

The Girls' Network Annual Review & Accounts 2021-2022

We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has supported our work this year.

As a small charity, we rely on the support of so many incredible volunteers, donors, partners, schools, community organisations and individuals who offer their time, contacts, financial support, practical assistance and personal commitment to our programme delivery.

We want to thank every one who has supported our work this year and who share our vision of a future where all girls and young women are able to achieve their full potential, regardless of their personal circumstances.

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2022. Reference and administrative information set out on page 24/25 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the charity's constitution and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. Charity Registration Number: 1156517

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Letter from the Chair

Like many charities emerging from the challenging years of the pandemic, The Girls' Network has again demonstrated its adaptability and resilience in responding to a world that is constantly changing.

We have diversified our services by offering more virtual and digital opportunities; by rolling out a workshop-only programme and growing the Ambassador Community. Our flagship mentoring programme goes from strength to strength as it enters its' tenth year. Research undertaken both in-house and with external partners has demonstrated the programme's efficacy. We have also piloted an innovative reverse-mentoring scheme to ensure we are centring the voices of young women within our organisation. I am particularly pleased to see the evolution of our Ambassador Community as we work towards our vision of being a supportive and inclusive environment where young women can develop their potential and have their voices heard. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the support that our corporate partner Enterprise-Rent-a-Car are providing through their R.O.A.D Forward initiative and the associated five-year funding that they have committed to resourcing our Ambassador programme.

I am so proud of our staff who have worked extremely hard, often in challenging circumstances, to ensure that the hundreds of girls and young women the charity supports receive an outstanding experience. We have also brought new skills and experience to the charity in 2022 as we welcomed two new members to the Senior Leadership Team as Head of Fundraising & Communications and Head of Programmes. On behalf of the Trustees, I want to extend our gratitude for all our colleagues' efforts this year.

As always, our progress has been reliant on the unrelenting support of our volunteer mentors and our corporate partners, Trusts & Foundations and individual donors who fund us so generously. We thank them all for their dedication and determination to help and inspire us in delivering our mission to enable young women to create limitless futures.

As the charity matures, so do the girls who were previously mentees. Many of the original cohort from 2013 are now working, many entering the worlds of science, business, education, and politics. Some have themselves become mentors and I am delighted that two ambassadors are now members of staff.

As we celebrate all we have achieved we also look forward to next year's tenth anniversary and all that will follow. In the Autumn, the trustees commissioned a Strategic Review and these findings will help guide our work in the coming year as we begin to establish our 'new normal' and look towards our next 10 years.

We have also learnt that the charity's Co-Founder and CEO, Charly Young, who we were proud to congratulate on the award of an MBE during the year, has decided to step down as CEO. On behalf of all the Trustees, past and present, and the thousands of girls and young women who have benefitted from our programmes, I would like to thank Charly for all she has done to establish and grow The Girls' Network into the strong and sustainable charity we describe in this Annual Review and wish her all the very best for her future.

Sue Rimmer, OBE- Chair of Trustees

Letter from the CEO

Operationally, 2021-22 was another year of change, growth and development at The Girls' Network, and of course more widely.

This year has seen the appointment of an Ambassador Community Lead, to provide guidance and opportunities for this growing cohort of young women who have been through the programme. We also piloted a fully online mentoring programme on the Isle of Wight, building on our lessons learnt during the lockdowns. Early indicators have shown that this has been effective and well received. The second is a workshop only programme, which is designed to deliver a condensed programme of development over the course of three workshops. It is hoped that this will be a stepping stone for girls to embark on mentoring, or as a standalone opportunity which allows the charity to reach those schools with the tightest of budgets. We have also been excited to continue our work on the Girl-Led mentoring programme. This iteration of 'reverse mentoring' provides the opportunity for ambassadors to mentor senior leaders in organisations or structures of influence and power, in order to help shape the world they live in, support leaders to make better, more informed decisions, and disrupt the traditional flow of power.

This year also saw the continuation of our organisation-wide focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). Alongside our charitable work challenging gender and socio-economic inequalities, we recognise it is also vital that we identify and address internal systems and structures that prevent us from being as diverse and inclusive as we can be. We know a big part of this is in ensuring our mentors and our staff are more representative of the young women that we serve.

As part of this work, the diversity organisation Watch This Sp_ace conducted an audit of our communications and our internal processes and policies. This independent review of our work and practice has highlighted both areas that we were conscious of, as well as blind spots or areas that we might not have identified ourselves. We have implemented many of the recommendations already, whilst also embedding areas that require longer-term or on-going attention into our operational plans and organisational approach.

2021-22 was a year of learning, too: drawing lessons from the innovations and the challenges of the pandemic, exploring the employment and technological trends coming, and listening to the challenges and ambitions of the girls and young women who we serve and support. We have seen the likely growth in both the digital and care sectors, and the opportunities this brings. And we have heard the concerns held by the young women we support – including climate change, racism, and future employment prospects. All of this will help to shape the way that we grow and develop our work over the coming years.

As we approach our tenth year in 2023-24; we are examining where we are now – the resources, needs and opportunities at hand; and looking to the future and asking what will the next ten years look like? How can we remain impactful, responding to the changing needs and environment that we, and the young women we support, find ourselves in?

As this milestone comes into view, I will be taking the opportunity to step down as CEO, clearing the path for a new person to lead the organisation into its' next decade. Whilst this has been a really difficult decision, I believe the charity is in a great position to continue building on the incredible impact that we have across its first decade. I will be staying on in a Co-Founder role and will remain close to the organisation, as an advocate for its work, and through regular attendance at our events and other activities.

Thanks to the incredible support and commitment of our mentors who so generously offer us their time and in partnership with schools, colleges, community organisations and businesses across the country, I know that The Girls' Network will continue to create the solutions which will help ensure that all girls and young women can achieve their full potential in life.



Charly Young, MBE- CEO and Co-Founder

What we do and why we do it

The Girls’ Network aims to inspire and empower girls aged 14-19 from the least advantaged communities by connecting them to a mentor and a network of professional role models who are women. We believe that no girl’s future should be limited by her background, gender, sex or parental income. We focus on areas where deprivation indices or child poverty rates are highest. We ask that two-thirds of girls on the mentor programme are eligible for Free School Meals and others are often involved because they have home situations for which they require sustained support.

We now have successful partnerships with 60+ secondary schools and colleges in London, Sussex, Portsmouth, the West Midlands, Greater Manchester, the Tees Valley, Tyne & Wear and Merseyside, and together we support over 1,000 girls each year. The mentoring programme runs twice a year, in Autumn and Spring terms and encompasses the following activities:

1-to-1 mentoring

Each girl is matched with a mentor with 3+ years’ professional experience, who we vet, train and support throughout the programme. Receiving at least 10 personal mentoring sessions (around 1 per month), sessions focus on building confidence, resilience, CV writing, interview skills, knowledge of opportunities and awareness of the working world. Our mentors are drawn from a range of business sectors including the arts, STEM, transport, finance, media and law, as well as community organisations and civil society.

Work experience, insight talks, visits and skills workshops

Each cohort is also offered at least two workshops to build practical skills that support their education, training or employment choices. We partner with businesses, community leaders and organisations to offer work experience, site visits, career round-tables and ‘A Day in the Life of’ talks.

Ambassador Community

After taking part in the mentoring programme all mentees can become ambassadors and join this free, lifelong community, similar to an alumni network, enabling them to access support and opportunities and a platform to have their voice heard. We hope ambassadors will return as mentors once they’ve entered the world of work, helping us create a self-sustaining social movement.

Why we do it

Girls from the least advantaged communities face a double disadvantage. Gender inequality is exacerbated by poverty: both the ‘glass ceiling’ and the ‘class ceiling’ continue to hold girls and young women back. If we want to break the cycle of disadvantage and inequality that too many girls face, then we need to ensure that we equip girls with:

- >> the **self-belief** to realise their ambition
- >> the **opportunities** to develop a voice and a platform for it to be listened to
- >> the **support** to tackle the obstacles along the way, for however long they might need it

Our approach aims to deliver the following outcomes:

Nurturing ambition

Only 10% of girls associate the word ‘leader’ with being a woman (GirlGuiding, 2021). We support young women to pursue their full potential such as applying to University, taking up work experience, internships and speaking opportunities or exploring ideas for career paths. The programme also helps build understanding of different professional environments.

Reducing inequality

Our programme offers support during the vital secondary school years, and the positive effects of mentoring can also last a lifetime, positively impacting on education and employment rates (University of Glasgow, 2003).

Inspiring future leaders

We believe that “you can’t be what you can’t see”, so we help girls to build their aspirations and self-belief, expanding their horizons whilst developing their skills and creating a community of encouragement and support. Through this we encourage young women to see that they have unlimited potential.

Building confidence

Our programmes help to build communication skills, whilst offering access to a trusted, ‘neutral’ adult who is investing their time in the mentee, which encourages a greater sense of self-esteem.

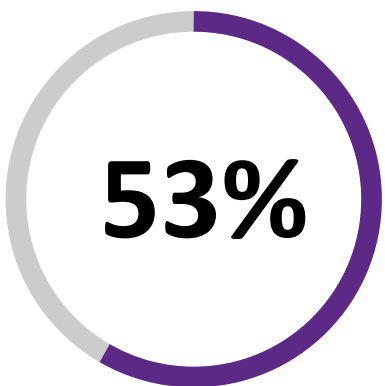


The number of girls aged 14-19 that are eligible and receiving Free School Meals in England is 211,678 (an increase of 22% from 2019/2020: 173,903)

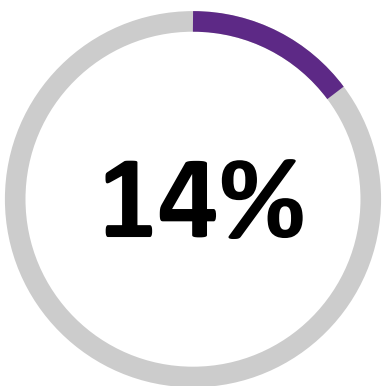


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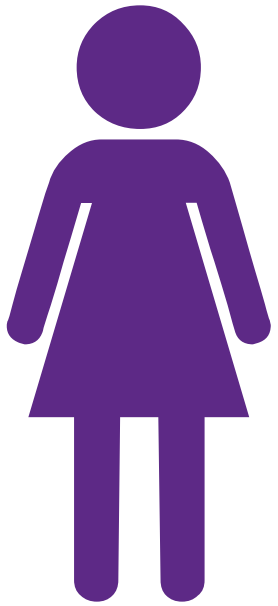
decision makers think men are more suited to senior management roles than women. (Young Women’s Trust, 2022)



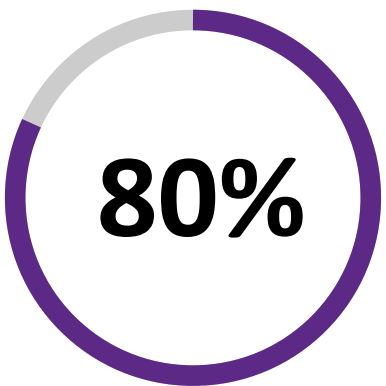
53% of under 21’s say they’ve missed out on developing skills for the future during the pandemic. (GirlGuiding, 2021)



Only 14% of girls and young women said that they are very happy most of the time. This has been declining year on year, in 2009 it was 40%. (Girlguiding, 2021)



On average, young women **aged 18 to 29 earned 22% less** than their male peers in 2021. (ONS, 2021)

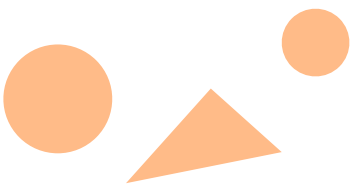
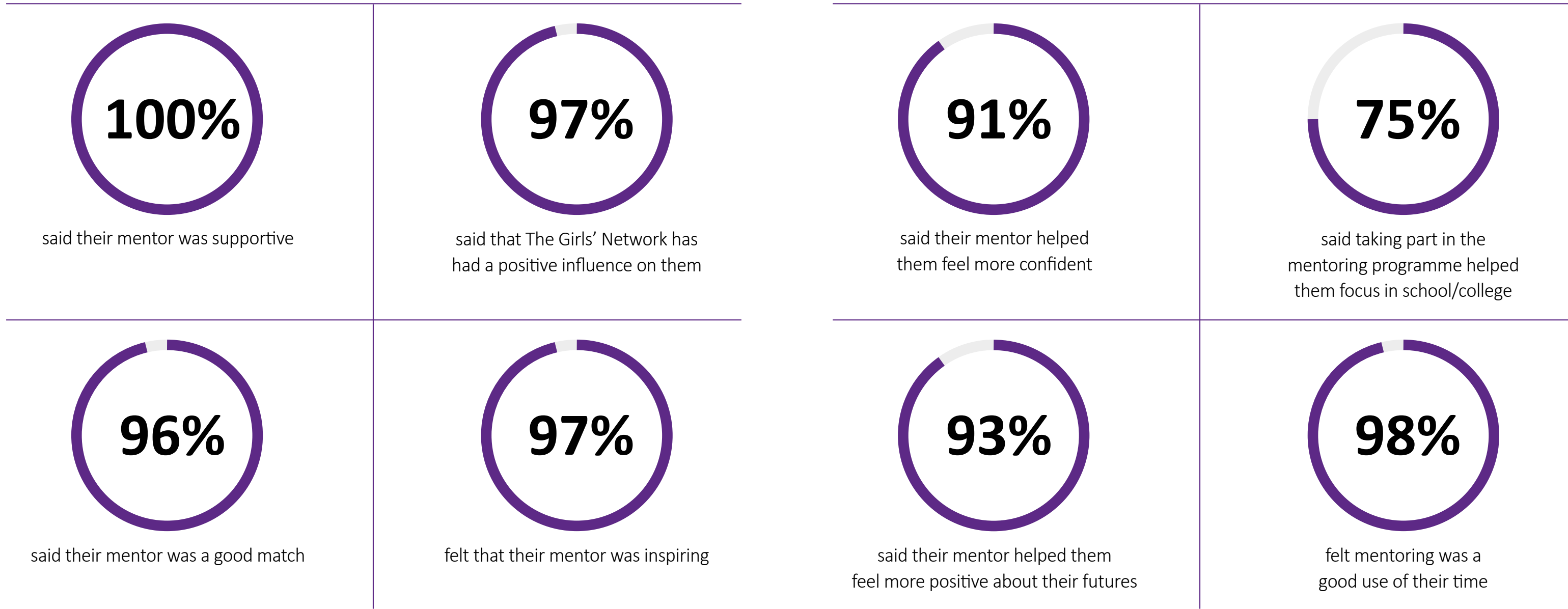


Even before COVID-19, pupils who had spent 80% of their schooling in poverty were 22.7 months behind non-disadvantaged pupils. (Social Mobility Commission, 2021)

Half of young women (**50%**) agree that having a mentor would improve their confidence in their future, while **49%** said seeing young people like themselves **achieve their goals** gives them confidence. (The Prince’s Trust Youth Index 2022)

Key achievements in 2021-22

The mentoring programme has continued to have a significant impact on mentees:



1,164 girls aged 14-19 years old were supported through 121 mentoring



We partnered with **66 schools and colleges** across England



2,746

ambassadors were welcomed into our new community

*Figures taken from a longitudinal study of Autumn 2021 cohort



Highlights from across our Network.

North East: Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley

During 2021-22, we have worked with 280 girls from 14 schools and colleges in Stockton, Hartlepool, Redcar, Billingham, Middlesbrough, Blyth, North Tyneside, Gateshead and Sunderland.

Once again, our partnerships including those with Sage, Just Williams and Smartworks have added great value to the programme - with money management skills, and workplace visits all being well received by the mentees, teachers and mentors.

Workshop highlights have included tours of Newcastle University, volunteer days at SmartWorks and sessions on Finding Your Voice with professional speaker Jo Darby.

We also piloted a workshop-only programme in the region this year, which allowed us to work with new schools which due to location, budget or safeguarding constraints, would not have otherwise been able to participate in the core mentoring programme.

Seeing the girls develop confidence and independence has been a great highlight. The organisation, communication and depth of the programme as a whole has been fantastic. **Steph Towns, School Careers Coordinator, Whitley Bay**

I would really recommend The Girls' Network to anyone. I had such a positive experience. **Mentee, Redcar College**

My mentor had amazing advice, experience and connections to people that are able to help me in the future. **Mentee, Bede Academy**

My mentor makes me more successful and confident. She never lets me down. My experience with her was fantastic. **Mentee, Stockton Riverside College**

Things were a lot simpler in my day, but now we have all the pressures of society and social media which make teenagers feel anxious and stressed from having to conform to what society and social media think is acceptable – our girls should be free to be whoever and whatever they want to be and encouraged to do so. **Razvana, Mentor, Stockton-on-Tees**



North West: Greater Manchester and Merseyside

We have worked with 100 girls in Manchester and 162 girls in Merseyside, in partnership with 17 schools and colleges. We have hosted sessions on body confidence and self-defence; arranged visits to local employers and delivered a broad range of careers workshops including 'A Beginner's Guide to Midwifery'; 'Getting into Law'; 'Nursing and Healthcare in the NHS' and 'Breaking into Banking & Finance'. Through our partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, we held workshops on 'An Introduction to Higher Education' and 'Understanding Student Finance' and the mentees really enjoyed visiting the charity Smartworks, gaining advice on how to dress for job interviews and personal styling.

As well as new regional partnerships with Talk Talk and AG Communications, we launched an exciting collaboration with Liverpool FC, whose support includes mentoring and use of their facilities. For International Womens' Day celebrations in March, students from Holly Lodge Girls College were invited to Anfield stadium for a packed day of activities, including reverse-mentoring and meeting Rianna Dean from Liverpool FC Womens' team and journalist and television presenter Lynsey Hipgrave.

As a club we are delighted to be working together with The Girls' Network to support young women across Merseyside as we mentor the next generation. This collaboration forms an important part of the club's Red Together strategy, which embodies its commitment to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded across everything it does. **Rishi Jain, Senior Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Liverpool FC**

My mentor made me realise that I can do what I put my mind to. **Mentee, Werneth School, Stockport**

It has been a great experience. I've done so many things with my mentor. I love football, so she introduced me to the captain of the women's Warrington Wolves football team! I've had so many opportunities as well as the mentoring, and I've been invited to attend loads of workshops. **Mentee, Warrington**

I definitely wouldn't be where I am without my mentor, Emma. She opened my eyes to all the possibilities for my future and put me in touch with some fantastic people who provided me with insight, practical advice and insight. **Yentel, ambassador, Merseyside**

Having the girls visit our office was so inspiring, we were so impressed by their determination - it seems their mentors empower them to be their best selves, which is just lovely to hear. They couldn't speak highly enough of The Girls' Network. We would love to do this again in the future. **Clicky Media, Manchester**

I'm incredibly proud of how much my mentee has matured, her commitment to the programme and school work and the young adult she is becoming. The Girls' Network is a fantastic way of increasing confidence in students when they can be going through some pretty challenging times. **Atina, Mentor, Stockport**



West Midlands: Birmingham

We have worked with 128 girls through 5 schools in the city. One of the highlights this year was a visit to the Science Museum, where mentors and mentees were able to see the GAIA exhibition and Think Tank.

Staff from the museum spoke to the girls about careers in science, engineering and architecture. Many of them did not realise that things that they were good at or interested in already would help them on their path to a career in science. They encouraged each other to try things and supported each other's learning and discovery. The day created long-lasting memories - indeed one of the girls wrote in her end of programme feedback that the trip had been the highlight of her mentoring journey with The Girls' Network.

I really recommend this programme; it really has helped me to become more confident in myself and I would rate this programme 10/10. **Mentee, Birmingham**

Hello Future Mentee, as someone who has completed the programme, I recommend you take every opportunity you've been given. Ask as many questions as you can and be as open about your personal struggles because it will help you, and you won't find a similar opportunity. **Mentee, Birmingham**

My mentee really opened my eyes up to the pressures faced by young people today and in turn I hope I helped her to challenge stereotypes and understand a little more about the world outside of the classroom. **Aga, Mentor, Birmingham**

I have really enjoyed my experience on this programme and think it is such a special and necessary project to continue and expand so everyone gets this opportunity! **Mentee, Birmingham**

When I first joined The Girls' Network, I was naïve about the world and felt like I wanted to know and understand more about the world outside the classroom. I also wanted to use the opportunity to build my confidence and try to overcome some of the anxieties I had about leaving school. Girls can be so marginalised and discriminated against in this world and that fact can sometimes hold you back from believing in yourself. I feel very honoured to be shown that there are so many options available to me. I feel encouraged and supported and now determined to find a career pathway that suits me. **Mentee, Dwellings Academy, Birmingham**



London

With 409 girls supported through our partnerships with 19 schools, 2021-22 was another busy year for the London team.

The mentees enjoyed workshops delivered by 'Ms Independent' whose sessions on problem solving, resilience and identifying personal strengths are always very popular, along with confidence-building workshops, 'Flying Fantastic' circus skills and workplace visits. We were delighted to confirm a long-term partnership with The Lord Mayors' Appeal and their 'We Can Be' campaign - a series of workshops and events that challenge stereotypes about working in the City.

We were also delighted to take part in the marketplace of the 'Women of the World' event at the Royal Festival Hall in London in March. It was a fantastic opportunity to speak to and recruit new mentors and gave two of our ambassadors a chance to speak to visitors about their experiences and cover the event for the ambassador community Instagram channel. Our corporate partners made a valuable contribution to our mentor pool in London, with women from professional services, FMCG, technology, retail, insurance and banking sectors all represented, helping our mentees to broaden their understanding of these industries, whilst benefiting from one to one support.

Evelyn Partners first worked with The Girls' Network back in 2019 and the experience for us has been brilliant! We have had 30 women across the business now trained to be mentors and are already seeing such a ripple effect of involvement across all our regional offices. We are involved with the programme as part of our wider aim to increase the number of women in the finance industry. We hope by creating positive role models for teenage girls across the country from a young age we can break down any myths about who can work in the City, and The Girls' Network has provided us with the perfect structure to achieve this. It's been a fulfilling and impactful partnership that we couldn't recommend enough to other corporates! **Lydia Garratt, Investment Manager, Evelyn Partners**

It has made me feel better about myself and have learned to appreciate myself more. Which is needed. **Mentee, Sarah Bonnell School**

We have similar interests and share the same enthusiasm to make the programme work; we show up to our meetings on time, prepared and excited to talk. **Mentee, Harris Academy, Peckham**

I feel more confident to praise myself and know it's okay to take a break when I'm overwhelmed. **Mentee, Wembley High Technology College**

It has made me realise that having outside-of-school support (apart from family) is really helpful. **Mentee, Hornsey School for Girls**

I would never have had the confidence, self-belief or charisma to put myself forward for so many amazing opportunities if it hadn't been for my mentor. She was always there to encourage, guide and support me through a difficult, decision-making year. What's great about The Girls' Network is knowing that I have a support network there for me if I need it, and as an ambassador for the charity I am so part of a wider community which I can turn to for advice. I'd recommend the experience as it will only make you a better version of the person you already are. **Farheen, ambassador, London**



South East: Sussex, Hampshire and Isle of Wight

During 2021-22, we worked with 75 girls in Eastbourne and Brighton, and 90 in Portsmouth in partnership with 10 schools. A further 10 mentees were supported through our online pilot in the Isle of Wight.

In Portsmouth, an inspirational 'Gratitude Workshop' was held with two of the schools and at Shoreham Academy, the 'Be Your Own Hero' session was very successful, as was a wellbeing session at BACA. A celebration event for Willingdon Community School generated great press coverage in the Eastbourne Herald and lots of excitement amongst the attendees. We developed some positive links with local organisations including PlusX and Wiley, as well as Soroptimist International, who share our commitment to a more inclusive world. One of our ambassadors, Ishrat accompanied the Sussex Network Manager, Rebecca to a conference at Sussex University aimed at aspiring headteachers called 'Lessons in Leadership'. We have also been running our online mentoring pilot, working with the Isle of Wight Education Federation, based at Medina College in Newport.

My mentor is very understanding and she helps when I need it. She's very empathetic and not judgemental. She has helped me gain confidence and helped with emails for my apprenticeship. I really did enjoy my mentoring.

Mentee, Longhill School, Brighton

My mentor directed me with the A-levels I want to take, my personal statement and my future university plans. When I presented my personal statement to her, she boosted my confidence highly. I have grown to be more confident and less worried about many things. **Mentee, Willingdon Community School**

My mentor and I have very similar interests and she really understands me. She was amazing at encouraging me to face my fears and she taught me skills like writing a CV. She also gave me great advice on universities.

Mentee, Longhill School, Brighton

It's wonderful to see how the mentees develop through the year and I'd really recommend it.

Lynne, Mentor, Eastbourne

I've always been very nervous, one of my biggest fears is talking to people so I decided to join because I was told it would help with that and I didn't know what I wanted to do with life. From the beginning of the scheme my confidence just went up and up.

Mentee, Willingdon Community School, Eastbourne

The most powerful thing I have learnt about mentoring is the fact that, as a mentor, you learn and grow just as much as the young person you're mentoring. I love that, and have been really lucky to learn from an amazing young woman.

Jacqui, Mentor, Eastbourne



Ambassadors' stories.

Our Ambassador community officially launched in Autumn 2021, thanks to the generous support of Enterprise-Rent-a-Car UK who have pledged their support for a five-year programme of activities.

The Community, it is designed to be a life-long support network for any mentee who has taken part in the mentor programme - as well as a source of leadership development and networking opportunities. By early 2022, the Ambassador Community was up and running, with a successful virtual event with leading author Jaspreet Khan; a regular blog series called 'Ambassadors' On' and a Steering Committee established to shape and deliver our new 'BeYou' events. We now have more than 2,740 ambassadors recruited into the community.

“ Networks that encourage people to support and learn from one another are hugely powerful. That's why we were excited at the opportunity of funding the creation of a mentoring community with The Girls' Network. Mentoring is central to Enterprise's employee culture as it is beneficial for both the mentor and the mentee. Enabling women to support other women through their student and working lives will help to build a stronger workplace for all.

Simon Caughey-Rogers, Corporate Social Responsibility and Charity Events Manager, Enterprise-Rent-a-Car

Here are a few of our inspiring ambassadors talking about their experiences in their own words:



Rucha, 24

“When I first came to the UK, I started studying for my A-levels and it was there that I was offered the chance to join The Girls’ Network. It was through this that I realised my true passion for neuroscience and the array of career opportunities available to me. My mentor helped me to realise there was nothing holding me back from pursuing a career in science. She encouraged me to take a gap year to explore all my options, undertake some work experience, hone my skills and gain a wider perspective on life and culture in the UK. It was such a brilliant suggestion, and I am so glad I took that time to myself.

Having a mentor was a fantastic experience for me and looking back I can really see the difference it made to my life. I think it’s so important to show young women all the career options available to them, and that we can overcome any social inequalities, prejudice or discrimination as long as we work hard and are determined enough.

Women are so under-represented in the STEM sector so it is important to show girls that science can be fun, interesting, varied and really fulfilling.

Although having role models, like I had with my mentor really helped me to decide what to study, where to study and how to go about applying. She helped me with my confidence and grow as a person, which helped me to prepare for my University journey. I think more young women would benefit from having a mentor at such a crucial time in their lives.”

On completion of her Master’s degree, Rucha is considering whether to embark on a PhD in Pharmaceuticals or take on a role at a pharmaceutical company.

Tamara, 17

For International Womens’ Day, Tamara spoke at a special event hosted by Women in Social Housing about how she “breaks the bias”, which was the theme of this year’s campaign. Tamara spoke about her resilience and her determination, and why she wants to help other young women find, and have the confidence to pursue their dream – whatever that might be.

“I’m 16 years old. At the age of 11, I made the decision to start playing football, and I broke the bias by joining a boy’s football team. At football I quite often overhear the word ‘lads’; it’s something that I should be bothered about but after hearing it for so long I just look at my coach, laugh, and say, ‘I’ve been forgotten about again’. This then spurs the response of, ‘and Tamara!’. It happens less now, but we all need to work together to remove stereotypes.

I consider myself a tomboy, because that is what everyone has called me for years. But I will always just be me. I am proud that I am unique, I am proud that I am my own person and always will be, that will never change. I think other people would be proud of me for being unique too, if stereotypes change, and we as humans all work together to break the bias. Why should we all be treated differently?

At the beginning of Year 10, I came across The Girls' Network when they visited my school. I decided that it was an opportunity that I couldn't miss, so I filled in the application form. After I joined, my confidence grew massively. I went from a child who was afraid to talk to other people, to coaching the under-7 boys' team at my local football club. I've wanted to do this for years but never had the confidence; The Girls' Network has given me the opportunity to do it.

My mentor, Zoe, gave me the opportunity to speak to someone in the career path I’m interested in, and this inspired me to work harder to get there. Every day I feel one tiny step closer to reaching my dream job, and my little goals in between.

Since joining The Girls’ Network I’ve been able to meet a sports physiotherapist at Northumbria University who gave me insight into how to get into this role and what it’s like. I have had my heart set on this path since I was eight years old, and have put my everything towards it since then; in school my GCSE options are focused on this, and I have just been accepted onto a college course that will take me one step closer to getting there.

My mentoring journey at The Girls’ Network has come to an end, but I’m now part of their Ambassador Community and, as an ambassador, I want to help other girls break the bias. I hope to be able to help others to find something they are as passionate about as I am sport, and help them achieve their goals within that passion.”

Olivia, 16

“Many people say that, as a girl of my age, it is too soon to think about my future, that I’m ‘reaching for the stars’. My mentor not only helped me think about the future with hope and inspiration, but supported me in the present, with any struggles I was having. Before I met my mentor, I had a long list of important careers that I was interested in, each with their own list of worries. With my mentor, I managed to untangle the mess of jobs and anxiety related to a future career, and explore each one. My mentor paid close attention to my future aspirations; it felt like she was making a continuous effort to know me as a person, as well as a mentee.

Personally, I think a lot of young women lack a role model to follow, especially in the context of careers. My mentor went above and beyond to support me. I felt completely comfortable talking to her about any issues or worries, and she still supports me to this day.

Young girls everywhere are not being shown their potential, and lack guidance. Mentoring helped me as I was given a great role model to follow, and a guide to step onto the path of a career. That small amount of support really improved my confidence, and I felt that I knew more about my future, and ended up feeling a lot more secure.

For me, having a mentor has been a beam of support that I needed, someone to look up to and feel inspired by, as well as someone to motivate me for the future; almost like a really supportive friend to confide in. I was sad that I had finished the programme, but optimistic for the future.”

Yentel, 19

“I see so many young people confused, troubled and in complete desperation as to what to do with their lives, while also troubled with issues of inequality and social deprivation.

In my mind charities like The Girls’ Network are an essential service for young people as they provide support, guidance and advice from real people who can relate to them and their situation. They also inspire them to follow the right pathway and not go down any potentially self-destructive pathways, while widening their networks and opening their eyes to the opportunities available to them.

When I was studying for my A levels, I was also Vice President of the Student Union and a Young Advisor at Liverpool City Council. I definitely wouldn’t be where I am today if it wasn’t for my mentor. She opened my eyes to all the possibilities for my future and put me in touch with some fantastic people who provided me with practical advice and insight. I will be forever grateful for the experience, which gave me the confidence I needed to reach my goals.”

Aliyah, 20

“My mentor helped and guided me to find a course that complimented my skills and I eventually settled on architecture. Although initially I wasn’t sure that the course was going to be for me due to preformed stereotypes, I soon realised that it shouldn’t put me off and that I could help quash that stereotype. This felt really empowered and although the course has been challenging at times, I knew I was helping to pave the way for other women from similar backgrounds to me.

I have been encouraged to not only do things I wouldn’t normally do but also believe that if I put my mind to something, I can achieve it. I’m now on my way to achieving a first-class honours degree while also paving the way for women in architecture.

Without The Girls’ Network I definitely wouldn’t be where I am today. My mentoring journey not only filled me with confidence, ambition and drive but it also made me realise my dreams and has opened up so many doors of opportunity for me and my future. I am excited for the next steps now and to explore where I can go from here, but I will always be truly grateful to my mentor and The Girls’ Network for helping me to set me on a pathway to achieving my dreams.”

Meet the mentors.

Our mentors are vital to our success and we could not run our programmes without them! Each mentor commits their time, energy, life experiences and often their professional networks to support the next generation of girls and young women to achieve their potential. Many return for multiple years to offer their support and we hear time and again that getting involved with The Girls' Network offers volunteers a great sense of achievement and pride, as well as the chance to develop their own skills.

Fiona, Liverpool



Fiona has mentored with The Girls' Network four times, and she is passionate about the impact it can have.

Why do you mentor with The Girls' Network?

"This is my third time mentoring and I know how useful it would have been if I had had someone who I could have talked to when I was 14 or 15 about some of my dreams who said to me, 'Well, why not? It might be a bit tricky but you can absolutely do it'. But no one ever had those conversations with me."

When I said I'd like to do carpentry to my careers advisor, he said, 'What on earth are you talking about?' It was the most demotivating conversation I'd ever had in my life. It's so sad that women are treated in a particular way, and limitations are put on them.

What do you see as the challenges that girls are having to manage?

"The three young women I have worked with have all said that they don't know what they want to do, how to go about it, and fear not being 'good enough'. These girls are starting out with a belief that they can't do it.

When I'm mentoring I work with the girls on how they see life, what their core values are. They know, instinctively, what drives them and where they want to go. My perspective is that everyone has the ability to reach whatever their potential is, but you have to create the right environment to enable someone to do that. And if you can support someone to overcome the difficulties they are facing, then they can achieve their potential."

How would you summarise your role as a mentor?

"Being there to walk alongside someone. And if there are any skills that help them become more self-sufficient or resourceful, or believe in themselves, then you do whatever you possibly can. And then you hand the baton over, and you get that feeling that you've done something which has helped that person take one or two steps forward."

Razvana, Tees Valley



Razvana is a Decision Support Manager working in Asset Management and started mentoring with The Girls' Network in 2021.

Why did you sign up to be a mentor and what have you enjoyed most?

"I wanted to give something back to the community and in particular wanted to give a girl the guidance I never had at that age. I really enjoyed interacting with and seeing my mentee grow over the course of our journey."

What was the biggest challenge you faced during the mentoring journey?

"My mentee is very ambitious and she knew which industry she wanted to work in and was already volunteering in that field to get more experience – this made my role a lot easier! She was very shy to begin with so it required a lot of coaching and giving her ideas to think about. However, after quite a few sessions she started to feel more comfortable and had confidence in bringing her own ideas to our sessions."

Would you recommend becoming a mentor?

"Yes, definitely. It is a rewarding experience being able to help someone in their career journey."

From your experience, what do you see as the biggest challenge facing teenage girls today?

"Things were a lot simpler in my day but now we have new pressures which makes teenagers feel anxious and stressed from having to conform to what society and social media think is acceptable – our girls should be free to be whoever and whatever they want to be and encouraged to do so."

Is there anything you wish you had done differently during your mentoring?

"The only thing I wish is that I would have joined The Girls' Network sooner!"



Jacqui, Eastbourne

Previously the CEO of a successful business, Jacqui is a coach, mentor, consultant and holds three non-executive director roles.

What led you to volunteer as a mentor with The Girls' Network?

"The careers service at school didn't give me any idea how broad I could think and what I could actually consider doing. It felt like I was fighting to be something else. I was fortunate to have a couple of amazing teachers who really saw something in me. It gave me the desire to strive really hard, and the courage to fail; this is probably the hardest but most valuable lesson, and it needs to be supported by someone who will pick you up and dust you down."

Why do you think mentoring is so important?

"I recognise that I wouldn't be where I am today without people supporting, championing, and challenging me. I have felt, first hand, just how powerful that support and belief in me has been, and I hope as a mentor I can give that to someone."

There are going to be pioneers in so many areas as they make their way through centuries of inequality and with that comes the risk of knockbacks, fear from change-wary people, and negativity. I think girls today need support to equip them for some of the more subtle challenges ahead- the politics, how to undo unconscious bias."

How do you help your mentees to achieve their goals?

"It's not about telling someone to do something a certain way (because it worked for you), but walking alongside someone so they can tell you what they are thinking, seeing, planning, and sharing any insight you might have to help them on their way. As a mentor, it is our job to help mentees look after themselves in the midst of such change."

“

Mentoring is about giving your mentee a toolkit of life skills to become more self-sufficient in bringing out their own potential, recognising the need for self-care, and how to ask for support.

”



Operational updates

Programmes

The year has seen the majority of Covid restrictions easing and then being removed, which enabled us to have confidence in running our face-to-face mentoring programmes in-person again. We have matched over 1,110 girls with a mentor during this time, despite the challenges posed by illness and school closures caused by restrictions caused by the pandemic. Taking learning from the Covid-enforced online mentoring, we have piloted both a fully online and a hybrid online programme and will use the learnings from these pilots to better understand how we might supplement our face-to-face programme, particularly in areas where we do not have a physical presence yet. The programme has seen significant internal changes, as we have implemented Salesforce software to support the mentor and mentee journey. We have also appointed a new Head of Programmes, who has already updated the work streams to ensure more efficiency in programme management. She is also currently undertaking a review of how we work with our volunteers, in order to ensure the experience is beneficial for them as well as the mentees.

We have been struck again, by how resilient our mentees are in the face of so much disruption to their schooling. We know that 1-1 mentoring makes a big difference in supporting them to face whatever the future may hold. To ensure our mentees get the very best support from us, we slightly reduced the number we chose to match this year (down from 1,263 last year). We expect this level to continue during 2022-23, as we embed our new processes and focus on ensuring a quality mentoring experience.

During this period we piloted our new ‘girl-led mentoring’ project, partnering with organisations to offer a form of ‘reverse mentoring’ and amplify the voices of young people in their service design. We have commissioned an external review of the pilot to inform future programme development.

We also launched our Ambassador Community, offering a free, life-long network of support to anyone who has completed our mentoring programme. Through an exciting programme of events, speaker talks, work placements and career round tables, this programme has a brilliant future. A full time Ambassador Community Lead post was created in August 2021 to enable us to deliver its potential.

Challenges and lessons learned

Covid 19: the shift to online demonstrated an appetite for a digital/hybrid mentoring programme, which we were able to deliver, still achieving high levels of positive impact. A fully online mentoring pilot is being tested in the Isle of Wight to enable The Girls’ Network to deliver its programme to girls across the country, beyond its main regional hubs. Hybrid programmes have also been successfully run in other regions this year, accommodating a change in both circumstances and working patterns of mentors. The shift towards more home working meant fewer people commute to work, which initially impacted mentor recruitment in Spring 2022. Our staff team has been incredibly resilient throughout the pandemic and we will continue to prioritise staff wellbeing in 2022 - 2023. We offer free access to The Circle Line, an organisation which aims to create confidence, connection and collaboration through therapy, experiential training and online self-development.

The economy: increasing pressure on school budgets over the past few years has impacted on some schools’ ability to fund the mentoring programme. In some cases, we have been able to find match-funding through our fundraising efforts. We have also developed a ‘Workshop Only’ programme which is a series of three workshops delivered to schools on topics most relevant to those institutions as an alternative to the year-long mentoring programme. This can either be a foundation to the main mentoring programme offered by The Girls’ Network, or a standalone programme. This has allowed us to support girls and young women with developing key skills and connections to professionals, as well as extending our reach across the country.

Mental health crisis in young people: experiences of poor mental health have become an increasing issue for the girls we work with and teachers have been looking to our programme to provide some of the support that the schools are finding hard to give. We will be reviewing how we can continue to meet this challenge in our business planning processes.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Research & Learning (MERL)

Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) has continued to inform and shape the direction of The Girls’ Network, highlighting the areas of greatest impact and identifying trends both internal and external which have the potential

to affect the charity. A new MERL Manager joined the team in November 2021 and led the roll out of the new survey software as part of the mentoring programme. Throughout the year, programmatic data collection has been improved through the widespread use of the Salesforce database, allowing for easier, accurate reporting. This will be enhanced further in the following next year with the planned introduction of new survey software combined with the use of powerful data analytic tools to understand our programmes on a deeper level. A literature review was undertaken as a continuation of the work done by the previous MERL Manager to ensure that colleagues are aware of, and sympathetic to, the issues faced by girls and the communities in which they live. The team also oversaw the production of a paper written by a Masters student from the Clinical Psychology department at King's College London, titled “Ensuring Impact for Mentees in Rural Areas”. The findings of this will be used to develop the online mentoring pilot. Work on calculating the charity’s Social Return on Investment (SROI) continued following the pro bono support provided by PwC in late 2020, creating a useful metric, through which we will be able to undertake further impact analysis.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The aim of our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy is to remove negative biases and inequalities in our current systems and thinking, so that the beneficiaries are represented, and their voices are heard and included at every layer of the movement we are building. We established a ‘live strategy’ in January 2021 with an audit year laid out for 2021-22. As part of this work, we set up a working group with stakeholders from across our network – a mentor, a trustee, a mentee, an ambassador and two staff members. The purpose of this is to help shape the strategy, consult, feedback and co-create. A specialist consultancy, Watch This Sp_ce, were engaged to perform a thorough audit of our current processes, talking to employees, teachers, mentees, ambassadors and mentors. The report recommended a number of actions to take, both immediate and longer term, in order to make our external programmes and internal operations more accessible. In 2022-23, our aim will be to focus on the priority recommendations in order to better serve the beneficiaries that we represent. Additionally, we have begun to track EDI measures as part of our programme evaluation to ensure that we are getting equitable results for all beneficiaries.

Fundraising & Communications

During the pandemic, we worked hard to ensure that our fundraising strategy was able to underpin our vital programme delivery. Our corporate partners have continued to play a key role - they have enabled us to recruit a diverse range of mentors; delivered valuable insights into the workplace and career paths and provided vital financial support through donations, employee fundraising and strategic partnerships.

We were thrilled to secure a five-year partnership with Enterprise-Rent-A-Car through their R.O.A.D Forward initiative. Their generous commitment will support the delivery of our five-year plan for the Ambassador Community, with a focus on increasing young womens’ employability, developing their life skills and building self-confidence and aspirations through access to events and opportunities. We also welcomed Liverpool FC on board as a new partner and girls supported by our mentoring programme in local secondary schools were delighted to visit Anfield stadium for the partnership launch in March.

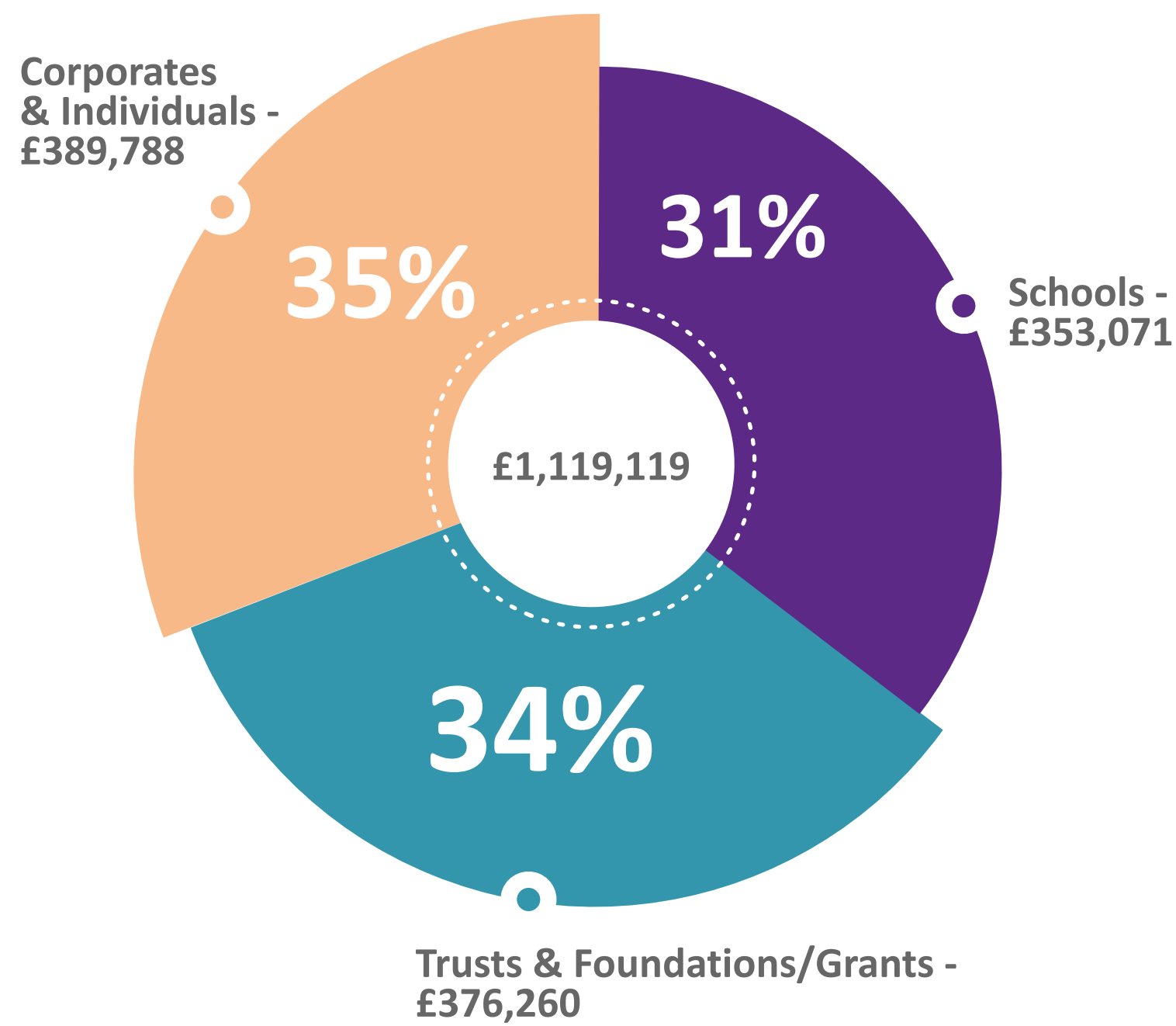
We are very grateful for the continued support of the Trusts & Foundations who fund our work, as well as our supporters who have taken part in fundraising challenge events; pledged to our ‘Big Give’ appeals; donated through payroll or regular giving or nominated us as a Charity of the Year.

Digital engagement with our mentees, ambassadors, mentors and supporters was again prioritised this year. We built on the firm foundations established during the pandemic, creating more online content, such as engaging talks with the writer Jaspreet Kaur, author of ‘Brown Girl Like Me’ and careers workshops with experts from the healthcare and STEM sectors. We also launched a new podcast ‘After Work With...’ and a new Instagram channel curated for - and by - our Ambassador Community.

We delivered an International Day of the Girl campaign in October; created a pop-up version of our ‘Empowerium’ concept in London’s Kings Cross to raise awareness of our work over Christmas and secured national and regional media coverage in support of International Womens’ Day activity in March 2022.

Finance

Our position at the end of the financial year was positive, especially given the continued threat of the Covid pandemic on both income generation and programmes. We achieved our goal of six months unrestricted cash in reserves and ended the year with around nine months of unrestricted cash reserves. Our fundraising activities have provided valuable stability for our programme delivery in 2021-22, with income derived from the following sources:



Governance and accountability

Charity object

To advance for the public benefit the education of girls and young women in such ways as the trustees think fit, including but not limited to making facilities and services available to them with the particular (but not limited) aim of helping them win places at universities, colleges or institutions of higher education.

Public benefit

All of our activities are undertaken to further our purposes for the public benefit board, and are overseen by the Trustees to ensure that this is the case.

Name of the charity: The Girls’ Network

Charity registration number: 1156517

Address of the principal office of the charity:

CAN Mezzanine, 7-14 Great Dover Street, London, SE1 4YR

Charity Trustees

Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Sue Rimmer OBE (Chair)

Hannah Essex (Vice-Chair)

Michelle Rodrigues

Sarah Vawda (resigned 5 June 2022)

Senior Management Team

CEO: Charly Young MBE

Head of Programmes: Katie Thiselton (joined February 2022)

Head of Fundraising & Communications: Katya Borowski (joined January 2022)

Head of Finance & Operations: Fiona Stancombe

Auditor

Slade & Cooper Limited

Beehive Mill, Jersey St, Ancoats, Manchester M4 6JG

Structure and Management

The Girls’ Network is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, whose only voting members are its charity trustees. The charity had a board of four trustees and one CEO. The charity had a payroll of 21 full time staff, including the CEO. Trustees are recruited through existing networks of professionals, mentors and partner organisations. Advertisements are also posted on national websites and charity sector websites, including Reach. Trustee roles are outlined following an audit of the existing skills and resources on the board, and an examination of the key needs of the charity over the subsequent three years.

Apart from the first charity Trustees, every Trustee is appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity Trustees. In selecting individuals for appointment, the charity Trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.

Induction and training

All trustees receive training and safeguarding. Every trustee receives an induction pack, is invited to mentor and expected to attend at least one mentoring event within their first six months of service to better understand the work of the charity and the impact that it has on the girls that we support.

Decision-making and governance

Charity trustees make decisions about spends over £5,000 that are not part of the agreed budget for the charity. They also agree budgets for each year, including the cost of expanding the programme into a new region.

Trustees make decisions about partnerships or associations that could be deemed a risk to reputation or quality of delivery of the programme, as identified by the CEO. Trustees delegate the day-to-day running, recruitment and staff management, growth planning and spending decisions that are part of the core business of the charity to the CEO of the charity.

Financial Review: financial activity and financial position

The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet can be found on page [29](#). The Charity’s reserves increased by £311,224 during the year (2021: increased by £307,111). The balance sheet shows total net assets of £764,487 (2021: £453,263).

Policies on reserves

The charity aims to maintain reserves of six months to ensure business continuity in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Our current free reserves are higher than our reserves policy, due to underspends during pandemic, as with many charities. Our Trustees maintain a prudent approach with regular reviews of the funds held, due to the on-going financial uncertainty. As part of this, the charity decided to hold-off making significant investments until we knew that schools were able to afford the mentoring programmes. Given the ongoing pressures on school budgets we expect there to be some challenges in the year ahead and we are keeping a close eye on this situation. Over the coming 12 months we will formulate our strategy building on last year’s review. We will then direct a proportion of our reserves to support the priorities that emerge whilst retaining sufficient funds ensure the Charity continues to be financially resilient.

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

The key management team comprises the CEO and the three Head of department roles. The CEO’s salary is decided by the Trustees, with reference to roles in similar sized charities. The salaries of the other three staff are decided by the Trustees and the CEO together. We conducted an extensive benchmarking exercise in the summer of 2021, which we have used to inform salary bandings and increases.

Risk Management

The Trustees have a robust approach to risk management. The risk register is updated by the key management team every quarter, and presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at each meeting for review. The Trustees have given consideration to the major risks to which the charity is exposed and satisfied themselves that systems or procedures are established in order to manage those risks.

Governance and accountability

Third party indemnity provisions

There are no third-party indemnity provisions to disclose.

Fundraising Compliance

We undertake a range of fundraising activities in support of our charitable aims. Our approach includes:

- >> partnerships with corporate supporters;
- >> securing grants from trusts and foundations;
- >> donations from individuals;
- >> sponsorship raised by individuals for challenge events, and sponsorship related to other events.

All of our fundraising activity is managed in-house. We did not engage the services of any professional fundraising agencies to undertake direct response fundraising solicitation or cultivation either by phone or face-to-face, during the year. We are committed to observing the highest possible standards in fundraising. We are required to comply with all relevant law and regulations.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Notwithstanding the explicit requirement in the extant statutory regulations, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the SORP 2005, in view of the fact that the SORP 2005 has been withdrawn, the Trustees determined to interpret this responsibility as requiring them to follow current best practice and prepare the accounts according to the FRS 102 SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting and Reporting by Charities) 2015, (as amended by the Bulletin issued in February 2016), (The SORP).

In particular, charity law requires the Trustees, if they prepare accounts on an accruals basis, to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit of the charity. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- >> prepare the accounts in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law);
- >> select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently; make Judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- >> prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business;
- >> state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The law requires that the trustees must not approve the accounts unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for the year.

The Trustees are also responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with regulations made under the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

The Trustees are also responsible for the contents of the Trustees' report, and the statutory responsibility of the Independent Examiner in relation to the Trustees' report is limited to examining the report and ensuring that, on the face of the report, there are no material inconsistencies with the figures disclosed in the financial statements.

Auditors

Slade & Cooper Ltd were re-appointed as the charity's auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 29th November 2022 and signed on their behalf by Sue Rimmer OBE, Chair of Trustees.

Signed *Sue Rimmer*

Date **29th November 2022**



Independent Auditor’s Report to the Trustees of The Girls’ Network

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Girls’ Network (the ‘charity’) for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the charity’s trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity’s trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity’s trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- >> give a true and fair view of the state of the charity’s affairs as at 31 March 2022, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- >> have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- >> have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC’s Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC’s Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees’ annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have

performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- >> the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees’ report; or
- >> sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- >> the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- >> we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement set out on page 17, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of financial statements which give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent Auditor’s Report to the Trustees of The Girls’ Network (Cont)

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with regulations made under section 154 of that Act.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- >> enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims.
- >> enquiry of the charity's staff, management and those charged with governance to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- >> reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- >> reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- >> auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

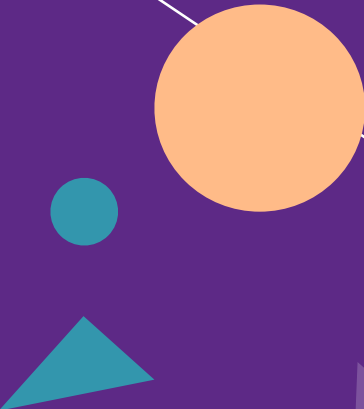
A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council’s website at: www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Audit/Audit-and-assurance/Standards-and-guidance/Standards-and-guidance-for-auditors/Auditors-responsibilities-for-audit/Description-of-auditors-responsibilities-for-audit.aspx

This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

Slade & Cooper Limited
Statutory Auditors
Beehive
Jersey Street
Manchester
M4 6JG

Date: 29 November 2022

Slade & Cooper Limited is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.



Financials

The Girls’ Network Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds 2022 (£)	Total funds 2021 (£)
Income From:					
Donations and legacies	3	389,788	–	389,788	250,103
Charitable activities: Mentoring programme	4	479,742	249,589	729,331	727,799
Total Income		869,530	249,589	1,119,119	977,902
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities: Mentoring programme	5	523,428	284,467	807,895	670,791
Total expenditure		523,428	284,467	807,895	670,791
Net income/(expenditure) before net gains/(losses) on investments		346,102	(34,878)	311,224	307,111
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	6	346,102	(34,878)	311,224	307,111
Transfer between funds		(238)	238	–	–
Net movement in funds for the year		345,864	(34,640)	311,224	307,111
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		370,343	82,920	453,263	80,599
Total funds carried forward		716,207	48,280	764,487	387,710

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The Girls’ Network Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 (£)		2021 (£)	
Fixed Assets:					
Tangible assets	10	–	3,494	–	2,344
Total fixed assets		–	3,494	–	2,344
Current Assets:					
Debtors	11	98,195	–	69,523	–
Cash at bank and in hand	12	925,570	–	616,753	–
Total current assets		1,023,765	–	686,276	–
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	13	(262,772)	–	(235,357)	–
Net current assets		–	760,993	–	450,919
Total assets less current liabilities		–	764,487	–	453,263
Net assets		–	764,487	–	453,263
Funds of the charity:					
Restricted income funds	15	–	48,280	–	82,920
Unrestricted income funds	16	–	716,207	–	370,343
Total charity funds		–	764,487	–	453,263

The notes on pages 31 to 39 form part of these accounts. Approved by the Trustees on 29/11/2022 and signed on their behalf by: Sue Rimmer (Chair)

The Girls' Network Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ending 31 March 2022

Note		2022 (£)		2021 (£)	
Cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	18	–	313,118	–	382,617
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		–	(4,301)	–	(1,882)
Cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		–	(4,301)	–	(1,822)
Increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		–	308,817	–	380,734
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		–	616,753	–	236,019
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		–	925,570	–	616,753

The Girls' Network

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgments and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a. Basis of preparation

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

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared to give a 'true and fair view' and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), second edition - October 2019, rather than the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005 which has since been withdrawn.

The Girls' Network meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b. Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

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

There were no key judgments which the trustees have made which have a significant effect on the accounts.

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

c. Income

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

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

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of a provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

d. Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated

item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised; refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e. Interest receivable

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

f. Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g. Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

The Girls' Network

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022

h. Operating leases

Operating leases are leases in which the title to the assets, and the risks and rewards of ownership, remain with the lessor. Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

i. Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £250 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

Office fixtures and equipment 3 years

j. Debtors

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

k. Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

l. Creditors and provisions

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

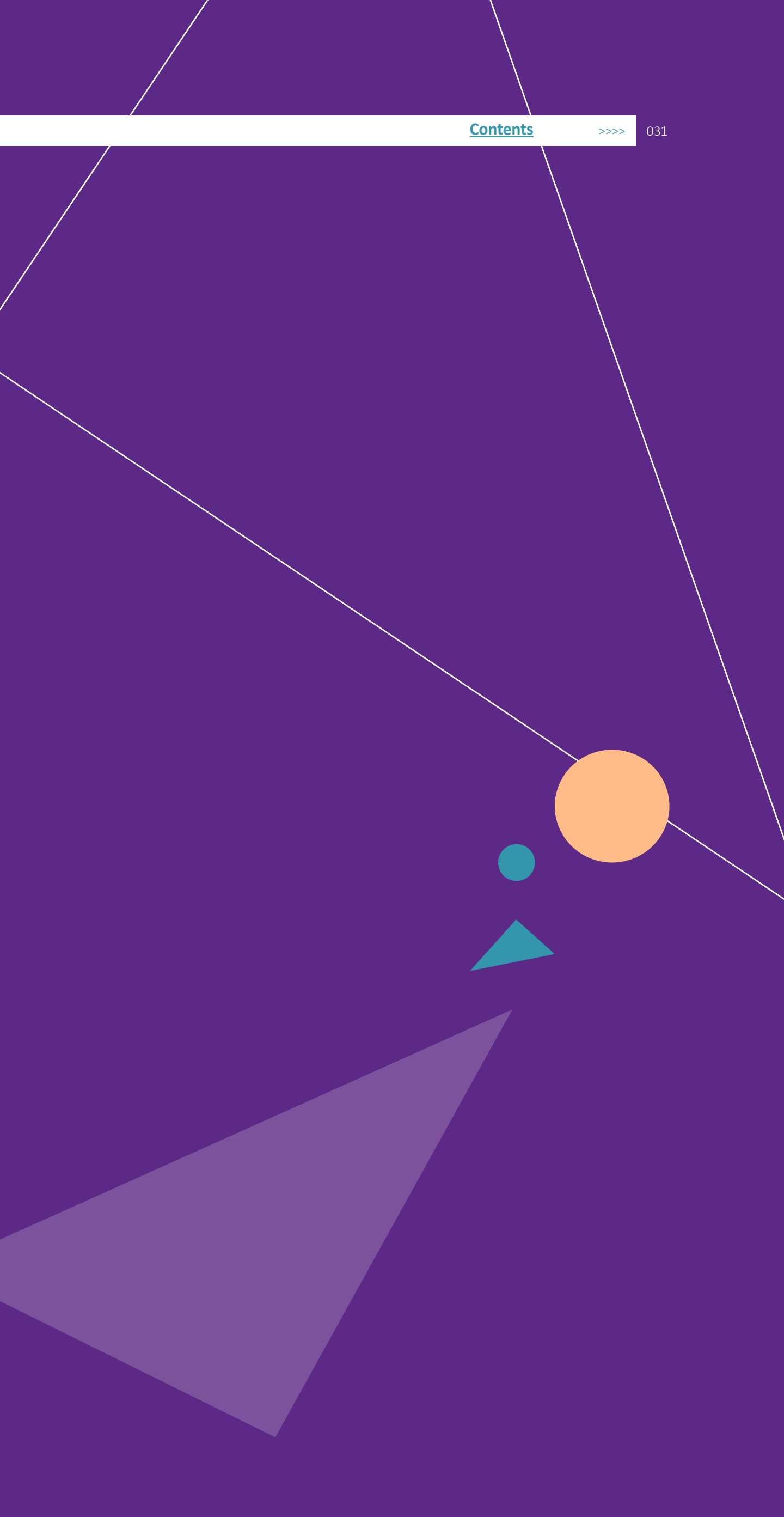
m. Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

n. Pensions

Employees of the charity are auto-enrolled in a defined contribution ‘money purchase’ scheme after 3 months' service. The charity’s contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 11. The outstanding contributions at the year end were £0 (2021: £2,511.76). There were no costs associated with running the defined contribution scheme.

The money purchase plan is managed by NEST and the plan invests the contributions made by the employee and employer in an investment fund to build up over the term of the plan a pension fund which is then converted into a pension upon the employee’s normal retirement year age when eligible for a state pension. The trust has no liability beyond making its contributions and paying across the deductions for the employee’s contributions.



2 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation, registered as a charity in England & Wales.

3 Income from donations and legacies

Current reporting period	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds 2022 (£)
Donations	389,788	–	389,788
Total Income	389,788	–	389,788

Previous reporting period	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds 2021 (£)
Donations	250,103	–	250,103
Total Income	250,103	–	250,103

4 Income from charitable activities

Current reporting period	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds 2022 (£)
Income from schools	353,071	–	353,071
Income from Unrestricted Grants	126,671	–	126,671
Income from Milby Foundation	–	45,000	45,000
Income from TVCA	–	30,000	30,000
Income from Dulverton Trust	–	31,000	31,000
Income from Enterprise	–	50,000	50,000
Income from HIWCF	–	4,500	4,500
Income from Sussex Community Fund	–	5,000	5,000
Income from London Community Response Fund	–	42,078	42,078
Income from Clothworkers Foundation	–	32,011	32,011
Income from Newby Trust	–	10,000	10,000
Subtotal for mentoring programme	479,742	249,589	729,331
Total Income	479,742	249,589	729,331

4 Income from charitable activities cont.

Previous reporting period	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds 2021 (£)
Income from schools	283,850	–	283,850
Income from Unrestricted Grants	24,462	–	24,462
Income from City & Guilds	–	37,420	37,420
Income from TVCA	–	60,000	60,000
Income from Dulverton Trust	–	31,000	31,000
Income from Big Lottery	–	145,558	145,558
Income from HIWCF	–	5,688	5,688
Income from Tampon Tax Community Fund	–	3,260	3,260
Income from Impact 100	–	15,000	15,000
Income from Joseph Levy Foundation	–	8,628	8,628
Income from People's Postcode Lottery	–	19,500	19,500
Income from Steve Morgan Foundation	–	11,250	11,250
Income from Sussex Community Fund	–	4,997	4,997
Income from Wellesley	–	10,000	10,000
Income from Big Lottery- Covid emergency Fund	–	67,186	67,186
Subtotal for mentoring programme	308,312	419,487	727,799
Total Income	308,312	419,487	727,799

5 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Total 2022 (£)	Total 2021 (£)
Staff costs	677,656	600,348
Rent and office costs	57,010	41,067
Programme costs	25,108	25,108
Depreciation	3,151	1,718
Governance costs (Audit fee)	3,000	3,000
	807,884	671,241
Restricted expenditure	284,467	451,273
Unrestricted expenditure	523,428	219,518
	807,895	670,791

6 Net income/(expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):	Total 2022 (£)	Total 2021 (£)
Depreciation	3,151	1,718
Auditor's remuneration- audit fees	3,000	3,000

7 Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:	Total 2022 (£)	Total 2021 (£)
Wages and salaries	604,234	499,662
Social security costs	51,843	43,233
Pension costs	13,359	10,499
Contractor costs	8,220	47,604
	677,656	600,998

No employees has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2021: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the period was 17.9 (2021: 14.7).

The average full time equivalent number of staff employed during the period was 17 (2021: 14).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £176,440 (2021: £158,429).

8 Trustee remuneration and expenses, and related party transactions

No trustee nor any persons connected with them received any remuneration or reimbursed expenses during the year (2021: Nil).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity, including guarantees, during the year (2021: nil).

9 Corporation tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

10 Fixed assets: tangible assets

Cost	Computer equipment (£)
At 1 April 2021	6,409
Additions	4,301
Disposals	(1,256)
At 31 March 2022	9,454

Depreciation	Computer equipment (£)
At 1 April 2021	4,065
Charge for the year	3,151
Disposals	(1,256)
At 31 March 2022	5,960

Net book value	Computer equipment (£)
At 31 March 2022	3,494
At 31 March 20 21	2,344

11 Debtors

	Total 2022 (£)	Total 2021 (£)
Trade debtors	94,635	60,752
Prepayments and accrued income	3,560	8,771
	98,195	69,523

12 Cash at bank and in hand

	Total 2022 (£)	Total 2021 (£)
Cash at bank and on hand	925,570	616,753
	925,570	616,753

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Total 2022 (£)	Total 2021 (£)
Trade creditors	9,019	7,508
Short term compensated absences (holiday pay)	5,859	13,216
Other creditors and accruals	15,928	9,543
Deferred income	216,221	202,578
Taxation and social security costs	15,745	2,512
	262,772	235,357

14 Deferred income

	Balance at 1 April 2021 (£)	Income received (£)	Released in year (£)	Balance at 31 March 2022 (£)
Schools	202,578	358,225	(362,071)	198,732

15 Analysis of movements in restricted funds

Current reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2021 (£)	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)	Transfers (£)	Balance at 31 March 2022 (£)
Mentoring programme					
Dulverton Trust	18,083	31,000	(31,000)	-	18,083
Esmae Fairbairn Foundation	(149)	-	-	149	-
The National Lottery Community Fund	52,186	-	(52,093)	-	93
City & Guilds	11,947	-	(11,947)	-	-
Tampon Tax Community Fund	39	-	-	-	39
St James' Place Foundation	14	-	-	-	14
Millby Foundation	(7,366)	45,000	(45,267)	-	(7,633)
TVCA	140	30,000	(30,140)	-	-
HIWCF	-	4,500	(3,461)	-	1,039
Joseph Levy Foundation	742	-	-	-	742
People's Postcode Lottery Trust	3,250	-	(3,250)	-	-
Steve Morgan Foundation	1,624	-	(1,624)	-	-
Sussex Community Foundation	2,499	5,000	(4,587)	-	2,912
The National Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund	(89)	-	-	89	-
Enterprise Holdings	-	50,000	(33,980)	-	16,020
Clothworkers Foundation	-	32,011	(35,733)	-	(3,722)
London Community Response Fund	-	42,078	(28,052)	-	14,026
Newby Trust	-	10,000	(3,333)	-	6,667
Total	82,920	249,589	(284,467)	238	48,280

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2020 (£)	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)	Transfers (£)	Balance at 31 March 2021 (£)
Mentoring programme					
Dulverton Trust	-	31,000	(12,917)	—	18,083
Esmae Fairbairn Foundation	(149)	-	-	—	(149)
RSA	1,535	-	(1,535)	—	-
The National Lottery Community Fund	59,878	145,558	(153,250)	—	52,186
City & Guilds	11,182	37,420	(36,655)	—	11,947
Tampon Tax Community Fund	4,384	3,260	(7,605)	—	39
St James' Place Foundation	46	-	(32)	—	14
Millby Foundation	38,280	-	(45,646)	—	(7,366)
TVCA	-	60,000	(59,860)	—	140
HIWCF	-	5,688	(5,688)	—	-
Impact 100	-	15,000	(15,000)	—	-
Joseph Levy Foundation	-	8,628	(7,886)	—	742
People's Postcode Lottery Trust	-	19,500	(16,250)	—	3,250
Steve Morgan Foundation	-	11,250	(9,626)	—	1,624
Sussex Community Foundation	-	4,997	(2,498)	—	2,499
Wellesley	-	10,000	(10,000)	—	-
The National Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund	-	67,186	(67,275)	—	(89)
Total	115,156	419,487	(451,723)	77,429	82,920

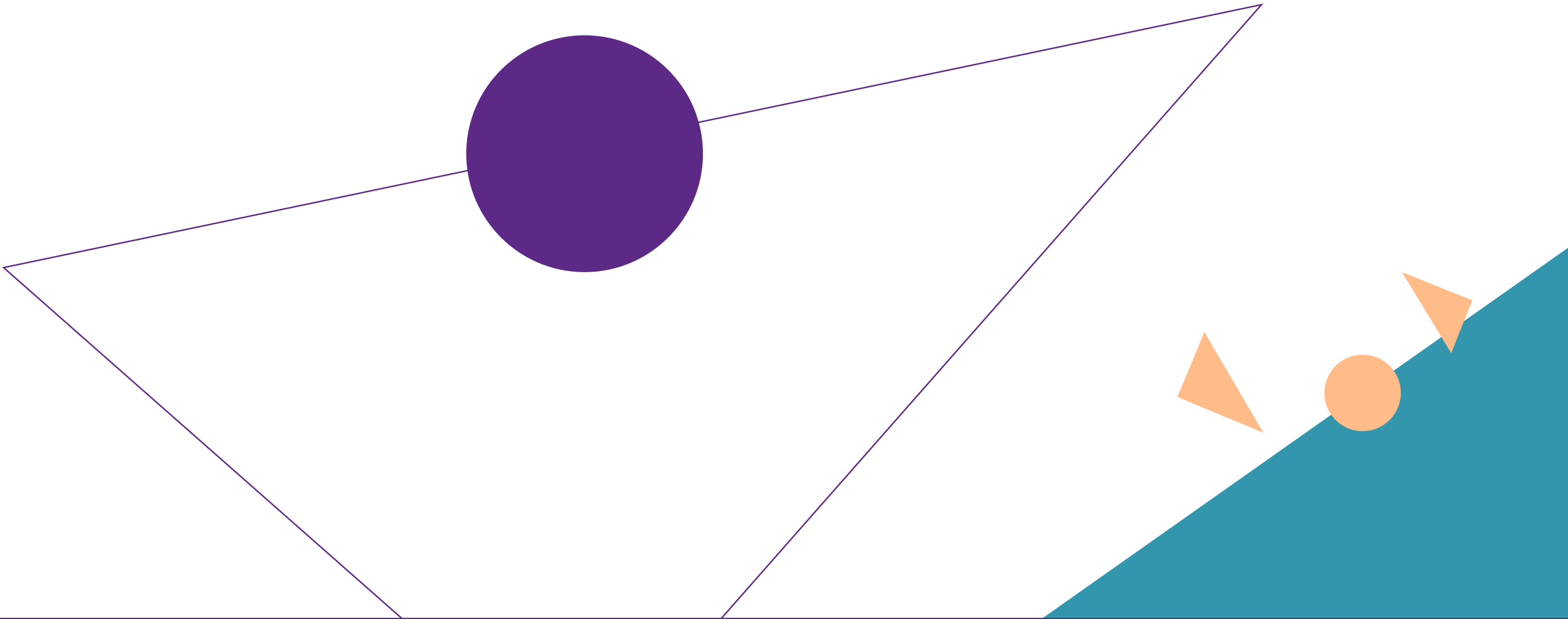
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Analysis of movement in unrestricted funds

Current reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2021 (£)	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)	Transfers (£)	Balance at 31 March 2022 (£)
General fund	370,343	869,530	(523,428)	(238)	716,207
	370,343	869,530	(523,428)	(238)	716,207

Previous reporting period	Balance at 1 April 2020 (£)	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)	Transfers (£)	Balance at 31 March 2021 (£)
General fund	31,446	558,415	(219,518)	—	370,343
	31,446	558,415	(219,518)	—	370,343

Name of unrestricted fund	Description, nature and purposes of the fund
General fund	The free reserves after allowing for all designated funds



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Analysis of net assets between funds

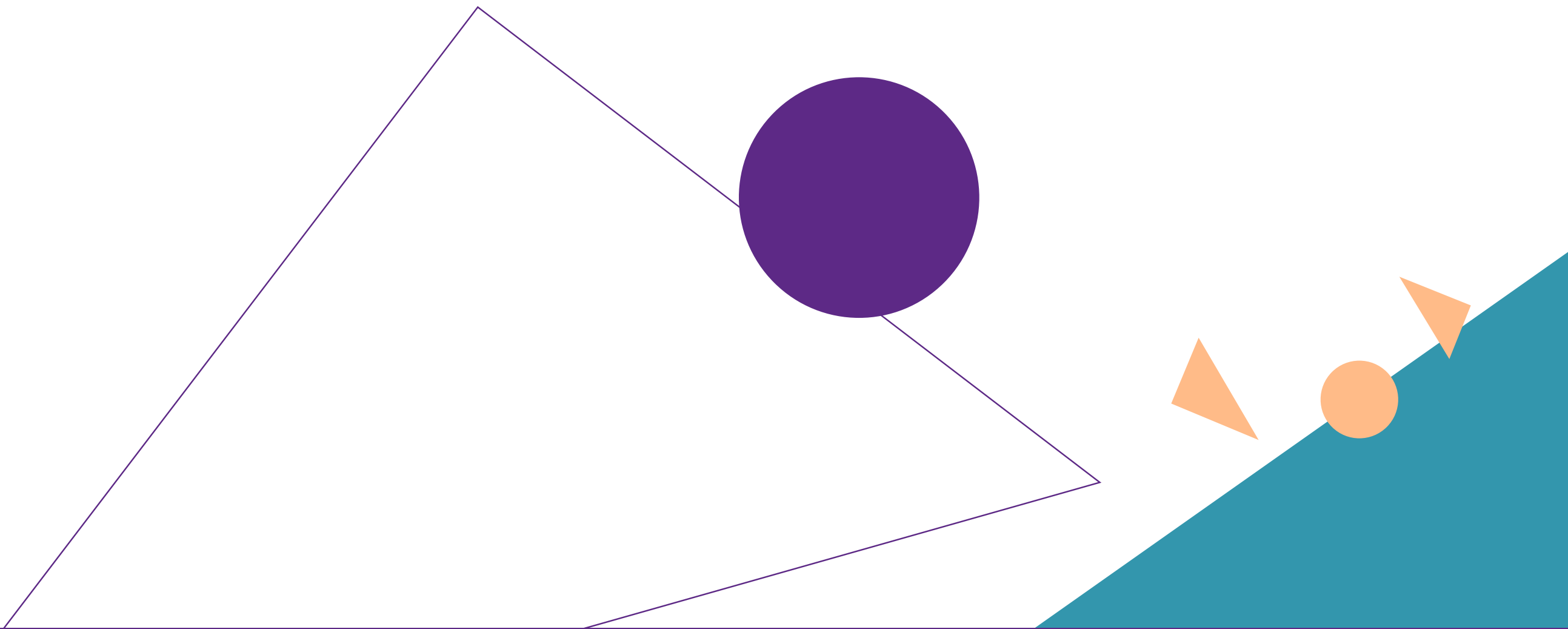
Current reporting period	General fund (£)	Designated funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total (£)
Mentoring programme				
Tangible fixed assets	3,494	–	–	3,494
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	712,713	–	48,280	760,993
Total	716,207	–	48,280	764,487

Previous Reporting Period	General fund (£)	Designated funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total (£)
Mentoring programme				
Tangible fixed assets	2,344	–	–	2,344
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	367,999	–	82,920	450,919
Total	370,343	–	82,920	453,263

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Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2022 (£)	2021 (£)
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	311,224	306,661
Adjustments for		
Depreciation charge	3,151	1,718
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(28,672)	75,167
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	27,415	(930)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	313,118	382,616



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