



COMMUNITY HORIZONS CIO

ANNUAL REPORT March 2020– March 2021



Authors of this publication

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Image by Joseph McNally Jr.



OUR AIMS:

The aim of Community Horizons CIO is to develop the capacity and skills of the members of the socially and economically disadvantaged community of Plymouth and surrounding areas in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society by:

- Providing opportunities for people to learn through experience – opportunities which otherwise would not be available to them; and
- Involving people in a collective effort so that they gain confidence in their own abilities and their ability to influence decisions that affect them.

WHAT WE DO:

Our core work:

We support disadvantaged women to build confidence in accessing groups and services in Plymouth. We achieve this through activities that promote intercultural competence (ICC) development. ICC is an exploration of people's particular expertise and skills based on their cultural make-up through interactions with others, uplifting and empowering women of diverse backgrounds in our case. There are many excellent projects and services in Plymouth which we compliment by linking with 'hard to reach' women through community leaders. Women we support can feel engaged taking part in activities and share knowledge about what support is available and where in Plymouth. Our projects and workshops are forums for participants to express themselves creatively through artistic means and share their knowledge and experiences of their journeys, their personal cultures and their lives in the UK. By developing intercultural communication skills, projects and workshops assist participants to engage with the communities they live in.

Our wider reach:

We use reflective and reflexive practice and collate feedback at all sessions from all participants to shape and form all our activities with direct input from everyone involved. We share our feedback throughout the city with other services and in our social media to promote best practice.



Beyond our core work:

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began we have made concerted efforts to aid existing services in promoting community safety and delivering hygiene products throughout the pandemic to people that are forcibly displaced in Plymouth. Families received vital cleaning and personal hygiene items including nappies for under twos. People struggling to access formal education and employment during lock downs were assisted in accessing and achieving online qualifications at Level 2. We also supported entrepreneurs in practical ways in opening their food businesses during the pandemic.

OBJECTIVES:

We use creative and innovative methods to engage people of diverse backgrounds through non-formal and informal learning in order to:

- Build good relations / encourage interaction / build trust between individuals and the community they live in
- Communications: belonging / valuing diversity
- We facilitate intercultural dialogue and learning / dispel myths / challenge misconceptions
- We support small projects and groups in their work to offer a helping hand, securing success.

BENEFICIARIES:

Displaced people and services who work with displaced people and the communities they live in, in Plymouth and surrounding areas. Predominantly, we engage East African communities and more isolated Kurdish community members, but also people with diverse migration backgrounds where appropriate.

Our core work:

There is a persistent lack of women initiatives in Plymouth that attract women from broader diverse backgrounds. Women projects and initiatives are often still tag ons of existing support services rather than a primary focus in Plymouth. We would like to continue to initiate change here.

We plan on taking a more strategic approach to receiving insights to the women that work with us. Participant action research is a useful approach in community education. We use academic theory linked to practice knowledge to form a solid foundation for



our work. Our steering group works together with community leaders to support the most vulnerable in practical ways. This has led to a decision to apply for funding for a two to three year period, after continued interest from women in the community. Through our steering group and community leaders in the wider network we know where and what support is required. We extend the impact and reach of active community supporters who work to improve lives for all. Throughout 2019 until now we met regularly with community leaders and individuals to bring together engaged, passionate people that are part of positive changes.

There are no official initiatives run in Plymouth set up by FDP and BAME women. Women focused work is too often an add on to core services. We believe women, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds, benefit from more specialised responses. Ethical, confidential, respectful approaches that uphold women's autonomy and empower are essential in creating safe spaces. We understand this as we are led by women who kindly shared their stories and needs with us.

The women's group is a social innovation with all input sourced directly with and from our Plymouth communities, empowering and bringing together people in a new, creative way expanding a network through regular sessions in which we address women's identity, domestic abuse, FGM, intercultural development, women entrepreneurs and human rights. Feedback we received of women in the community is the desire to join an open welcoming group and to feel comfortable in a space and during activities. All women will be engaged in setting out the group space and set out how and when it will be used. We will rotate displays of cultural outfits, organise swimming pool visits and picnics in the park and continue educational confidence building workshops catered by community cooks.

Beyond our core work:

- We plan to deliver one more round of COVID-19 support in form of hygiene products and online training, based on feedback and requests from the community.
- Another endeavour will be possibly accessing a gardening plot and offer some family activities to combat isolation and offer relaxing support sessions that allow for confidence building.



Additionally:

With new funds we can set up a professional website to promote, diffuse and offer greater transparency on the things we do, with who and how. It is vital to strategically promote best practice for initiatives that work with vulnerable members of society and we want to support this as best as we can. We have WordPress as a main site at present which hugely limits our digital output to other services, while our social media is well presented and reaches a significant number of people. A more professional website would also allow for us to provide the community with straight forward help and information on how to take part in our activities or access other services in Plymouth.

OUR FINANCES

Our projects 2020/2021 are funded through the TNL Awards for All Fund with HM Government, Mayflower 400, Vital Sparks, Plymouth Culture, The Box, Plymouth City Council, Plymouth University Formationzone and the National Lottery Community Fund. Our total income came from grants only and was £21,799.

OUR ETHOS, STRATEGY AND POLICIES

Community Horizons strategy is to build relationships and form networks between local organisations to improve accessibility and awareness of services and aid in up-keeping quality of services as well as promoting best practice. All our work is based on the direct feedback from communities we work with and their community leaders that generously invest time and effort to help improve lives. We have a range of policies in place and have these available on our website and social media.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Our trustee board guides the organisational lead Phyllis McNally with their wisdom and insights on the annual meetings. Panteleimon Chaviaras is the marketing manager, trainer aid and support staff for projects. Panteleimon works closely with our project coordinators and trainers to ensure best practice. Sami Woldemedhin is a project coordinator and trainer for SST. Sami engages and trains our volunteers and ensures safe practice especially regarding COVID-19. Ivan Leon Sartison is project



support and manages all training materials, supplies and storage as well as developing our social media content for SST and MC.

We have a number of volunteers, including our trustees, who we could not provide our services without and we are very appreciative of their efforts and time donated to good causes. More details on who we are is at the end of this report.

FUTURE PLANS

Community Horizons CIO is working towards scaling up and expanding our reach. Our projects have set the foundation for a collaboration with University of Plymouth and other support services in Plymouth to diffuse our expertise and share best practice examples.

We will be undertaking participatory community action research with our community leaders and beneficiaries to deepen our insights and share these throughout the city to support better access to events, groups, organisations and services as well as promote best practice across services and initiatives working with vulnerable people from diverse backgrounds. We will link this with socially engaging activities that combat isolation and economic challenges for women to take part for example in swimming in the swimming pool.

As part of our strategic planning we will be setting up a community space for women sessions that will be created from women for women. Taking space and shaping identity is essential for everyone but particularly for the forcibly displaced. Through setting up a space we will be able to bring together women from all walks of life to enable activities women suggest and design together.

With the prevailing pandemic it is essential we continue our efforts to hand out hygiene items to help vulnerable stay safe and help all communities in Plymouth to prevent avoidable spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we will be offering drop in hours for people to attend the community space to access hygiene support as well as online course access help for those that cannot access education temporarily any other way.

Community Horizons CIO has had a significant impact on people's lives in Plymouth and will continue doing so. Thank you to everyone supporting our efforts.



PROJECTS 2020/2021

Women's Project - Merging Cultures

Terminology FDP=forcibly displaced people BAME= Black, Asian, Minority, Ethnic

Our Aim: Confidence building through peer to peer learning, empowerment through autonomous women's network, steered by FDP and BAME women and promote best organisational practice across Plymouth.

Objectives:

- *Enable confidence building through peer to peer learning and informal learning based on intercultural citizenship and ICC development by creating a women's only activities and a space, set up and guided together.*
- *Supporting vulnerable women through better understanding their needs by using mapping exercises that draw out their expert knowledge of their needs and what they perceive as accessible.*
- *Applying an appreciative inquiry approach to grow a sustainable organisation based on a strength approach and positive perspectives that will allow recording feedback and insights by unheard voices of FDP and BAME women to promote best practice.*

In our planning processes we use a variety of programs like this mind map of what we would do in Merging Cultures which helped us understand how and what we want to achieve. Estimated timeframes were flexible and were adapted as the project flowed. This map was a useful tool and we plan to expand on the use of mapping.



We support women in their skills development. We created a series of educational community workshops which will culminate into an awareness raising photo exhibition



for women from women in Plymouth later in 2021. This project is a new project to create the first community exhibition of its kind with the plans to establish regular workshops and establish a diverse women's network throughout 2021 by bringing together women to form a women's community group network. As we engage community members already in the planning process word is already spreading with people showing a great interest. The women's group is a social innovation with all input sourced directly with and from our Plymouth communities, empowering and bringing together people in a new, creative way producing a network like we have never had before, through regular workshops which will consist of a range of presentations about women's identity, domestic abuse, FGM, intercultural development, women entrepreneurs and human rights. We engage a wide variety of women including refugee women from dominant ethnic communities such as Eritrea, Sudan, Kurdish and others, migrant women from Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Thailand and others as well as local women which we are interlinked with in our social and professional networks. We met regularly in a small group due to the pandemic and enjoyed sharing foods from different cultures, sharing our migration or travel stories, discussed issues on domestic abuse and FGM and looked at what is inter-cultural education and why does it matter. We paid community cooks, with vulnerable backgrounds, to cater for our group after completing CPD online courses Level 2 in Food Hygiene, Health and Safety and COVID-19 awareness. On the right is one of our trustees, Margaret McNally, attending one of our workshops. As our longest sitting trustee we thank her for all her assistance and valuable input. This will be Margaret's last year with us as she will have served 10 years as a trustee with CH CIO by 2023.





There are a great many talented, skilled and ambitious women in Plymouth who can forge strong support networks.



This combats isolation due lack of confidence, the pandemic and lack of finances. We bring together women from diverse ethnic, professional and English proficiency backgrounds.

Plymouth's population is becoming increasingly diverse. There are 43 main languages spoken citywide and nearly 100 languages spoken in Plymouth schools. Plymouth is a dispersal area for asylum seekers with around 300 people accommodated at any given time (Plymouth City Council Report 2017). This does not include Syrian and Afghan refugee resettlements. Plymouth must make efforts to catch





up in its provisions in services, representation of its communities and education to reflect its diversity. We want to contribute to this effort and set positive examples making links throughout communities. Part of our workshops were goodie bags to engage participants in different ways and give incentives to open up, chat about different things. Small items such as charger cables or salad boxes are useful and also offer opportunities for ice breakers.



Women of FDP and BAME backgrounds have different needs and face gender specific adversities for instance maternity needs (<https://www.gov.uk>), period poverty, disproportionate caring responsibilities, less access to digital means (<https://webfoundation.org>) and gender based violence. FDP and BAME women are systemically disadvantaged (<https://cityofsanctuary.org>). More must be done to bridge gaps in service provisions and create equity in access to support, education and autonomy. Addressing such sensitive topics is vital but challenging. Breaking bread, eating together and sharing foods while sharing cultures breaks down barriers and creates a mutual understanding while forging bonds. While we aren't able to share all images from the workshop we are just giving a little insight into how we set up our get together. It was a fabulous time and we look forward to create spaces for women to



meet more regularly. Participants, volunteers and staff were all vaccinated or took LFT. All COVID rules were factored into all meetings when doing risk assessments. Bridging not only cultural but also age differences our workshops engaged women from all walks of life. We are very grateful to especially the hosts, but also all our participants. The photo guide was well received and we will make more copies available during the photo competition that will still take place as soon as all COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and we secure a communal space in which we can all meet to share images, vote and hand

our prizes to winners. Winners will have their images displayed in our community space and online. We will be giving away gift baskets and everyone will receive a small participation gift for attending our competitions. Watch our space for updates.

This project reach and statistics:

Through our Merging Cultures project we have a social media group that is private and only for women. We have approximately 100 women active in our Facebook (Meta) group. We brought together small groups of women to community catered group workshops throughout the project and gathered feedback using participants input to shape the project activities as they were running.

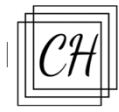
We had 12 workshops over the project cycle, with attendee numbers between four to eight. Due to the pandemic our health and risk assessments determined numbers that will abide by governmental rules and prevent putting any participants at risk.

We have reached 44 more women through informal community channels to reach out and help make links within our project. We learnt from this that there is a great need for targeted work to help overcome isolation for vulnerable women.



We had women introduce themselves and share some of their imagery in our Facebook group. Three images posted in the group just give a peek into the group.





Merging Cultures

Merging Cultures is a women only photography project, so get your camera ready!

Submit your photos on our Facebook Group and get a chance to participate on our photography workshops and for your work to be featured in our online gallery



- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2779714778956470>
- Community Horizons CIO

Email:

info.communityhorizons@gmail.com

Website:

<https://communityhorizons.wordpress.com/>



We created a photo guide that is available digitally and has been distributed in print to all participants in workshops. This guide was put together by a professional, award winning photographer and an experienced community photographer in conjunction with project coordinations, volunteers and women in the community. The guide was then translated in Amharic and Arabic. Despite translations distributing material online is hugely a hit and miss endeavour considering our primary target group, their access to electronic devices or the internet. We had built rapport and developed

relationships, engaging women who would not otherwise take part in such a project. This project was a hugely ambitious undertaking since we had not calculated the pandemic nor did we know how much outreach work is required to engage hard to reach individuals within vulnerable communities. Part of our project plan was initially a public exhibition, then we amended this to a digital exhibition and found if we were to take this route we will not engage our target beneficiaries. Despite engaging a great number of diverse women we found a real push and pull between what could be termed class backgrounds possibly more so than cultural. It was also evident as work proceeded that a great many women from vulnerable communities were immensely interested in workshops and photography, however lacked confidence to par-take in larger or more mixed groups. We adapt our working methods to be highly sensitive and guided through the expertise of experienced professionals in this field. The interest was greater in numbers than attendance and

This is a preview to our photography guide WHAT I SEE - WOMEN MERGING CULTURES and is part of our Merging Cultures photography project. It is a women's only workshop series that focuses on photography and intercultural exchanges. This project was made possible by our generous funders at The National Lottery Community Fund, Mayflower 400 UK, Plymouth Culture, The Box Plymouth, Vital Sparks and Plymouth City Council.



WHAT I SEE

WOMEN MERGING CULTURES

PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

ما زال الصبح النساء
التقائات
التصوير
المشروع
يتضمن دليل الصور هذا أمثلة لتصوير مثل
الطعام والملابس والمجوهرات والمنزل و / أو
الإثراء لأفكارنا. كما أنه يقدم نصائح حول
التصوير ، والتأليف ، والتقديم ، والتعليق
بالتعليق المصورين
مهم

oto guide includes ph
es such as Food, Clot
Jp, Home and or Obje
spiration. It also gives
ighting, posing, came
photography.





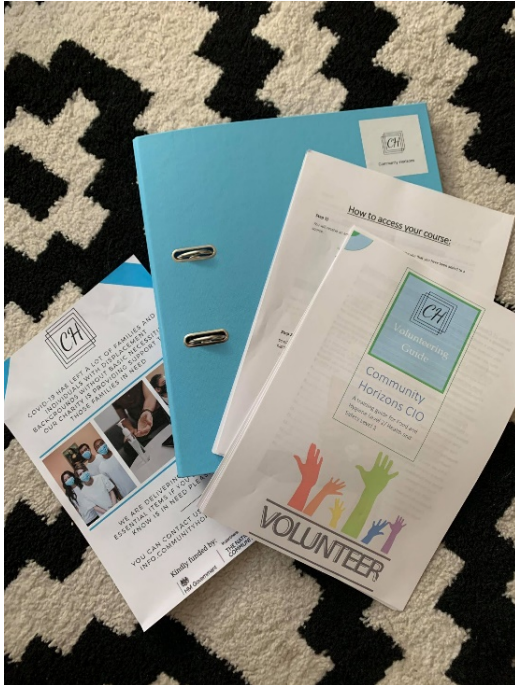
interactions which told us we must work harder in how we engage people and how we bring them together. Frequent engagement was seen on our private facebook group of women sharing and posting photos they take. We will undertake a little competition with prizes later in 2021, to encourage more interaction which will offer images that can be exhibited.

With all the challenges we faced in Merging Cultures, the project was a success and a positive impact was evident from feedback we received and continued interest in more activities specifically for women is recorded. We look forward to delivering more positive, impactful projects in co-operation with our communities.



COVID-19 response

Staying Safe Together (SST)



Plymouth is a dispersal area for asylum seekers with around 300 people accommodated at any given time (Plymouth City Council Report 2017). People in BAME communities are disproportionately affected by Covid-19 and are twice as likely to die (<https://www.hsj.co.uk/coronavirus/>). Significant income challenges are faced by BAME with forced displacement backgrounds. For instance, asylum seekers receive no additional benefit top up in this period as did people receiving Universal Credit, despite the asylum support payments being very small and barely covering

living costs as it is. We support communities to work together to respond to COVID-19 and make a difference in expanding supporters reach while offering active members opportunities for personal and professional development.

We supported vulnerable through the pandemic in two ways:

- Distribute care parcels with cleaning and hygiene products (including feminine hygiene products) accompanied by information about Covid-19 and ways to continue to stay safe.
- Offer active volunteer supporters training opportunities such as Level 2 Food Hygiene and Level 2 Health and Safety certified online courses as well as supervisory support.



This is achieved by helping volunteer supporters expand their skills by preparing and helping them through online courses while offering supervision, emotional support and guidance by experienced coordinators and trainers. With detrimental job losses through Covid-19 individuals who face many obstacles into secure employment already will benefit from the training we provide as well as the jobs our project creates. It is expensive to purchase face masks, disinfectant, soaps, nappies, wipes



and household cleaning products when asylum seeker receive just under £40 a week per person in their household. Some hygiene items are depicted on page 14 in storage waiting to be bagged and distributed. We initially had a storage chest but quickly found during lockdowns that it would not suffice and we needed to rent storage space. Accessing education and employment remains challenging with re-occurring lockdowns and strained services adapting to new ways of working due to COVID-19. Reduced volunteering opportunities leave many FDP isolated or limited in opportunities for integration. We combat this by working with participants expand their skills by helping them access online courses while offering supervision, emotional support and guidance by experienced coordinators and trainers. In SST we supported 2 refugees in opening and running their own food businesses despite the pandemic challenges. We strengthens vulnerable communities, improves how they organise themselves, helps them minimise the virus spread and remain safe.

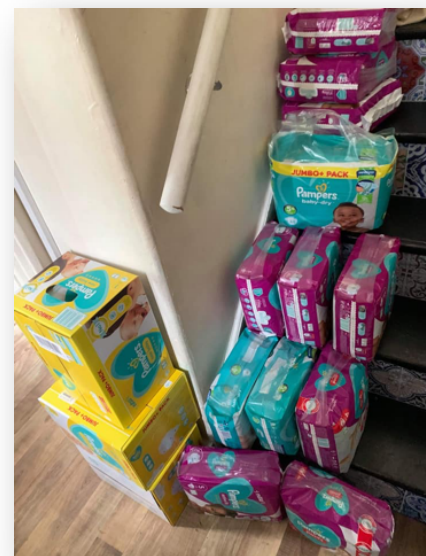
We use reflective and reflexive practice to collate feedback from all involved to shape and form all our activities with direct input from everyone. This is in verbal form obtained by our volunteers when delivering parcels and recorded by our project coordinator. Due to the lockdowns and the spread of Coronavirus we met a tremendous amount of challenges and had to be flexible in our delivery. Word of mouth and community support was a vital way we managed to deliver our project outcomes.

Part of the overall projects were monthly Zoom meetings with all steering members and community leaders who form a support network help uplift those people keen to help and seek opportunities to develop themselves and further their communities. Minutes are taken at all meetings and shared with all members. Social media is used to communicate and share information. We use all feedback to shape and advance the way we work and strongly believe in uplifting and supporting other services in the city by promoting best practice. We apply a bottom-up approach (Bellinger and Ford, 2022; Mulgan, 2006) to our socially innovative initiatives that ensures we operate from our beneficiaries perspective first and loop this through volunteer, staff and leadership. This ensures we deliver what people require the most, while respecting their autonomy and ensuring we use resources to the best of our ability.

This project reach and statistics:

40 online courses were delivered and 332 bags of hygiene articles were delivered to families and individuals in need during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. We were also able to supply 55 packets of nappies to those with children under 2 years of age. 4,448 people were reached through our Facebook updates.

Yellow bags hold feminine hygiene items for menstruation, while blue bags hold items for community cooks that ensure better food hygiene for those who supplied different foods to people in their communities. The largest number of bags were the natural coloured ones since they had items for cleaning and personal hygiene, including toothpaste, soaps, showered, hand sanitiser, face masks and many more things. These bags were distributed throughout the city to the most vulnerable community members based on community leader referrals. Our trusted volunteers and staff who all had COVID-19 awareness training CPD accredited shared out the bags abiding by governmental COVID-19 pandemic rules.





A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE INVOLVED

We thank all our volunteers, supporters, people in the community and community leaders to trust us, share their needs and challenges and support each other throughout a very difficult stretch of time due to the global pandemic. We also thank our trustees, staff and partners who worked through this difficult time with us.

AND A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

This project has been made possible by our funders from the National Lottery Awards For All Fund, Mayflower400, Plymouth Culture, Plymouth City Council, The Box and Vital Sparks. A great big thank you to all our funders that helped bring this project to life and have enabled us to continue our work despite challenging times. We would not have been able to support so many people without you.





COMMUNITY HORIZONS CIO - VOLUNTEERS

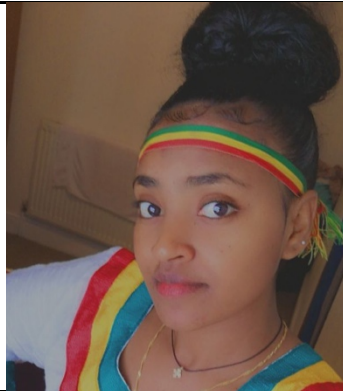
Semrat AND Emebet

Not only are Semrat and Emenbet incredibly generous with their time and expertise, but they are knowledgeable and dependable community leaders. Without their support and inspiration it would not have been possible to come this far in supporting vulnerable people, especially women in our communities. We are very lucky to have their vital input and collaboration.



Habtam

Outreach and translations – community supporter



Andy

Skilful, clever and passionate media artist who kindly put together for us fantastic short videos available on YouTube.



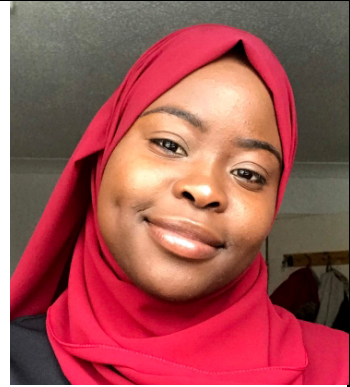
Zoi

EAL and project consultant



Rahema

Translations – community supporter



Simon

SST volunteer



Abdu

Training content and education consultant







COMMUNITY HORIZONS CIO - STAFF

Project and digital media co-ordinator	Ivan	
Marketing and project application manager	Panteleimon	
Project Co-ordination, volunteer manager and trainer	Sami	
Organisational Lead and Safeguarding Officer	Phyllis	



COMMUNITY HORIZONS CIO - CHARITY TRUSTEES

Treasurer since 2013	Margaret McNally	
Chair since 2018	Lilly Sartison	
New trustee in 2022	Tereza Vranova	
New trustee in 2022	Eryk K. Ostrowski	
New trustee in 2022	Daisy Birkenhead	



March 2021

Community Horizons CIO
Annual Accounts 2020- 2021
Payments and Receipts

TOTAL INCOME BALANCE £22,479.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £19,064.89

Surplus £2,924.11

Free reserves £490

Grants we received in financial year March 2020- March 2021	
TNL Awards for All / COVID—19 for ‘Staying Safe Together’	£9,999
TNL Awards for All ‘Merging Cultures’	£9,000
The Box and Plymouth City Council ‘Merging Cultures’	£2,800
Plymouth University Formationzone	£180
TOTAL	£21,979

How we spent funding in in the financial year March 2020- March 2021	
Staff wages	£9,738.44
Insurance	£211.44
Volunteer expenses and hardship fund	£1889
Project material and stationary	£2,691.02
Project cost (community catering and guide translations)	£4,265.19
Equipment	£269.80
TOTAL	£19,064.89



Time volunteered 244h - Equivalent to expenditure of: £4655.56

- 3 Volunteer community practitioners 120h £20.97/h
- Facilitator volunteer 80h £20.97/h
- Project volunteer 44h £10.49/h

Please note: in accordance with charity regulations this payment and receipts is not externally audited due to the annual income not exceeding the threshold of £25,000.

‘Only charities with a gross income of more than £25,000 in their financial year are required to have their accounts independently examined’

(<http://www.slsgb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/CIO-Accounting.pdf>).