*

**Ms Alison Griffin**

### *Independent examiner*

**Waqas Hussain ACCA**  
**10 Knebworth Avenue, London E17 5AJ**

### *Banker*

**The Co-operative Bank**  
**1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP**



## DIRECTORS' REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

The directors and trustees present their report and financial statements of the charitable company for the year ending 31 March 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on page 46 and comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

### CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of THE MILL @ COPPERMILL ("The Mill") are:

- To further or benefit the residents of Walthamstow and neighbouring areas by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and the arts and to provide facilities for a varied range of social, educational and recreational services in the interests of social welfare with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents.
- To promote and provide for the public benefit the use of a community centre or centres in Walthamstow or neighbouring areas, for purposes including in order to promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society.

### PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

In shaping The Mill's objectives and planning activities, the directors have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance on public benefit and fee-charging. The directors give careful consideration to the accessibility and benefit of The Mill for all and prioritise openness and inclusivity to enable this to happen. The Mill's User Charter supports this, as does ensuring a balance of activities takes place, providing free-access communal public space, and encouraging free or low-cost access for activities and groups.



## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

### GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The charitable company is governed by its memorandum and articles of association, and was incorporated on 7th April 2011 as a company limited by guarantee with no share capital (number 07596426) and, acting entirely as a non-profit making organisation, has a charitable status, registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 15 August 2011 (charity number 1143365).

### DIRECTORS

The directors, as charity trustees, have control over and responsibility for the charitable company and its property and funds. Subject to the provisions of the Companies Act, the memorandum and articles of association, and to any directions given by special resolution, the business of the charity is managed by the directors, who may exercise all the powers of the charitable company. They are unpaid and are required to declare any conflicts of interest in accordance with the law and best practice. The memorandum and articles of association lay out the terms of directorship (trusteeship). Appointment to directorship is on the basis of eligibility, personal competence and local availability, and is made according to nominations received from interested individuals following an open recruitment process. Directors are inducted through training days and through informal and formal meetings with the Chair and Secretary and established or outgoing directors and are provided with an induction pack and other relevant materials to familiarise themselves with the charity's operations.

### ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The directors are legally responsible for the overall management and control of The Mill. They implement their policies and oversee the day to day management of The Mill through delegated management groups comprising directors, Mill staff and key volunteers. Directors meet each month chaired by their Chair and have regular meetings with the management groups, supported by periodic strategy meetings

## MEMBERSHIP

The subscribers to the **Memorandum and Articles of Association** are admitted to membership in accordance with the rules made under Article 10, and shall be members of the charitable company. Membership is open only to the directors and is terminated if the member ceases to be a director.

The form and the procedure for applying for membership is to be prescribed by the directors. No person shall be admitted a member of the charitable company unless his/her application is approved by the directors. Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association each Member is required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the liabilities of the charitable company in the event of it being wound up whilst they are Members, or within one year of them ceasing to be Members.



## CHAIR'S REPORT

After an unprecedented period of change and challenge for The Mill, through the early phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year has been one of careful but steady reopening and normalising. Our community came through the trials of the pandemic, with volunteers and staff finding innovative ways for people to support each other and continue creative activities. By April we were able to open our doors once again, gradually building back activities and groups as restrictions on spacing and numbers were eased.

We continued to be careful about this; our community includes vulnerable people who needed continued protection. We were guided by their needs and wishes in the pacing of a steady return to normality. Building people's confidence and responding to changed comfort levels will continue to take time, and we will evolve to meet our community over the coming months and years.

Key to the reawakening of The Mill's buzz was the reopening in October of the Children's Room. The mingling of knitters and stitchers and scrabble players and youth club and readers and toddlers and parents and artists makes The Mill what it is: the community's living room. This report outlines the many special events, groups and activities hosted by The Mill during the year; their diversity is a testament to the activism and mutual support of so many people in our community.

We are immensely grateful to our volunteers and staff for their creativity and care in enabling all this. They have shown huge flexibility and resilience through The Mill's most difficult period ever, and have emerged still smiling and welcoming as old friends and newcomers appear at our door.

Inevitably, some former volunteers' circumstances changed during the pandemic and they moved on. We have needed to recruit and prepare new volunteers to cover a growing range of opening days and hours; our thanks go to them for stepping up when we needed them.

This year was The Mill's tenth anniversary. We held a celebration in September – mainly outdoors due to ongoing social distancing requirements – which was enjoyed by many of our friends and supporters. We were also able to raise resources for an oral history project to capture our story so far. This brought together the voices of many of those whose campaign against library closure led to The Mill's formation, people who contributed to the way The Mill developed, and more recent volunteers and users. The book and online resources offer a beautifully rich account of what makes The Mill so special to so many.

The delays and new priorities resulting from the pandemic meant that our planning work on



improving our space - Build the Mill - also had to be adapted. Rather than pushing forward at pace, we took the time to engage our users and understand emerging needs (such as improved ventilation and hybrid connectivity), as well as working with architects to bring our ideas to life. We ended the year with a clear and exciting building project to engage new supporters and partners.

We have been privileged to receive generous support from a range of sources during the year, including London Borough of Waltham Forest, St James Street Big Local, Power to Change, Tudor Trust and L&Q Foundation. Their flexibility in the face of COVID-19 challenges has been vital to our ability to see through the year, and we are immensely grateful for their help. We are especially grateful to the Tudor Trust who have allowed us to support staff and volunteer wellbeing, which had suffered during the stress of the pandemic.

The Trustees, who met more frequently than usual and entirely online to enable The Mill to function through the pandemic, have been able to return to monthly meetings that are hybrid, enabling some of us to be together in The Mill. While we were sad to see two of our Trustees step down (remaining very active in The Mill in other ways), by March we were inducting three new excellent contributors to our governance, who became Trustees shortly after the year ended. My thanks go to all the Trustees who, in spite of often spectacularly busy lives, find ways of concentrating on our oversight responsibilities with prudence and creativity. Particular thanks go to Ingrid Abreu Scherer, who as Chair steered us expertly through this challenging time and stood down (remaining as a Trustee) towards the end of the year.

**Richard Bennett**

*Chair of Trustees*

## OUR VISION AND MISSION

Our **vision** is of a strong local community where people love to live, and know and care for their neighbours.

Our **mission** is to provide a welcoming, positive and inclusive space at the heart of Walthamstow, and work with the community locally to make things happen.

Our **focus** in these changing and challenging times is particularly on those members of our community who are lonely or isolated.

Within this, our **approach** is based on these beliefs and principles:

- **Stronger communities:** we believe that strong and resilient communities can achieve amazing things – and that The Mill can help our community become stronger
- **Wellbeing:** we believe the most important difference we can make to our community is to improve people's well-being by connecting them to each other
- **Prove and improve:** we will work together to measure our impact, celebrating our successes as well as learning when things go wrong

To achieve this, we need to reach out and work with others:

- **Building on our strengths:** we will support our wonderful volunteers and group leaders to make their ideas happen
- **Wider connections:** we will work with others, making new connections with partners, funders and organisations who will help us meet our vision
- **Securing our future:** we will live within our means and grow our income to meet our aims, with a management structure providing good governance.

## OUR PEOPLE

Our small and dedicated staff team continued to provide support in running a volunteer-led organisation, supporting volunteers through the provision of a safe workplace and ensuring visitors and members of the local community can access the activities safely.

Following the lockdown in December 2020 due to government restrictions around the COVID-19 pandemic, The Mill opened once again in April 2021 with reduced hours. Staff worked staggered shifts to limit infections, and kept in contact with each other through the usual channels as well as 1-2-1's with the Centre Manager and weekly all-staff Zoom meetings which have continued throughout and since restrictions have been lifted entirely. Online meetings, where staff gather to plan and discuss new ideas or issues, have now become a norm.

Our People management group continued to review and improve our volunteer recruitment procedures to ensure they are robust whilst also taking the opportunity to streamline the recruitment process. The People group benchmarked employee salaries and annual leave entitlement against similar roles in local organisations, and on the basis of their findings, two recommendations were put to the Trustees: to increase annual leave allowance to 25 days (pro rata) for most of our staff; and to increase pay for most of our staff team according to the benchmarking outcomes, both of which were approved by the Trustees in recognition of the commitment and dedication of staff members.

We received support from Power to Change's [Community Business Renewal Fund](#) which provided us with the time and expertise of an HR consultant from Eastside Primetimers to complete a review of our HR policies and procedures. Through this, we were able to update some of our existing policies and introduce new ones.

Trustee meetings continued to take place remotely on a fortnightly basis to address changing needs and meet legislation, and to offer additional support to staff who needed to make quick and important decisions about The Mill's operation as well as the well-being of our staff, volunteers, and visitors. In September 2021, Trustee meetings returned to once-monthly with a blend of online and in-person.

## EMPLOYEES AND FREELANCERS

Employees and freelance staff who served the charity during the period were:

Natasha McFadzean Centre Manager



Victoria Bureyko	Administration Officer
Kim Dexter	Community Organiser
Helen Johnson	Communications Coordinator
Helen Hunte	Fundraising and Development Associate
Andrew Murray	Finance Officer
Karen Hart	<i>Build The Mill Project Coordinator (until Jan 2022)</i>
Neesha Badhan	<i>Wellbeing Wednesdays Project Coordinator</i> <i>(May 2021-Dec 2021)</i>

## ACHIEVEMENTS 2020–2021

Our 2016 to 2021 Strategic Plan identified aims in four impact areas:

- **Aim 1:** Getting together
- **Aim 2:** Getting involved
- **Aim 3:** Getting creative
- **Aim 4:** Improving our space

In this section, we review achievements against our objectives in each impact area, supported by examples, quotations and photos. We decided to extend our 2016-21 Strategic Plan by a year to accommodate delays as a result of the pandemic.

### AIM 1: GETTING TOGETHER

“  
*I love The Mill and their activities as they offer great variety and there's always space for everyone to express, experiment, try something new, catch up on local initiatives, and so on.*

”  
*User survey, December 2021*

The Mill above all is a place where local people come together to share skills, get to know each other and connect. As the country was reopening to more or less normal functioning, at The Mill we also increased our operating hours and timetables, which at points differed from pre-pandemic opening hours, as we worked towards being open for as long as we safely can.

Our key objectives are to:

- **Maintain** The Mill as a trusted and widely used community hub
- Become **open** and **accessible** to even more people, especially those who are isolated
- Ensure more people know about The Mill and come to us **to connect** with their neighbours

### Re-grouping after COVID-19

In April 2021, as COVID-19 restrictions were being lifted as part of the Government's plan for opening up, we reopened The Mill with reduced opening hours of just four hours per day,

three days per week. We were able to accommodate some bookings outside these hours for permitted activities including children's language classes and tuition, as well as the Chill Out Zone youth club and Mindful Peak Performance Yoga.

In May 2021, we extended our opening hours further to include Sundays, and in September 2021 we added Tuesdays and increased opening hours, as well as allowing for extra time for staff and volunteers to set up and clean the spaces to reduce the spread of infection. A few weeks later we were able to open on Saturdays too, and things began to feel a little more normal as we reopened the self-service tea point, which had been closed since the beginning of the pandemic due to concerns over cross-contamination.

We still made choices about our opening hours with our people at the heart of our decision. For example, we closed early for Christmas in December 2021 and reopened a week later than scheduled in January, due to the high number of COVID-19 cases locally. We have since had almost no disruptions, other than due to exceptional weather.

Throughout the year, we updated our COVID-19 risk register, keeping track of the ever-changing situation, and ensuring that anyone using the spaces was as safe as possible. Our staff and volunteers tested weekly before coming in for their shift and continued to wear face coverings, even when the mandatory requirement stopped.

## Who Uses The Mill

We conduct an annual user survey to understand who uses The Mill, why they come and what they feel about The Mill. Due to the changing circumstances, we were unable to conduct the survey at the usual time for a second year running, which would allow us to compare the data to previous years. We conducted a survey carried out both in the building and online, asking our users how the closures and changes in reduced opening hours had affected their experience.

### Key findings from our user survey between December 2021 and January 2022

How many people answered the survey? / How many questionnaires were completed?	107 (19% were completed online and 81% were completed in person)
Most popular reason to visit	49% cited their reason for visiting was going to the Children's Room
Who are our visitors?	72% women 11 languages spoken at home
Most regular visitors	49% families 23% working part-time (20% retired)



Main benefit of visiting	By coming to The Mill I can meet and connect with other people (59% strongly agreed with this statement with 32% agreeing with it)
Visitors with a disability, impairment or long-term health condition	15% with a disability, impairment or long-term health condition

## ONLINE OR OUTDOORS?

We asked respondents to let us know how often they interacted with The Mill online or outdoors. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, The Mill was always a space for people to get together in person, and we started offering some activities online and outdoors when the restrictions and shielding guidelines were in place. An equal amount of people (31.4%) said that they'd interacted with The Mill online or outdoors a few times, as those who said they'd never interacted with the Mill online or outdoors. Almost 12% of respondents said that they'd accessed The Mill online or outdoors once or twice a week.

“The ongoing engagement of The Mill staff on social media was encouraging and kept The Mill 'active' in people's everyday lives.

”

Mill User Survey (online), Jan 2021

### Summary of mode of engagement as part of the annual survey:

	How often in person (%)	How often online/outdoors (%)
Once/twice a week	31.78%	5.61%
Once/twice a month	14.95%	2.80%
A few times	30.84%	14.95%
Only once	11.21%	9.35%
Never	7.48%	14.95%
Other	2.80%	0.00%

This year we only recorded speakers of 11 languages visiting The Mill (compared to 25 languages in the previous survey) - this is probably due to fewer people visiting The Mill, fewer people filling in the survey, and shorter opening hours and schedules than pre-pandemic.

## Bringing People Together

“

*It gives me something to look forward to every week and I really enjoy it.”*

Bollywood dance participant

Despite the logistical challenges, staff and volunteers at The Mill organised activities to keep the local community and Mill visitors engaged throughout the year, including The Mill's tenth anniversary in September.



A photo collage of activities taking place at The Mill

### 10th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We were delighted to celebrate The Mill's 10th anniversary in September 2021 and we were very grateful to St. James Big Local for providing funding to help us bring the community together to get involved and celebrate with us through a number of activities:



- Five 'Grow Your Idea' projects
- Holiday Art Club activities
- A big birthday celebration event
- 10th Anniversary Exhibition

### **GROW YOUR IDEA 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY EDITION**

We invited applications for projects encompassing one or more indicators of the [five ways to wellbeing](#): connecting, being active, learning new skills, taking notice, and giving back. We received 20 applications from local individuals with a wide range of online, outdoor and on-site activities proposed. Successful applicants were offered a choice of free room hire for activities in The Mill, or a fee where the activity took place off-site. They were offered support with designing their sessions, promotion and materials/equipment through our Community Organiser, and an opportunity to try out their ideas and develop their practice with support and no financial risk.

The five projects selected included:

- Online Bollywood exercise sessions for over 55's
- Inside Out online creative writing
- Outdoor Sketch walks
- Growing from seeds
- Papercraft



### *Grow Your Idea - case study*

*"I'd been feeling confined inside my head after being in lockdown. Outside In writing challenges really helped me to articulate my thoughts and feelings and I was proud of the creative writing I produced." (Inside Out online creative writing participant)*

The Inside Out online creative writing project was very successful in creating a cohesive group, providing a safe supportive online environment for people to share ideas, thoughts and experiences. Using picture prompts, including local street art and news headlines, the project sought to create alternative visions and realities through short fiction writing. This was an important creative outlet for people after the difficult time of lockdown and readjustment - especially for those not able to go out for varied reasons.

More local people could participate in new activities and interact with others, reducing isolation and improving mental health. Participants reported enjoying the sessions and found them friendly and well-planned. They learnt new skills and developed new interests and appreciated the online and outdoor options available. Some group leaders used this opportunity as a springboard to continue developing their projects and ideas in the future.

## **HOLIDAY ART CLUBS**

*“The workshop yesterday was so great, really fun and Mila the volunteer was brilliant.”*  
Creative children's workshop parent (2021)

Local arts practitioners carried out 9 free to attend family workshops in August and September centred around the theme of a birthday party. Two local young people also helped to facilitate the workshops.

- Create your own Party Chameleon with Vanessa (2 workshops)
- Create Paper Flower Bunting with Yanire (2 workshops)
- Create Party Shakers, Clackers and drums with Del (2 workshops)
- Create recycled party decorations with Gemma (2 workshops)
- Decorative Bunting with Emily

Many workshops were also joined by children alongside parents and carers, which was very positive after the weekly Junior Art Club was cancelled as a result of the pandemic, and many families joined multiple workshops.

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS!**

### **Volunteers**

We recruited more than 45 volunteers to help us with the events, a mix of new and current volunteers as well as some who used to volunteer and who wanted to get involved again through our birthday celebrations. Volunteers helped in organising the workshops, with publicity, and organising a special 10th birthday party edition of our newsletter which was distributed to thousands of local households.

Other volunteers were part of a steering group to plan celebrations, others were involved in baking, making, decorating, collecting equipment, preparing signage, putting up gazebos, setting up stalls, running stalls and activities and everything in between. We are extremely grateful to them for all of their hard work and enthusiasm.

We are also thankful to the local community organisations, churches and school PTA's that lent us equipment as well as people who donated their time and belongings to help make the birthday party a success.

### **The party**

On Sunday 19th September our celebration event took place in The Mill and at the nearby Mission Grove Car Park. We held most of the activities at the car park in order to accommodate large numbers of people safely and to minimise the risk of infection. We had a variety of stalls and activities, most of them free or low-cost to make them accessible to our diverse community so that everyone could join in.



This included a bouncy castle, giant games area, storytelling for 0- to 8-year olds, children's art and craft workshops in printmaking, plant pot painting with bulb planting, stalls from The Mill groups, many live performances (including Bollywood dancing, Swingtime Serenaders, and the Waltham Forest Community Choir) and many more.

Our wonderful Mill bakers baked and donated an array of fantastic cakes, as well as Mell's Desserts (a local start-up organisation) who sold family favourite desserts alongside her own



line of merchandise. Over 160 participants helped to make decorations in the workshops to help decorate The Mill for our birthday and people made and sent us birthday cards which we displayed alongside, and we welcomed over a thousand people who joined in with the fun and activities at our party and wished us a Happy Birthday.

### **The Mill 10th Anniversary Quiz**

A special birthday quiz was organised on Friday 17th September in the community room of the Rose and Crown pub, generously given to us for our fundraising event, where quizzers enjoyed being able to get together for a special 10th-anniversary quiz. The evening was well attended by 50 quiz goers and our raffle raised £211.00 for The Mill.

## **Events at The Mill**

“  
*A godsend. It gives me a destination!*”  
Annual Survey 2021

Each year our Events Team volunteers organise several community events. With the challenges around the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were delighted that the team were able to organise a Christmas craft sale. Volunteers from our knitting and sociable sewing groups ran tables selling beautiful items, and a local jewellery maker hired a table to sell her pieces.



A local mother and daughter ran a stall selling toys and other craft items, with all proceeds going towards children's activities at The Mill. We received a lot of positive feedback following the event and we raised over £300.

## **CHRISTMAS SOCIAL**

### **December 2021**

We were pleased to be able to get together in person for our annual end-of-year social gathering with volunteers, staff and our tenants. It was a nice opportunity to catch up with friendly faces away from screens.



## AIM 2: GETTING INVOLVED

“  
*An amazing opportunity to give something back to your local community. So many wonderfully creative things happen at The Mill and although I've not been volunteering for very long, it already feels like this experience has opened up my concept of what London life can be and how we can absolutely connect with the community we live in in a positive way. The Mill is a warm, creative and welcoming space full of opportunities to bring ideas to life in E17. It's an inspiring place to walk into - it has a calming feel.*

”

*Iranzu, volunteer (2021)*

Our volunteers are the heart and soul of The Mill and it is thanks to their dedication, ideas and diversity of experience that The Mill is a welcoming and friendly place. Everything that happens here is down to our volunteers' skills, energy and commitment. Our volunteers genuinely care about making a positive difference and are our greatest asset, bringing their valuable skills and experience to The Mill for the benefit of their community. We often hear volunteers saying they gain much from their volunteering with us in developing new skills, making friends and connections, and learning more about their community.

We have seen how volunteering and socialising together can break down barriers between people with different life experiences, and these interactions are at the core of building community resilience and an enhanced sense of belonging. We are proud that The Mill is contributing towards building resilience in the local community, and that, through providing support, and safe, accessible opportunities to volunteer, we offer opportunities to deepen volunteers' self-belief and confidence in creating change, and provide a sense of purpose which contributes to their wellbeing.

### **Our key objectives are to:**

- Enable more people from across the community to share their skills and time through volunteering
- Make it possible for more local people to share their skills and feel confident to act on their ideas
- Continue to host a wide range of activities run by and for the community

### Segi runs the Paris Marathon for The Mill

*"It's an absolute pleasure and very happy I can do my part for The Mill and wider community...I'm thrilled the fundraising target was smashed"*  
Segi Adewusi, October 2021

In October 2021, Segi Adewusi ran the Paris marathon and raised £1,306.90 through donations for The Mill. We are very grateful to Segi for such an incredible achievement and for choosing to fundraise for us.



## Volunteering during COVID-19

Despite the challenges of living at a time of an unprecedented pandemic, we were still able to attract 23 new volunteers and are in the process of recruiting two trustees. Volunteer retention remained good, with volunteers adapting with great resilience to the additional demands of the frequent changes to their roles and operations. All volunteers who responded to our 2021 volunteer survey said they would recommend volunteering at The Mill and some of them found being part of The Mill a very supportive experience throughout this time, in offering friendship, purpose and the opportunity to be part of their community.

We continued to support the emotional and physical well-being of our volunteers by being flexible around their needs and keeping in touch with them when The Mill's operational hours were more limited. We were very grateful to receive funding from the Tudor Trust to enable us to support the well-being of our staff and volunteers. We used this funding to offer various social activities, including a pizza and pottery evening, learning about herbs and essential oils and making soothing hand creams, a meal at a local restaurant, and tickets to Kew Gardens.

As well as providing an environment where we aim to foster community, kindness and self-development, one of our constant aims is to try and offer a wide variety of volunteer roles to suit the interests, skills and existing commitments of our volunteers. In 2021 we were able to offer new volunteer roles for our 10th Anniversary party funded by St James Big



Local and accompanying oral history project, *Tales From The Mill* funded by National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All. These two related activities attracted new volunteers and provided scope for existing ones to learn new skills on a fun and interesting piece of work.

As part of our aim to ensure a good and safe experience for volunteers and visitors, we revisit and revise our policies and procedures around governance and compliance. In late 2021 we focused on revising our safeguarding procedures and working with Global Safeguarding who kindly produced a new bespoke safeguarding briefing for us pro-bono. This will be introduced to our volunteers on a rolling basis along with further bespoke in-house training for our volunteers to be delivered by our Safeguarding Trustee.

## GROW YOUR IDEA

*“ I think that The Mill has given me the right amount of support to help me kick start my project and I do not think that they could have improved upon this. The Mill has been supportive, helpful and friendly throughout.*

*”*

Rani Gyi participant 2022

*Grow Your Idea* puts into practice what The Mill is all about: supporting and encouraging people to put forward their ideas for activities and events that benefit the local community and to take action to make them a reality. Since we opened our doors, one of our missions has been to support local groups and individuals to grow, which we have done in the past with various iterations of our Grow Your Idea community competition. Since Autumn 2018, we have been able to embed Grow Your Idea into our core practice, and in 2021/22 this scheme flourished with the kind support of funding from Waltham Forest Community Ward Funding, Local Giving Magic Grants, St James Big Local and the Co-op, which enabled us to support 15 projects and extend our programme.

Our community call-outs for group leaders this year were very popular, especially for our 10th-anniversary celebratory projects. The 15 projects we hosted were joined by over 150 people, from children to older people, many of whom said that they enjoyed the activities and the opportunity to be with other people in a group setting, whether in person or remotely online.

The group leaders selected for Grow Your Idea fed back their satisfaction with their experience saying the scheme was well run and supportive. Some of them were able to use the sessions as a springboard and their project ideas often continue beyond Grow Your Idea.



## NEW YEAR NEW SKILLS - digital inclusion project

Following on from last year's [Digital Buddies Project](#), we successfully received community ward funding from London Borough of Waltham Forest to offer more help to those at risk of being digitally excluded. This iteration provided more in-depth tuition aimed particularly at those with very little experience or knowledge.

In partnership with [Superhighways](#) who provided the tuition, we were able to offer 12 one-hour practical sessions on various basic and popular digital skills, which could be booked as a set or on a one-off basis. Before these sessions, there had been little to no in-person digital up-skilling in the Borough. Bookings for the sessions were taken in person so as not to disadvantage those who could not book online. Social Prescribing and Age UK helped with publicising these courses, helping us reach people outside of regular audiences.

## WELLBEING WEDNESDAYS

*“ I have children and grandchildren but they don't live here. This group gives me a chance to get out each week and see nice people.*

*”*

Jean, 74

Following on from the success of Feel Good Thursdays funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, we turned to Wednesday as a day to get people together who may be feeling isolated with the launch of Wellbeing Wednesdays in May 2021. Activities took place outdoors initially due to COVID-19 restrictions, then moved indoors as well. Participants enjoyed a range of workshops over 30 sessions, including:

- Creative art workshops
- Skills development (e.g. print-making, stitching)
- Knowledge base (e.g. personal safety, horticulture, nutrition)
- Fun (e.g. board games, bingo)
- Physical activities (e.g. walking, yoga)
- Spirituality (e.g. meditation)

Participants spoke often about their isolation. Some spoke about how they did not want to cook for themselves or were concerned about food costs, whereas others lacked the skills and knowledge about healthy food and nutrition. These discussions were an opportunity to discuss nutrition and how healthy affordable meals can be achieved as well as an important way of improving well-being.

Participants were encouraged to research, try out and bring in evidence of their cooking. These nutrition learning sessions gave people a chance to realise they could cook for themselves, that they deserved to eat something nice even if they live alone and to shop around for good prices.

Though not in our original plan, we delivered four sessions and the group produced their own cookbook, with recipes and artwork chosen and designed by the participants. The Wellbeing Wednesdays Cookbook is available from The Mill and is a bright and varied collection of recipes from different cultures to share with others.

### TALES FROM THE MILL

Tales from the Mill was a project aiming to record the 10-year history of The Mill community centre through the words of people who were involved during that time. The project was funded by a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund and local artist and oral history practitioner, Lucy Harrison, was appointed in June 2021 to deliver the project.

Lucy recruited nine volunteers who received training in collecting oral history interviews. Volunteers then arranged interviews with the original "Save The Library" campaigners who campaigned to save the building which is now The Mill, as well as the many volunteers, staff, users and group leaders involved over the past ten years. Excerpts from the interviews would be collated into a printed book, form part of an exhibition to be shown in The Mill's Living room and could be listened to on The Mill's website.

An exhibition of digitally printed text and photo panels was on display in January-March 2022 and Audio clips were available on our website. A Community Day was held on March 5 2022 in place of an opening event which had been difficult to plan earlier in January due to rising cases of COVID-19.





The history of how The Mill opened in 2011 following the closure of St James Street Library and the resulting campaign, and its ten years since then, is now recorded and archived in an accessible way, sharing the story with the local community. The archive of oral history interviews, transcriptions, images and the book will be held by The Mill and donated to Vestry House Museum, the London Borough of Waltham Forest Archive.

### Volunteer Team Make-up

Our **Reception** volunteers are normally the main point of contact for The Mill, signposting people, and ensuring room hires go smoothly and that visitors are comfortable and safe. The **Events** and **Art Works** teams, both volunteer-led, work autonomously to plan and deliver a range of activities, events and exhibitions throughout the year. We have volunteers who help us look after our space, with a particular focus on our library and garden, and others, such as The Mill Knitters and Sewing group who also contribute to larger events by donating items they have made to sell.

Our **Communications Coordinator** leads a volunteer comms team, and our Board of Trustees consists of volunteers who work together with the different management groups to ensure a collaborative approach to running the charity and make sure the voices of volunteers are represented at all levels of the organisation.



At The Mill, we understand that people have busy lives and we pride ourselves on being able to offer a variety of ways to contribute through a wide range of quality volunteering opportunities. Whether it is people who want to contribute their time to work on a one-off event, run a group, volunteer remotely from home or volunteer on a regular weekly basis, we offer opportunities that can fit with people's other time commitments, lifestyles, needs and abilities. This variety of options creates possibilities for a diverse range of people to get involved with all the benefits that can bring to themselves and their community.

Our community centre is only as good as the people who keep it going and make things happen. This is particularly true when our staff, volunteers and local community have faced a time of continued unprecedented challenges as a result of the pandemic and we are very fortunate to have a community that is full of skilled, knowledgeable and experienced people who went above and beyond to make sure the community remained connected and supported throughout this year and despite all the challenges we all faced. With asset-based community development values at the forefront of our activities and operations, we see our role in the community as a place where people are encouraged to take the initiative and put forward their ideas, and a space to organise and run projects and schemes which facilitate this and can give back to the community, and we worked hard to find ways to continue doing that when our building was closed and we were faced with new and unexpected challenges.

This year, our group of committed volunteers returned to their roles to help us welcome back our users by staffing our reception area, running groups such as knitting, sewing, book and our Mill Makers group. Our Artworks volunteers set to work on organising a photographic exhibition and we all began to get excited about our 10th birthday in September.

## AIM 3: GETTING CREATIVE

*“The Sunday drawing sessions are an inspiration. Quite simply, you sit down and get drawing for two hours - which would never happen at the kitchen table on a Sunday morning at home.”*

Duncan Holmes, regular user since 2018

Our key objectives are to:

- **Encourage** more people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to be creative
- Continue to provide **regular opportunities** for people to showcase their talent through our exhibitions and workshops
- Support creative activities that encourage people to **learn** new skills, **connect** with others and **build confidence**, especially for those who are isolated

## Art Works

The visual arts are at the heart of creative activity at The Mill. From the start, the Art Works volunteer team of creatives has planned and delivered a wide-ranging annual programme of events and activities. Central to this is a commitment to inclusion in its widest sense: inviting local people of all ages, abilities and from across our diverse community to take part in creating art together with others.

## EXHIBITIONS

Art Works run a year-round exhibition programme in the Living Room celebrating the creativity of our local community. This year The Mill's 10th-anniversary displays and exhibitions took precedence in The Mill's Living Room from August 2021 to March 2022. We mounted two exhibitions from May to August 2021 and opened a third, *'Picture it'* on 30 March 2022. Our exhibitions are open-call, inviting anyone, young or old, keen artist or total beginner to show their work for a small fee. There's no selection process: all works are accepted. The exhibition programme covers a range of themes and invites people to contribute work in a variety of media. They're always well-supported and popular. Planned, run and curated by Art Works volunteers, the exhibitions also bring in a small income to Art Works, which supports some of our other activities.

### Lockdown through the Lens

Our photographic exhibition, "Lockdown through the Lens" was created to be seen both online and in The Mill, in case the building was closed again and for people who may not



have felt confident yet going into public buildings. It ran in The Mill from May 19th until June 24th 2021. 15 local photographers contributed 25 works on a wide variety of lockdown themes. Visitors particularly commented on the humour and positivity of the photographs.



Photo (L) by Sally Anne Wood

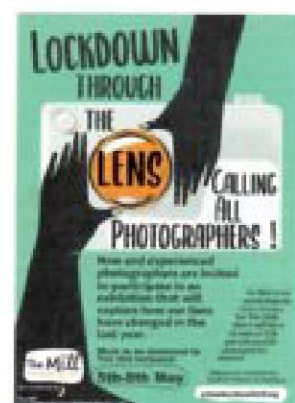


Image (top-right): Poster by Simon Welch

Image (bottom-right): Checklist for Going Out  
by Sue Grant

## FREEDOM

*Freedom* was part of the annual E17 Art Trail, open between July 1st-August 20th. Taking part in the Art Trail is a great way to introduce new people to The Mill, and to celebrate and share the creativity in our local area. Artists and poets were invited to respond to the theme in any way they chose, and a total of 26 artists and poets contributed a wide variety of submissions.



Image: Lockdown 3 by A. Alcock (February 2021)



## PICTURE IT!

'Picture It!' was our final exhibition of 2021-22, opening on March 30th. The open call this time invited local artists to create images that celebrated books and the written word. A total of 29 artists joined this project, producing a spectacular range of contrasting images.



*A - R - T* by Duncan Holmes



*Daphne* by Linda McDonald

## ANNIVERSARY WORKSHOPS

Our creative workshops for children have always been very popular with local families. In a series of free holiday workshops organised by Art Works and led by a team of local creatives, children age 4+ joined preparations for the Anniversary party by:

- creating their own chameleon (a smaller version of the much-loved cardboard chameleon in The Mill's children's room)
- crafting paper flower bunting
- making party shakers, clackers and drums
- creating recycled party decorations

On the celebration day itself, we ran a further three drop-in workshops for children of all ages, bringing the total of participants to 122 across all workshops. Their creations were displayed in the Mill Living Room and were a welcome and colourful contribution to creating a party atmosphere.

## GROUPS

*“ My 6-year old son really loved Junior Art Club last term. He really enjoyed how the classes were structured to explore a theme which ran all the way through, exploring an idea in both 2-D and 3-D and was delighted and proud with the things he brought home!”*

”

Parent (2021)

Two Art Works groups have been part of our programme for many years, both led by Art Works volunteers David Hughes and Jane Evans. We're very grateful to David and Jane for their input and commitment.

### Junior Art Club

Junior Art Club has been a very popular after-school club for children aged 6+ for many years. Parents attend with their children, and bring younger siblings to play in the Children's Room. The numbers involved in each session and concerns about distancing meant a full restart had to be delayed. To fill this gap, the Art Works team planned and ran four workshops in November and December 2021, on the days and at the time that Junior Art Club traditionally meets. Numbers were kept to 8 children per workshop to ensure social distancing, and each workshop was run twice to enable everyone who wanted to attend.

### Get Drawing

Get Drawing is a friendly, informal group for adults of all abilities who want to improve their drawing skills. After the break imposed by the lockdown, the group restarted fortnightly meetings on Sunday mornings from 18 June 2021, opening to new recruits in August. By the end of the year, attendance was regularly meeting the maximum of 10 set by the limits of space in the Living Room. In January the group became weekly and continued to attract good attendances every week.

## WINDOW ART

The Mill's large downstairs windows opening onto the street provide additional opportunities for creativity, and involving local children with The Mill's window displays has proved very successful. As well as being an enjoyable activity to be involved with, it creates a sense of pride in the participants when they see their work publicly displayed. It encourages them and their parents to feel that they are part of the Mill and attracts others who have never been to The Mill to get involved.



Many thanks to the talented Art Works volunteer team members who dreamed up the ideas, ran the workshops, put in hours decorating the windows - and made it possible for us to offer all the activities free.

### **Interactive Christmas window**

Led by Art Works team leader Vanessa, a small group of 8 children from Coppermill School were invited to add drawings for a Christmas Window display. The activity took place after school and hot chocolate was provided for refreshment. A background snow scene had been drawn beforehand and the children added characters and snowflakes to it. The children's unusual, lively and amusing contributions included a snowball-throwing alien! The children enjoyed this activity as it involved working with other children and using distinctive white chalk pens.



### **World Book Day**

World Book Day this year fell on Thursday, 3rd March. Our chosen book was the children's favourite, *'The Tiger who Came to Tea'* by Judith Kerr. On the eve of Book Day, local children aged 4 and over were invited to create their favourite meals for the tiger with art materials on paper plates. After the end of the workshops, workshop leader Sarah and her partner worked late into the evening laying out the display in the window, ready for the great day.

On World Book Day itself, children were invited to 'Create Animal Bookmarks' with Vanessa after school, with a further workshop the following week to let more children join in. Two enthusiastic groups of children aged 5-10 took part.



Photograph of *The Tiger Who Came For Tea* window display (2021)



## AIM 4: IMPROVING OUR SPACE

Our building is our most important resource: it's where people get connected, get involved, get creative and make things happen. Hiring out our space also provides us with essential income. We want it to be welcoming, well-equipped, comfortable and safe for all our users, and be available for a wide range of uses.

Our key objectives are to:

- **Improve our building** and its facilities to enable more people to make their ideas happen at The Mill
- **Make better use of our existing space**, and maximise the use of our rooms so that more people can benefit from a range of activities
- Continue to be a **trusted guardian of the loved and valued local space**, and make the most of what the building can do for the community

### Build The Mill

As with other activities, progress on this project was delayed further as a result of the ongoing pandemic. We now have a better understanding of where we are and what we need to do to achieve our ambitions to make The Mill building better for the long term. Our approach so far has been to make careful and considerate decisions before forging ahead with this project in the changed post-pandemic landscape.

Following a tender process, [BAT Studio](#) were appointed as project architects and designers and [Fraser Randall](#) were appointed as quantity surveyors. The brief to BAT Studio was to come up with a range of options for refurbishment to both improve the quality of the space and maximise the overall usable area of the premises. BAT Studio presented the steering group with four options for refurbishment from minimal to maximum intervention. All proposals acknowledged the many constraints of the building while offering options for greatly improving accessibility, the quality and flexibility of the spaces, reducing our environmental impact and maximising the use of all available space.

Through the Power to Change Community Business Renewal Fund programme, we have been given strategic support in business planning for Build The Mill from [Eastside Primetimers](#), specialists in supporting charities with building development. Senior consultant Kevin Davey has reviewed and advised on our fundraising feasibility study as well as developed a bespoke assessment tool to inform our decision-making in the area of income generation through our business activities. We have also had free support with fundraising planning from Locality and a letter of support for our project from the Community Buildings at

Risk team at the GLA. Our 2021 user survey indicates strong support from our users to improve our building, in particular the children's room and provision of more creative activities and drop-in space.

Our fundraising feasibility study has been reappraised and updated in light of changes to funding priorities, open grant programmes and competition levels over the last year. We are working closely with our most important local partner and owner of the building, Waltham Forest Council, and key local stakeholder Saint James Street Big Local, who are currently developing their legacy plans.

Project Coordinator Karen Hart stepped away from her role at the end of her contract in January 2021. Her valued work is picked up by the steering group, and puts us in a good position to proceed with the next phase of the project, with the continued involvement of Capital Fundraiser Helen Hunte, who also took on some of Karen's coordinating duties. As this year comes to a close and we are able to plan further into the future, we will build on this planning and preparatory work to move through the next phases of this project.

## Making good use of our space

### ROOM HIRE

At the start of the year, we continued to rent our rooms where permitted and promoted room hire to those needing a quiet space for an online meeting. We received a few one-off bookings as well as a regular booking for counselling sessions.

We continued to work with our room hirers to adapt their activities to meet government guidelines for community settings where these were available, and we remained in communication during the stages of the various lockdowns with hirers who could or wanted to come back on how they could run their activity adhering to social distancing, this included:

- Reducing hire rates for our spaces, including the Living Room, to enable activities to take place with social distancing limitations
- Offering additional time for each booking to ensure disinfecting between bookings
- Being flexible with bookings and allowing space hire outside opening hours, to ensure hirers could maximise the Mill's capacity for socially distanced events

This flexible approach enabled us to host a range of events, some continuing from previous years as well as drawing entirely new organisers into using our spaces for their activities:

- French & Spanish for children (under 5's)
- After School Tutoring



- Acupuncture
- Chill Out Zone Free drop-in sessions for children aged 10–16 who live in the area
  - Established in March 2019, they have been supported with funding from St James Street Big Local, the National Lottery Awards for All and London and Quadrant Housing, delivered through the Waltham Forest Arts in Education Network (WFAEN)
- Knitting and Sociable Sewing drop-in
- Get Drawing - due to its popularity with users, it became a weekly class in January
- Mill Makers
- Scrabble games and conversation
- Junior Art Club
- The Mill Book Club

We also hosted a number of successful one-off events:

- Artillery's High Street ADVENTures
- Wonders of Clay printing workshop - March 2022 ( rescheduled from December 2021 when Omicron cases were too high to allow it to go ahead)
- St James Big Local Volunteer Fair - Nov 2021
- Bike Maintenance Workshop - Jan 2022
- Activities funded by SJBL e.g. CreatiTEA, Holistic Hygiene

We were featured in the Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) newsletter for being a welcoming and a good community venue.

Though we weren't able to hire our space for children's birthday parties bookings due to room capacity restrictions, we made up for lost income by hiring the entire space for the Bulgarian elections which took place twice in July and again in November 2021, which brought in significant revenue for The Mill and we were pleased to be able to accommodate the local Bulgarian community in their civic duties. We also offered our space as a drop-off point for a Foodbank and Laptop donations, coordinated with William Morris Big Local.

We were delighted to finally reopen the Children's room in October 2021 after a year of closure. With new procedures to help make the space COVID-secure, we limited the number of adults in the room to four and laid out sets of toys on a rotation basis so they could be quarantined and disinfected between sessions. We know from previous surveys that the Children's Room and activities aimed at first-time mums are very popular and impactful in

new families in the local community and that parents and carers have missed this much-loved resource.

## PARTNERSHIPS

True to our values as a community hub, we have continued to work with and alongside other local community organisations. Our upstairs offices and studios are hired by true stalwarts of The Mill, many of whom have been with us from the very early days of The Mill. We worked hard throughout the pandemic to best support our tenants through the financial difficulties and uncertainties they were facing as a direct result of the pandemic.

- **Social Spider** — a socially-minded research and project development community interest company (CIC) who also publish five community newspapers including The Waltham Forest Echo
- **Artillery** — an arts development organisation established by the creative team behind the E17 Art Trail. Artillery aims to create lasting shared memories among neighbours resulting from their open invitations to create neighbourhood events and projects together
- **Jason Hawkrige** — an established multi-disciplinary artist
- **The Sleep Disorders Clinic Ltd** — a clinic specialising in the diagnosis and treatment of snoring and Sleep Apnoea
- **Del Taylor** — a participatory artist who works with a variety of arts organisations, theatres and community groups in Waltham Forest and across London.

## COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE

We want people to be able to easily find out about The Mill and get involved. Word-of-mouth and our friendly and accessible building have been our biggest assets, underpinned by an effective communication strategy that reaches out to our wider community.

Our 10th Birthday celebrations helped reinvigorate our message. It was an opportunity to share some of the stories of The Mill today and highlight our past through the oral history project. The opening of the children's room has encouraged new support on social media, including visits and reviews from parent Instagramers with high follower counts.

We've made more use of group messaging apps even as we returned to in-person operations, sharing information on large neighbourhood and street groups and local special interest groups for creatives. We can target our messaging to people who are more interested in specific activities or offers, in a format that is easy for others to share.



The impact of the lockdowns and COVID-19 restrictions in 2020 and 2021 is clear from the engagement analytics, with a big increase of users of our website in 2021-22, compared to the previous year, but a decrease in reach and engagement on Twitter and Facebook. Although we don't have complete data for Instagram, it is our account which has seen the most growth. We are now capturing and archiving analytics and insights on a monthly basis to be able to understand our social media engagement more effectively.

Website	2020-21	2021-22	Growth
Users	9,766	16,544	69%
Total Page views	27,981	50,755	81%
Facebook	2020-21	2021-22	Growth
Page Likes	2428	2472	2%
Reach	26,934	18,840	-30%
Engagement	8,057	4,318	-46%
Twitter	Jan - Mar 2021	Jan - Mar 2022	Growth
Followers	6563	6595	0.5%
Tweet Impressions	82700	31500	-62%
Engagement rate	1.1%	1.5%	36%
Mailchimp	Mill News April 2021	Mill News March 2022	Growth
Subscribers Mill News	1,022	1,016	-0.6%
Average open rate Mill News	28%	38%	36%
Subscribers Art Works	152 (April 2021)	187 (March 2022)	23%

As we're working towards being open all day and increasing capacity at The Mill, our Comms is going to be focusing on increasing use of The Mill through general visits, room hire and children's parties.

## FUNDRAISING

Over the last decade, The Mill has built a strong portfolio of funders supporting our work and grants have continued to be an important source of income this year. This year's grants have helped to sustain the organisation, keeping us going through the pandemic and into the cost of living crisis and helping us to support our users through targeted projects and initiatives.

We are grateful to our funders and supporters for their flexibility and generosity over the past 2 years of pandemic uncertainty.

- **LBWF Small Business Grant Fund** - Support for core costs to cover pandemic-related loss of income
- **LBWF Support for Vulnerable Residents Fund** - Creative Connections creative project to support people suffering from poor mental health after the pandemic
- **LBWF Community Ward Funding** - Digital Buddies project supporting the digitally excluded
- **Power to Change Community Business Renewal Fund** - A valuable contribution to core costs at a difficult time
- **Tudor Trust** - Build The Mill continues its development phase, delayed due to the pandemic
- **St James Street Big Local** - 10th Birthday Celebrations including a community birthday party event and special workshops and activities
- **National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All** - The Mill Story was an oral history project telling the story of The Mill
- **National Lottery Community Fund COVID-19 Emergency Fund** - essential core costs support during the pandemic
- **L&Q Foundation** - The Chill Out Zone, continuing our popular youth project
- **Clarion Futures** - Feel Good Thursdays project to support the well-being of local people
- **Tesco Bags of Help** - Contributions to our projects for young people and improving well-being
- **Co-op Local Community Fund** - Grow Your Idea support for local people to start their own projects and groups at The Mill
- **Local Giving Magic Little Grants** - Parent Carers Peer Support Group led by a volunteer
- **Asda Foundation** - A welcome donation to our core costs.

Thanks also to Euromonitor who made a donation on behalf of one of their long-standing members of staff who nominated The Mill for a £1000 donation.

A special mention to our fabulous **Friends of The Mill**, whose regular giving is greatly appreciated as a reliable source of unrestricted income for us to use to keep The Mill going!



## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### Summary

In the year 2021-2022, the charitable company had a total income of £151,215 (2020-2021: £168,881) and total expenditure of £125,576 (2020-21: £109,594). There was a surplus of £25,639 (2020-21 surplus £59,287).

The Mill experienced a further successful year of fundraising, business development, and income diversification, supporting The Mill's strategic aims and vision and, in particular, the five-year strategy that the community and trustees put in place at the end of 2016, and subsequently, in pandemic conditions, extended to the end of 2022. This enables the charity to continue to be secure and able to plan for the future, to retain its wonderful staff team and above all to give confidence to its community that The Mill is here as a resource for them for the long term. We were particularly grateful for a wide range of financial support this year, at a time when our usual activity was recovering from the pandemic, and serving the community in a wide variety of targeted ways at this time, and with a growing demand on our resources to do so. We are hugely grateful to all our supporters for this.

We started the year coming out of a lockdown and still with severe restrictions around the pandemic, along with high levels of uncertainty and community and organisational concern. We are glad this has gradually lessened during this year and, as reflected elsewhere in this report, we have been able to gradually reopen and rebuild throughout this year. At the same time, as we write we are now navigating inflation and rapidly rising running costs and cost of living in our community and for our people, and are very conscious of the need for strategic and operational governance and management to steer through this as well as we can. Our sound financial position, the generosity of our funders, and the incredible dedication and hard work of our staff and volunteers have enabled us to do so and to continue to be a charity in a good financial position.

### Funds and reserves

Total funds carried forward at the end of this year were £155,166 (for the year 2020-2021 the total was £129,527). This comprised £48,948 restricted funds and £106,218 unrestricted funds, of which £68,500 were designated reserves and £37,718 were general reserves (for the year 2020-2021 there were £27,471 restricted funds and £102,056 unrestricted funds of which £68,500 were designated and £28,556 were general reserves).

## RESERVES POLICY

It is the policy of the charitable company to maintain reserves of the charitable company at a level to provide sufficient funds to cover unforeseen circumstances.

The Reserves Policy of the company, as reviewed and updated in March 2022 by the trustees (directors) is:

- The trustees believe that, in order to remain financially secure and viable, they should seek to hold three to six months' running costs in reserve. This should mean that The Mill is able to continue to deliver its objectives in a climate of fluctuating funding. In previous years, The Mill has at times exceeded its reserves target due to the support it has received through donations together with a successful business development focus on increasing earned income and pursuing a diverse range of income streams, enabling the trustees to invest some of the reserves in projects that have both delivered the strategic aims of The Mill for our beneficiaries and helped to secure long term sustainability.
- Additionally, between 2019 and 2021, alongside delivering the work of the charity, a designated reserve equivalent to six months operating costs was also created. This is in anticipation of proposed building development works (*Build The Mill*) that may reduce the operational capacity of the building for up to 9-12 months in the coming years, depending on the needs of a capital project and in consultation with users and the community. The trustees are particularly keen to ensure any level of closure should not affect the delivery of The Mill's charitable objectives or staff retention. Fundraising will also need a commitment from the charity and trustees in the form of match funding, and to that end the trustees are now seeking to increase the designated reserve to be equivalent to twelve months of operating costs, so that the redevelopment of the building might be realised, together with all the benefits that that can bring to the community.

The free, undesignated reserves at the end of the year were £37,718 (2020-2021: £33,556), which meets our reserves policy of between three and six months of core running costs.

## Investment policy

There are no restrictions on the charitable company's power to invest. Investment is not part of The Mill's current financial strategy.



## Risk review

The trustees (directors) are aware of their obligations to make a statement in respect of the management of risks faced by The Mill. A risk register has been set up, is regularly reviewed, and steps are taken to mitigate the risks identified. Funding risk is continuously addressed through a fundraising strategy that seeks to achieve funding spread, by monitoring reserve levels and by ensuring controls exist over key financial systems. The trustees engage experts to support this process, including financial accounting and reporting.

The greatest risks in this year have continued to be the operational, financial, personnel, community and strategic risks around the COVID-19 pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on those risks was a focus of trustee and staff decision making throughout the year and particularly in the earlier months. We held regular meetings (mostly remotely) during which decisions and actions were reviewed, reflected upon, and adjusted to mitigate all the risks as much as possible and to respond to what was at times a very quickly changing situation. Coming to the end of the financial year, the risks of rising costs for the charity and the community (and including our staff and volunteers) have become a risk that trustees and the Centre Manager have given attention to, and continue to do so.

## Employees

The Mill strives to be an equal opportunities employer and applies objective criteria to assess merit. It aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, race, colour, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

Selection criteria and procedures are in place to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated based on their relevant merits and abilities. All employees are given Equal Opportunities Training to enable them to develop their skills and knowledge. The Mill is committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective and brings it to the attention of all employees. The Mill is also proactively undertaking an Equalities and Diversity review of all areas of its operations in 2022.

The Mill is extremely grateful to its team of employees for all their excellent work.

## Contribution by, and appreciation of, volunteers

The trustees would like to place on record the significant contributions of the volunteers of The Mill in securing further funding and in the delivery of the community centre activities,

which will help the local community and future generations. The Mill would not operate without its volunteers.

Volunteers are involved in several innovative ways to enable The Mill to make the most of the skills and willingness of a wide range of people, from experts in fundraising and communications who work in special teams. For every person who wants to gain new work experience, there is someone who is happy to share theirs. Some run groups and others provide a friendly face in reception, and each and every person who has volunteered and volunteers with The Mill has made a positive contribution to The Mill achieving its aims.

### Contribution by, and appreciation of, supporters


The trustees appreciate the support of Tudor Trust, St James Street Big Local, National Lottery Community Fund, Tesco Bags of Help, Power to Change, London Borough of Waltham Forest, Co-op Local Community Fund, Local Giving Magic Little Grants, Clarion Futures, L&Q Foundation, Locality and Eastside Primetimers towards the achievement of the set goals and objectives of the charitable company. The trustees appreciate all contributions from the local voluntary, community, public and business sectors and our community of Friends and supporters.

### Independent examiner

Waqas Hussain ACCA has been appointed as independent examiner for this accounting period.

### Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption.

<b>Registered office:</b>  7-11 Coppermill Lane  Walthamstow  London E17 7HA	<b>Signed on behalf of the trustees</b>   <b>Alison Griffin (Director and Treasurer)</b>  Date: 10/12/22
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## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT to the trustees of The Mill @ Coppermill

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Mill @ Coppermill ("The Mill") for the year ended 31 March 2022.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

### Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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

Name: Waqas Hussain FCCA

Address: 10 Knebworth Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E17 5AJ

Date: 2/12/2022

Signed:



## Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total Funds £	2021 Total Funds £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>					
Voluntary Income	2	39,168	70,492	109,660	144,337
Activities for Generating Funds		5,765	-	5,765	2,126
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>	2	35,790	-	35,790	22,418
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	2	80,723	70,492	151,215	168,881
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
<b>Fundraising Costs</b>					
<b>Charitable Expenditure</b>					
Community Centre Programmes	3	74,977	49,015	123,992	108,936
Governance Costs		1,584	-	1,584	658
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	3	76,561	49,015	125,576	109,594
<b>Net Incoming Resources</b>					
- Net Income for the Year		4,162	21,477	25,639	59,287
<b>Total Funds at the start of the year</b>		102,056	27,471	129,527	70,240
<b>Total Funds at the end of the year</b>		106,218	49,948	155,166	129,527

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.



**Statement of Financial Position**  
**31 March 2022**

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible fixed assets	8	-	-
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors & Prepayments	9	11,466	7,325
Bank & Cash at hand		<u>149,627</u>	<u>125,759</u>
		161,093	133,084
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	10	(5,927)	(3,557)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>155,166</u>	<u>129,527</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	12	<u>155,166</u>	<u>129,527</u>
<b>Funds</b>			
Restricted funds		49,948	27,471
Unrestricted funds		106,218	102,056
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	12	<u>155,166</u>	<u>129,527</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2022 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

These financial statements were approved by the members of the directors and authorised for issue on the XX November 2022 and are signed on their behalf by:



RICHARD BENNETT (Chair)



ALISON GRIFFIN (Treasurer)

## 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### (a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, and in compliance with 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (FRS 102), the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102 (Charities SORP) and the Companies Act 2006.

### (b) Going Concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue

### (c) Fund Accounting

- Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Unrestricted funds include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at market values.
- Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Management Committee for particular purposes.
- Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

### (d) Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Incoming resources from charitable trading activity are accounted for when earned.
- Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.

### (e) Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit or examination costs, and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.



- All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the SoFA on a basis designed to reflect the use of the resource. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly, others are apportioned on an appropriate basis e.g. floor areas, per capita or estimated usage as set out in the notes to the accounts.

## **1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**

### **(f) Fixed assets**

Fixed assets (excluding investments) are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, which is provided on a reducing balance basis over the useful life of the asset at 25% per annum for all assets, except when purchased with a capital grant whose terms and conditions specify otherwise. Full depreciation is provided in the year of purchase. The costs of minor additions or those costing below £2,000 are not capitalised.

### **(g) Operating lease agreements**

Rentals payable under operating leases, where substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership remain with the lessor, are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the life of the lease.

## 2. TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES

	Grant	Activity	Other	2022	2021
Analysis of Incoming Resources	Income	Income	Income	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Community Centre Programmes	105,492	41,555	4,168	151,215	168,881
	Unrestricted	Restricted		2022	2021
	£	£		Total	Total
				£	£
<b>Voluntary Income</b>					
<b>Grants &amp; Donations</b>					
LBWF Connecting Communities	-	2,330		2,330	4,660
Tudor Trust (Build the Mill)	-	25,000		25,000	20,833
National Lottery Community Fund	-	-		-	4,000
London Community Response Fund - City Bridge Trust	-	-		-	15,950
LBWF Community Ward Funding	-	1,421		1,421	1,263
LBWF Climate of Change	-	-		-	700
NLCF - COVID-19 Emergency Fund	-	-		-	10,000
Saint James Big Local	-	7,000		7,000	4,000
Tudor Trust (Wellbeing grant)	-	-		-	2,000
Small Business Grant Fund (LBWF)	13,000	-		13,000	40,286
Foyle Foundation	-	-		-	5,000
Covid-19 Community Led Organisations Resilience Fund	-	-		-	25,000
Tesco Bags of Help	2,000	-		2,000	500
People's Postcode Lottery - Magic little grants	-	500		500	-
Co-op Local Community Fund	-	2,991		2,991	-
LBWF Support for Vulnerable Residents Grants	-	10,000		10,000	-
Clarion Futures Feel Good Thursdays	-	1,000		1,000	-
L&Q Foundation	-	9,000		9,000	-
National Lottery Awards for All	-	11,250		11,250	-
Power to Change – Community Business Renewal Fund	20,000	-		20,000	-
					-
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>70,492</b>		<b>105,492</b>	<b>134,192</b>
<b>Other Donations</b>	<b>4,168</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>4,168</b>	<b>10,145</b>
<b>Total Voluntary Income</b>	<b>39,168</b>	<b>70,492</b>		<b>109,660</b>	<b>144,337</b>
<b>Activities for Generating Funds and income from Charitable Activities</b>					
Fund Generation	5,766	-		5,766	2,216
Hiring Income	35,790	-		35,790	22,418
<b>Total Incoming from Charitable Activities</b>	<b>41,555</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>41,555</b>	<b>22,544</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>80,723</b>	<b>70,492</b>		<b>151,215</b>	<b>168,881</b>



### 3. TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED

	Direct Costs	Support Costs	2022 Total	2021 Total
	£	£	£	£
Charitable Expenditure				
Community Centre Programmes	103,954	20,038	123,992	108,936
<b>Total Charitable Expenditure</b>	<b>103,954</b>	<b>20,038</b>	<b>123,992</b>	<b>108,936</b>
 Governance	 -	 1,584	 1,584	 658
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>103,954</b>	<b>21,622</b>	<b>125,576</b>	<b>109,594</b>

3(a) Governance Costs	2022	2021
These comprise the following:	Total	Total
	£	£
Independent Examiner's Fees	500	500
Professional Fees	1,084	158
	<b>1,584</b>	<b>658</b>

3(b) Direct Costs	2022	2021
	£	£
Fundraising Costs	6,498	7,420
Wages	55,138	60,640
Other Staff Costs	618	30
Volunteer Costs	250	225
Health & Safety	106	10
Projects & Consultancy Expenditure	38,670	22,253
Merchandise for Resale Cost	878	32
Activities Costs	1,616	1,496
Other Costs	180	134
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	<b>103,954</b>	<b>92,242</b>

3(c) Support Costs	2022	2021
	£	£
Rent and Rates	6,820	5,171
Heat & Light	3,555	2,617
Printing & Stationery	331	156
Telephone & Computer Consumables	1,865	1,411
Building Maintenance & Cleaning	4,048	2,841
Insurance	970	1,354
General Expenses	9	7
Accountancy	2,440	3,314
<b>Total Support Costs</b>	<b>20,038</b>	<b>16,694</b>

#### 4. EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS

	Wages £	Other £	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Restricted</b>				
Saint James Big Local	1,818	8,182	10,000	3,370
Tudor Trust	-	8,509	8,509	4,545
LBWF Connecting Communities	-	4,338	4,338	3,656
London Community Response Fund - City Bridge Trust	-	-	-	11,270
LBWF Climate of Change	-	-	-	700
LBWF Community Ward Funding	-	-	-	1,500
NLCF - Covid 19 Emergency Fund	-	1,250	1,250	7,120
Coop community fund	-	442	442	-
Clarion Futures Feel Good Thursdays	-	5,000	5,000	-
National Lottery Awards for All	-	10,001	10,001	-
Tudor Trust Wellbeing grant	-	2,000	2,000	-
People's Postcode Lottery - Magic Little Grants	-	500	500	-
L&Q Foundation	-	6,975	6,975	-
<b>Total Restricted</b>	<u>1,818</u>	<u>47,197</u>	<u>49,015</u>	<u>39,721</u>
<b>Unrestricted</b>				
General	55,138	21,423	76,561	69,873
<b>Total Unrestricted</b>	<u>55,138</u>	<u>21,423</u>	<u>76,561</u>	<u>69,873</u>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<u>56,956</u>	<u>68,620</u>	<u>125,576</u>	<u>105,594</u>

#### 5. NET INCOMING RESOURCES

	2022 £	2021 £
This is stated after charging:		
Independent Examiner's Fees	500	500
	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>

#### 6. STAFF COSTS AND EMOLUMENTS

<b>Total staff costs were as follows:</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	£	£
Gross pay	53,386	59,127
Employer's National Insurance	-	-
Employer's Pension Costs	1,753	1,513
<b>Total</b>	<u>55,138</u>	<u>60,640</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 in this or the previous year.

	2022	2021
Average number of employees during the year was:	4	4



## 7. DIRECTORS AND RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

	2022	2021
	£	£
	-	-

There were no payments made during the year to Directors and related parties (2021: nil)

## 8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant & Machinery £	Fixtures and fittings £	Office furniture £	Total £
<b>Cost:</b>				
At 1 April 2021	7,998	-	-	7,998
Additions	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	7,998	-	-	7,998
<b>Depreciation:</b>				
At 1 April 2021	7,998	-	-	7,998
Charge for the year	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	7,998	-	-	7,998
<b>Net book value:</b>				
At 1 April 2021	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	-	-	-	-

## 9. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade debtors	3,103	5,447
Prepayments	1,500	1,878
Other debtors	6,863	-
	11,466	7,325

## 10. CREDITORS

	2022	2021
	£	£
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade creditors	4,670	1,520
Accruals and deferred income	450	375
Deposits	40	41
Taxation and Social Security Costs	588	616
Pension	179	1,005
	5,927	3,557

## 11. COMMITMENTS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

At 31 March 2022, the Charity had annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

Commitments under operating leases	2022	2021
Expiring after more than 5 years	6,000	6,000

## 12. ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENT IN FUND

Total Funds	At 1 April 2021	Incoming	Outgoing	At 31 March 2022
Analysis of Movement in Funds	£	£	£	£
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
General	27,471	70,492	(49,015)	48,948
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<u>27,471</u>	<u>70,492</u>	<u>(49,015)</u>	<u>48,948</u>
<b>Unrestricted</b>				
Designated Emergencies	5,000	-	-	5,000
Designated Dilapidations	3,500	-	-	3,500
Designated Capital fund	60,000	-	-	60,000
General	28,556	80,723	(76,561)	37,718
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds</b>	<u>102,056</u>	<u>80,723</u>	<u>(76,561)</u>	<u>106,218</u>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<u>129,527</u>	<u>151,215</u>	<u>(125,576)</u>	<u>155,166</u>

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