

Registered charity number : 1157149

THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE
Trustee Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2024

Registered charity number : 1157149

THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE
Trustees' report and financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024

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THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2024

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's trust deed and the Statement of Recommended Practice, "Accounting and Reporting by Charities", issued in March 2005.

The Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are listed below.

Legal and administrative information

Charity Name	THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE
Charity number	1157149
Company Registration Number	5801288
Office Address	Suite 4 - Kingspark Business Centre 97 Stanley Road Bootle LIVERPOOL L20 7DA
Registered Office	Suite 4 - Kingspark Business Centre 97 Stanley Road Bootle LIVERPOOL L20 7DA
Secretary & Operation Manager	Petronelle K Moanda
Management Committee	Rev John Baptist Mr Charles Lemba Matondo Miss Deborah Mbosso Miss Vanessa Ndunguna-Ntemo Miss Eleanor Smith
Accountants and Independent Examiner	Whitfield Accounting & Integrated Services Ltd now trading as C W C Consultants Services
Bankers	Barclays Bank plc Great Crosby Branch 18-22 Liverpool Road LIVERPOOL L23 5SF Lloyds Bank PLC 88-94 Church Street Liverpool L1 3HD

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Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The Congolese Association of Merseyside is a Community hub of ions shaping ions. It was set up in 2004 by 6 members of the local community (founders) out of the hardship and stress caused by addressing integration issues alone when they first arrived in the UK. It was first registered as a company limited by guarantee No. 5801288 on 29 April 2006, then later registered as a Charity on 21 May 2014 Number 1157149.

CAM is owned and run by local residents to address the social dilemma of our marginalised community (African French and Luzophone speakers Refugees, Asylum seekers and other migrants) facing social exclusion due to language and cultural barriers.

Organisational Structure

The organisation has continued to benefit from 5 committee members with complementary skills, and is staffed by 10 multilingual volunteers. The committee diligently and generously engaged with the project while drawing on their personal refugee and life experiences.

Our day-to day activities are run entirely by trained volunteers and the community champions, which creates a far more responsive and informed provision because it is led by people who have had "lived" experiences of these issues and know how to help resolve them at the earliest possible stages.

The organisation's activities were and are still entirely run by volunteers. Our management structure remained unchanged. However, we have fully rejuvenated our board, benefitting from 4 new recruits including young people 25-35 years olds. We are passionate about further enhancing the excellent service our teams provide by enhancing their capacity and capability, to continue to run existing services, and to refresh our talent pool to ensure we remain viable and able to deliver our intended core activities and to develop our income generation endeavours (Community shop, community café) and focus our efforts to create a more sustainable future.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing trustees were initially selected by the community in their Annual General Meeting on 23 October 2023. The views and recommendations of elders and community leaders were obtained before the names of the proposed trustees were put forward to the members attending the AGM, for confirmation.

In selecting the trustees, individuals who regularly attended events, activities, meetings and functions organised by the charity were identified. The process of selection involved consideration of the person's eligibility and competence, specialist knowledge and skill and attitude.

Induction and Training of Trustees

Following appointment, the trustees were given details of their role and were also provided with the policies and procedures adopted by our charity. Details of the charity commission were provided to the trustees and they were advised to go through the various publications of the charity commission including guidance on charities and public benefit. The trustees are aware of their responsibilities under the Charities Act.

Risk Management

The Management Committee regularly review the major risks to which the charity is exposed. And the measures taken to manage these risks and to reduce their occurrence. A risk register has been established and is updated at least annually.

The Committee members are satisfied that systems are in place to manage the risks that have been identified.

Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces.

Policies for Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Equality and diversity are present, to ensure compliance with the welfare of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to the centre.

These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) now DBS checks are carried out for all individuals working with the children and vulnerable adults.

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Aims & Objectives

1. Aims:

Our vision is to provide a welcoming hub for displaced people (asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants), who are rebuilding their lives because of homelessness or forced migration and support those needing help to settle, access and participate in their new community, fulfil their potential and thrive, both individually and collectively.

Our key aim is to deliver services and activities that tackle social problems around the integration and social cohesion of non-English speaker migrants who struggle to navigate the mainstream systems due to language limitations which often leads to long-term issues with accessing employment and maintaining health and wellbeing, leading to high levels of poverty and social disadvantage. We work to help individuals and the community become better connected, economically secure, healthier, stronger and more resilient. We strive to:

- create a cohesive community;
- make a lasting difference to beneficiaries' lives rather than simply alleviating the symptoms or current problems;
- reduce isolation, stigma and discrimination;
- encourage or enable them to share in the life of the whole community

we want to see a growing sense of humanity, within our community where people of any background can live at peace and respect for each other and make our community a better place to live and work in harmony.

Objectives:

"Our goal" is to help more members of the community to thrive and live more fulfilled life. During this financial year, our target was to engage with 500 individuals (350 asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants directly and 150 secondary beneficiaries), to give as many people as possible access support services, to help alleviate suffering and their hardship and develop their resilience. Because we believe that it is our social responsibility, our common endeavour to do what we can to help the community around us, during difficult times.

However, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the cost of living hike, the energy crisis, and the continuous restrictions which have shocked and galvanized the community, so our service user's poverty increased, jobs and income decreased.

Individual people who have used our services are :	802	
Females	504	
Males	197	
Young people	101	

3. Core Services

During 18 years, we have run programmes aimed to initially help, but not exclusively non-English speaker migrants to settle, gain the skills, knowledge and confidence to become empowered.

We developed a portfolio of innovative services that exploits the range of skills, quality and internal resources available to encourage, empower and enable refugees, asylum seekers and migrants to build new lives and other residents who face life challenges to overcome them.

We therefore delivered holistic services and activities including:

- Advice, Guidance & Support (Interpretation/Translation)
 - Education & Training – Workshops
 - Advocacy and Professional Services
- Community Cohesion events that promote social connection, outings and conferences and workshops involving other stakeholders.

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Aims & Objectives**3. Core services (cont'd)**

Services	Activities	Targeting
Drop-In	Information – Advice - Guidance	French, Lusophones Migrants (Asylum Seekers, refugees) and others Residents needing help.
Advocacy	Signing in, referrals to professionals (Immigration, Housing, Education, Health Services,) etc...	Community and Beyond,
Practical Help/Outreach	Food and emergency essentials Home- visits/Hospital/Prisons/ Travels/ overnight shelter.	Community and Beyond,
Education – IT Hub facility	Education & Upskilling Activities/ E-learning, Financial Inclusion, Languages & Digital connectivity sessions, including Entrepreneurship including	Community and Beyond,
Social integration & connections	Community cohesion, interaction, networking and leisure activities including Arts, Dance Events, cultural food and attires.	Community and Beyond, mainly senior residents - to combat isolation

Expansion - New Services Activities**Activities****1- Brand New - Empreinte IT Community Hub**

IT – People Hub – offering free services – IT basic skills, printing, scanning, tea / coffee, fruits
 398 people attended our IT hub, 65 regular attendees
 3 permanent jobs created, 2 apprentices, 5 work placements from local universities and colleges, 8 volunteers joined

Impact**> Increased back office costs**

- * Greater volume of cases and a high demand for services - increase in refugee homelessness due to further Home office asylum applications backlog clearances
- * Disruption to income (stretched/reduced resources) to meet the raised demand
- * Increased demand for more equipment/repairs and adaptations - to enhance digital system
 - Space renovation (Repairs & Maintenance)
 - Equipment and furniture
 - Rent and rate
 - Utilities
 - Staff costs
- * Raised utility bills and emergency interventions fees (travel-overnight accommodation-clothing-food parcels hostels for homeless)

2- Outreach Engagement Services

- * More outreach and engagement sessions with the target group (those who are affected by the cost of living) crisis
 Networking Events and gathering / day outs: We have organised 6 social events and celebrations this year as gateway to our entrepreneurship route to selling artefacts, traditional costumes and cultural food. Over 1000 people have attended:
Youth Connect - 80 young people attended sessions.
 We took a group of 25 young people; 14 - 25 to London (5 days) for a football competition):

> Events - Increased event logistic fees

- Extensive promotion of future services (Catering-Cultural food - Community Shop - Artefacts - Traditional costumes)

E-Visas: 124 applications made, in line with the current Home Office transition to digital immigration system

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Aims & Objectives

The aims of our charity to relieve poverty or financial hardship among refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, workers, and other local persons in need living in Liverpool City, Region by providing Advice, Information and guidance on how to access local advocacy and mainstream services for integration (including Education, Employment, Immigration, Welfare, Housing, Health and wellbeing);

We work to help individuals and families to settle, to boost their integration;

> Enhance access to community life and foster participants chance to bring their share to their new community

>To fulfil their potential and thrive, both individual and collectively;

>To bring our city to become better connected, economically secure, healthier, stronger, and more resilient>>

Areas of Intervention

During the financial year 2023/2024, we have expanded our services, broadened our reach (through drop-in, outreach/engagement, advocacy services and education) with learning hub and development activities, to better respond to service users' needs.

Our monitoring data shows that people who recently accessed our services required more support with:

- 1) Housing and homelessness support
- 2) Debt advice, debt collectors notice, Bailiff, Housing notice to quit, and court summons
- 3) General Information, Advice, Guidance, referrals and sign postings.
- 4) Immigration and settlement advice
- 5) Domestic violence and crime help.

Our Flagship Programmes

1. Drop-ins support – Provision of easy access multilingual information, translation, interpretation, on-call support, to individuals and families newly arrived and long living residents based on initial assessment and tailored help soon after.

Advice, Guidance, signposting services including general administrative tasks such as completing immigration forms, application for housing/ education support, communication with mainstream services (Job Centre, CV, GP, hospital, Education, Benefit checks ...etc...) including getting people to emergency protection and access to critical safety.

2. Advocacy services – Immigration – Housing – Mainstream .

We facilitate access to professionals and external agencies to clients providing translation and interpretation in languages clients understand better, and responsive to their needs. We use Professionals including Independent Advocates, Solicitors, Counsellors, Lifestyle Advisors, Wellbeing coaches, Therapists, Support workers, Trauma specialists, Life coaches, Assessors.

3. Practical support & outreach – Visit to prisoners, the sick in hospitals, homes, delivering essential necessities to residents.

We supported a rising number of domestic violence and homeless providing them with essential ranging from (emergency food parcel, utility: heating, electricity and travel costs, emergency accommodation, items of clothing and bedding, rehousing the homeless.

We continued the provision and delivery food and essential supplies (Food parcels - Energy vouchers/care package and home essentials delivery to families struggling with costs of living.

4. Education & Lifelong learning – We have opened a new IT hub, innovated with more repairs and touches, acquired necessary equipment renewed old furniture.

The equipment (laptops, computers desktops, printer/scanners) have strengthened our capacity and capability to deliver Digital Connectivity services, this more needed services to the community and combat digital divide within our region.

The IT Hub continues to deliver Basic skills - Skills for work, Financial Capability, and Digital Inclusion sessions, and 5 new volunteers - have joined and 4 jobs created.

398 direct beneficiaries have visited our IT centre and 65 are regular attendees.

The new Hub offers Language classes (ESOL) 2 hours / 1 days per week, Digital Inclusion 2 sessions 2 hours per week With experienced teachers from Hugbaird College

Also online safety, identifying web tools e.g. comparison sites for deals on utilities, insurance, shopping, banking, Socialising; and referrals where to get advice on money issues.

Entrepreneurship program: devoted to supporting would-be entrepreneurs from disadvantaged groups in needs Practical support tailored to their needs and wants

(Community café, cakes, cultural foods, Barber shop, including art/ crafts and dog grooming)

5. Social Integration Activities

During this financial year, we have delivered with partners, 6 integration activities.

Over 1200 individuals and families attended.

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Way Forward (cont'd)

The plan aims to provide the organisation with a balanced portfolio of income from institutions, trusts, companies and individuals which will create a platform for the long-term sustainability of our programs. And to develop income generation streams, to lessens dependency on grants, avoid the backdrop of limited resources and insecurities over funding.

We are continually looking at how we can harness the energy, strengthen collaborative relationships that we have formed throughout the last years, in order to move the organisation forward.

Next few years, we will ontinue and consolidate our 4 key areas:

- > Expension of Drop-In - Advocacy – Education/Employment
- > Raise profile of IT Hub – enhance learning activities Digital skills/English language
- > Strengthen our referral system with Key partners and Mainstream services
- > Develop our Social Enterprise program- Preparing to grow and succeed in income generation: "Community Pub - Café & Catering Service - Community Shop"

as a new-look Immigration Advice Authority, or IAA next year); to become a regulated organisation for the provision of immigration services, on own right.

The Management would like to thank once again our funders and supporters for their much appreciated and valuable support without who, the Management would not be able to continue to deliver its much needed services to the Community.

C Lemba

For the Congolese Association of Merseyside

Charles Matondo Lemba

Director

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FINANCE REVIEW

The overall finances (£143,320) set to help us achieve our goals for the period are from Trusts and Foundations, National Lottery and Donations. The surplus for the year carried forward is £8,213.

The principal sources of funding for our charity are the grants from our key donors below, that we salute and shout about their trust and support to our work.

DONORS	
Citizen Advice Liverpool	LCVS-Community Impact Fund
The Henry Smith Charity	Membership contribution & Donations
The National Lottery Community Fund	Lloyds bank Foundation
Comic Relief – Ground Work	Cook Foundation Netherlands
VOLA UKSPF	

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Drop-ins support** – 30h/w x 52 = 1,560 hours Multilingual Information, Advice and Guidance to newly arrived and long living residents.
- Advocacy** – Immigration – Housing – Mainstream 10h/m x 12 = 120 sessions.
We have sign posted – made multiple referrals to professional services.
- Practical support & outreach** – Visit to prisoners, the sick in hospitals, homes bound individuals, delivering essential necessities to residents. 8h/week x 52 = 416 hours
We have delivered 116 Energy vouchers (Gas & electricity to clients worth £49 each Total worth £5,684
E-Visas: 124 applications made, in line with the current Home Office transition to digital immigration system
- Education & Lifelong learning** – We have innovated our, renewed equipment and furniture.
The IT Hub has delivered Basic skills - Skills for work, Financial Capability, Digital Inclusion sessions
398 direct beneficiaries have visited. 3 permanent jobs created – 2 apprentices opportunities
5 work placements from local universities and colleges - 5 new volunteers joined.
Entrepreneurship program: devoted at supporting would-be entrepreneurs from disadvantaged groups in need of practical support - according to their needs: 35 participants with broad business ideas incubation; (Community café, cakes, cultural foods, art/ crafts and dog grooming)
6 weeks Self employers Business Incubation workshops.
- Social Integration Activities:** During this financial year, we have delivered with partners, 6 integration activities.
Over 1200 individuals and families attended.
 - Global Liverpool with Citizen Advice
 - Day out in Park – Visit to Port Sunlight
 - Arts Exhibition with Blackfest
 - World in Bootle – with Sefton CVS
 - Sefton Volunteering fair
 - Visit to Liverpool Museums

We continued the provision and delivery food and essential supplies (Food parcels - Energy vouchers/care package and home essentials delivery to families struggling with costs of living.

How do we ensure that the organisation can build resilience and a sustainable service delivery, to maintain momentum and reach our growth targets was the management priority?

Future-proofing was highly needed more than ever to ensure that we were not simply reacting to crisis, but that we had a robust processes in place to deal with them in the future, and that we were taking necessary steps to ensure that our work remains financially sound and viable and that we continued to perform and deliver project benefits to the primary target group.

In the next financial year, we will focus on strengthening CAM so it is better equipped to meet the needs of those who need our support. We will be taking those challenges forward and creating a renewed plan to ensure we return stronger than ever.

We will collaborate to maximise our existing resources by drawing upon our network of key partners, whilst we will continue to undertake proper research to understand about the various options that can be used to maintain a steady flow of funds as well as to build a strong foundation for long term success.

CAM has a new adapted four-year (2023-2027) income generation plan in place which has been produced with the help of Sefton CVS, capacity building team. The approach has been delivering the desired results.
We hope that this plan will continue to guide our fundraising activities over this next phase of securing and developing our service provision and move from strength to strength.

THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees
for the year ended 31 March 2024**

I report on the accounts for The Congolese Association of Merseyside for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees, members and examiner

As the charity members you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts: you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by The Charity Commissioners under section 43(7)(B) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

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

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- * to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
- * to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

.....

**Cheryl P Agorom, ICPA
Independent Examiner
C W C Consultants Services**

Date: 17/12/2024

**Business First
23 Goodlass Road
Hunts Cross
Liverpool L24 9HJ**

THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE

Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Incoming resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds	1				
Voluntary income:					
John Moores Foundation					
John Moores Foundation		-	-	-	5,000
Elisabeth Rathbone Grant		-	-	-	3,500
Comic Relief		1,000		1,000	9,500
Sefton		-	10,000	10,000	
National lottery		-	43,061	43,061	42,622
Citizen Advice		-	3,531	3,531	-
DC-UK		1,500	-	1,500	-
Kook Foundation		-	5,105	5,105	-
Mak Consulting		3,500	-	3,500	-
The Leathersellers		-	-	-	2,000
LCVS		1,630	-	1,630	-
Henry Smith		-	39,200	39,200	12,800
Lloyds Bank		25,000	-	25,000	27,250
Members' contribution		4,641	-	4,641	3,733
Other income:		5,152	-	5,152	-
Loans					
Total incoming resources		42,423	100,897	143,320	106,405
Resources expended					
Charitable activities		(32,225)	(100,897)	(133,122)	(95,343)
Governance costs		(300)		(300)	(300)
Depreciation		(1,685)		(1,685)	
Total resources expended		(34,210)	(100,897)	(135,107)	(95,643)
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers					
Gross transfers between funds					
Reconciliation of funds		8,213	-	8,213	10,762
Total funds brought forward		14,493		14,493	5,418
Brought forward					(1,687)
Total funds carried forward		22,706	-	22,706	14,493

Approved by the trustees on: 17/12/2024, and signed on their behalf by:

*C Lemba*Charles Matondo Lemba
Trustee

Registered charity number : 1157149

THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE
Trustees' report and financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2024

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities:

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting Standards.

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

make judgements and estimates that are prudent;

state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to
any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;

prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is
inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provision of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees for the purposes of charity law who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on Page 1 of the trustees report.

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by:

C Lemba
Charles Matondo Lemba
Trustee

Date: 17/12/2024.

THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	2	9,458	-
		<u>9,458</u>	<u>-</u>
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>20,182</u>	<u>14,493</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	3	(6,934)	-
Net current (liabilities)/assets		13,248	14,493
Net assets		<u>22,706</u>	<u>14,493</u>
Income funds			
Unrestricted funds: b/fd		3,541	3,541
Restricted funds b/fd		10,952	1,877
Surplus/Deficit for the year		<u>8,213</u>	<u>9,075</u>
Total charity funds		<u>22,706</u>	<u>14,493</u>

Approved by the trustees on 17/12/2024... and signed on their behalf by:

C Lemba

Charles Matondo Lemba

Trustee

THE CONGOLESE ASSOCIATION OF MERSEYSIDE**Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024****1. Trustees**

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year and none of them was reimbursed expenses.

2. Tangible fixed assets

There are fixed assets of £11,233 showing a depreciation of £1,685 and a net book value of £9,458.

	2024 £	2023 £
3. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2024	2023
	£	£
Other creditors		
Accruals	6,934	-
	-	-
	-	-

4. Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising

There were no restricted funds during the year were

Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers '31 March 2024 £	Balance at £
100,897		100,897	-	-
-	-	100,897	-	-