



LET THE CHILDREN LIVE!®

LIFE IN ITS FULLNESS
FOR CHILDREN IN COLOMBIA

Charity registered with the Charity Commission No. 1159113



Correspondence Address: P.O. Box 11, Walsingham, Norfolk, NR22 6EH, United Kingdom

Telephone: (+44)-1302-858369

letthechildrenlive@mac.com - www.letthechildrenlive.org

AGGREGATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

31st DECEMBER 2021

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LET THE CHILDREN LIVE!
A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

GENERAL INFORMATION

COMPANY NUMBER:	07140869
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBERS:	1159113 1159113-1
DIRECTORS:	Miss P. Brown (Chairman) Mr G. Ireland Fr S. Goodman
COMPANY SECRETARY:	Miss P. Allan
REGISTERED OFFICE:	2, Roberts Road Doncaster DN4 0JW
BANK:	Barclays Bank PLC 54, High Street Worcester WR1 2QQ
SOLICITORS:	Brabners Chaffe Street LLP Horton House Exchange Flags Liverpool L2 3YL
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:	Ian Holder FCA Mazars LLP 2, Chamberlain Square Birmingham B3 3AX

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS

The Directors/Trustees present their Report for the year ended 31st December 2021.

Introduction

Let The Children Live! is a Charitable Company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, incorporated on 20th January 2010 and registered as a Charity on 6th November 2014. The Company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company; and it is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the Company being wound up the Members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. The Directors of the Company are also its Trustees for the purposes of charity law.

Let The Children Live! was set up by the Trustees of the Charitable Trust of the same name (Registered Charity No. 1159113-1, originally 1013634), which was founded by Father Peter Walters at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk, in 1992. The same people are the Trustees of both charities.

Fr Peter asked the Trustees of the Trust to set up the Company in order:

- to consolidate and extend the work he had begun through the Trust;
- to make the specifically Christian principles and nature of this work more explicit and secure; and
- to provide this work with an incorporated structure in which the liability of the Trustees would be limited.

Although Fr Peter is recognised as being the Founder of both charities, he is not a Trustee of either of them. He was employed by the Trust as its Executive Director until 31st December 2016; and the following day he became employed as the Executive Director of the Company.

When the Company was established, it was agreed that this new body should gradually take over the work of the Trust, and that once all of the assets and liabilities of the latter had been transferred to the former, the Trust would eventually be wound up in order to avoid the unnecessary expenditure of time and money involved in running two charities for the same purpose.

By the end of 2016 the Company was ready to take over the operational responsibilities of the Trust; and it duly did this on 1st January 2017. The Company then became the workhorse in the partnership between the two “related undertakings”.

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The employees of the Trust agreed that their contracts of employment should be transferred to the Company as from 1st January 2017. The Trustees decided that the tangible assets of the Trust should be made over to the Company on that day; and they arranged for the leases of the three properties rented by the Trust to be taken over by the Company on the same date. Consequently, thenceforward the Trust has no longer had any employees, tangible assets or leased premises of its own: but it has been able to benefit, free of charge, from those of the Company.

Although, as has been mentioned above, the Trustees had expected to be able to wind up the Trust within a quite limited timespan, they found that some regular donors had set up their Standing Orders without giving their contact details to the Trust, so it was not possible to contact them to ask them to transfer their Standing Orders from the Trust to the Company. Others simply ignored repeated requests to make this transfer.

The Trustees feared that the income from these donors would be lost if the Trust were to be wound up, so they allowed it to remain in existence year after year in a semi-dormant state, simply serving as the recipient of this income. However, on 14th December 2020 the Charity Commission told the Trustees that they “should review all available options by 31 May 2021 for effectively winding up the Trust by an appropriate time and transferring all assets/donations to the Charity, taking into account any appropriate professional advice.”

The Trustees therefore consulted their Solicitor, who said that in view of the net annual income of more than £10,000 in standing orders and Gift Aid that was likely to be lost if the Trust were to be wound up, he did not consider that this would be in its best interests. He therefore suggested that the Trustees should instead apply to the Charity Commission for the Trust to be “linked” to the Company. The Trustees accepted this advice, and made the necessary application.

On 26th July 2021 the Charity Commission agreed that the Trust (No. 1013634) should be linked to the Company (No. 1159113) for the purposes of Part 4 (registration) and Part 8 (accounting) of the Charities Act 2011. The Commission also decided that the number of the Trust should be changed to 1159113-1.

In order to avoid confusion, hereafter in this Report, the *Company* will be referred to as the “Reporting Charity”, and the *Trust* will be referred to as the “Linked Charity”. When the linked charities are referred to *jointly*, they will simply be called either “**Let The Children Live!**” or “the charity”.

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Partner Organisation

The charity's operational Partner Organisation in Colombia is **Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños! (Funvini)** a Charitable Foundation that the Trustees asked Fr Peter to set up in 1994 to serve this purpose. It is, however, a separate organisation, subject to Colombian law, and with its own *Junta Directiva* (Board of Trustees) to manage its affairs.

In order to promote transparency and cooperation between **Funvini** and **Let The Children Live!**, an important part of Fr Peter's work is to act as the non-voting Permanent Representative of the British charity on the *Junta Directiva* of the Colombian one. He is therefore usually based in Medellín for more than half of the year. Further contact is provided by occasional visits made to **Funvini** by the Trustees of **Let The Children Live!** For example, the Chairman of the Trustees made such visits in 2013, 2014 and 2017; She had planned to make her next visit in August 2020, but unfortunately this was not possible because of the Covid pandemic. The ongoing complications in intercontinental travel have prevented her from going in 2021 or 2022; but, if conditions permit, she hopes to be able to go in 2023.

The accounts of **Funvini** for 2021 were subjected to a full Audit by an independent *Revisora Fiscal* in 2022, and were certified to be in order. **Funvini**'s Child Protection Officer confirmed that its Child Protection Policy had continued to work satisfactorily in 2021, and that no irregularities had come to her notice.

Objects

The Objects of the Linked Charity are: "to relieve children and young persons anywhere in the world but particularly in Colombia who are in conditions of sickness, need, hardship and distress by the provision of medical supplies, clothing, food, shelter and in such other charitable ways the Trustees may determine."

Similarly, the Objects of the Reporting Charity are:

(i) to relieve street-children and young persons anywhere in the world particularly (but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing) in the Republic of Colombia who are in conditions of sickness, need, hardship and distress by the provision of medical supplies, clothing, food, shelter and in such other Charitable ways as the Trustees may determine;

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(ii) to advance the education of the public by the following:

- the provision of education and training of such children and young persons, and to advance their formation within the doctrines and principles of the Christian faith;
- furthering research into the causes and nature of the conditions and behaviour of such children and young people, and into the means of their improvement; and the dissemination of the useful results of such research for the benefit of the public; and
- the provision of Development Education (education on social, health and economic issues), in the United Kingdom and elsewhere in relation to the conditions and behaviour of such children and young people, in particular but not exclusively through delivery of education in schools.

(iii) to preserve and protect the health of such children and young people by assisting in the prevention of substance abuse and delinquency; and in their protection from violence, cruelty, danger or exploitation and other violations of their human rights.

Mission and Vision

In accordance with these Objects and the Founder's intentions, the Trustees defined the charity's Mission as being "to promote the welfare and education of street-children and other young people who are in conditions of hardship, danger or distress, in the Republic of Colombia or elsewhere, so that they 'may have life and have it to the full', by means of obtaining and providing financial and technical support for the work of **Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños! (Funvini)** and of other similar organisations."

In their Vision Statement, the Trustees proclaimed that the charity would aspire "to develop the expertise and capacity to obtain and provide the financial and technical resources required to enable **Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños! (Funvini)** to become a leading developer in the Republic of Colombia of innovative, reproducible, small-scale, high-quality programmes, designed and conducted in accordance with Christian teaching and principles, and intended to assist, educate and protect street-children and other young people at high social risk, to prevent their falling into delinquency and substance-abuse, and to facilitate their reintegration into the family, school and society; and also to obtain and provide resources to help other organisations to develop programmes of a similar nature elsewhere."

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Principal Activities

In 2021 the work of **Let The Children Live!** was focused on supporting that of **Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños! (Funvini)** with street-children and other children and young people at high social risk in the city of Medellín. A total of 685 children were helped by **Funvini** during the year. Of these, 334 benefitted *directly* from the charity's programmes; and a further 256 children - mostly younger brothers and sisters of the main group - benefitted *indirectly* from help such as food-parcels given to their families.

For both **Let The Children Live!** and **Funvini** every year since 2007 has been impacted by the fluctuations in the value of Sterling against the Colombian Peso (C\$). At the beginning of July 2006, £1 was worth C\$5,030; and in 2021 the average exchange rate received by **Funvini** was £1=C\$5,116.31. Although this represented a welcome increase of 8.06%, on the 2020 rate, it still left the pound worth only 1.72% more than it had been in 2006. The average rate received by **Funvini** in the first seven months of 2022 was £1=C\$5,061.73 - a fall of 1.07% in comparison with the average rate in 2021. This fall would have been greater had not the weakness of the pound against the U.S. dollar been largely compensated for by the even greater weakness of the peso against the dollar.

The damage caused by the many years of a weak the pound has been made worse by the effect of inflation in Colombia. The peso had an average inflation rate of 4.30% per year between 2006 and 2022, producing a cumulative price increase of 96.12%. This means that today's prices are 1.96 times higher than average prices since 2006, according to the OECD and the World Bank consumer price index for Colombia. A peso today in Colombia only buys 50.989% of what it could buy back then. The failure of the pound to rise proportionately against the peso therefore represents a fall of about the same amount in the purchasing power of the charity's donations to **Funvini**.

In 2020, Colombia had a population of about 50,880,000 within a territory of about 1,139,000 square kilometres: a density 44.7 people per square kilometre. In contrast, in 2019 Great Britain (without Northern Ireland) had a population of about 65,187,333 people in an island of about 209,331 square kilometres: a density of 311.4 people per square kilometre. That meant that the population density of Great Britain was 5.4 times greater than that of Colombia. Or, to put it another way, if Great Britain had a population density as low as Colombia's, its population would be only 9,357,096 - and that would be less than its population in 1800!

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These figures show clearly that if there is one problem that Colombia does *not* have, it is that of over-population. On the contrary: in order to develop its economy and to make use of all its natural resources, Colombia will need a very much larger population - perhaps several times larger - than it has now. In order to maintain a stable population without resorting to mass immigration, a country requires an average fertility-rate per woman of 2.1 children: unless, of course, there is a high rate of infant mortality, when the necessary fertility-rate may be much higher. But in Colombia in 2021 the fertility-rate was only 1.764, which was only 0.7% greater than the United Kingdom's figure of 1.752. The Trustees consider that the ongoing collapse in Colombia's fertility-rate ought to be a matter of the gravest concern, and certainly is not to be welcomed or applauded.

To use the word "collapse" in this context is no exaggeration. In 1960, Colombia's average fertility-rate per woman was 6.74 children: but by 2019 it had fallen to only 1.79 - a decrease of 4.95 (73.4%). By contrast, in the United Kingdom the decline in this period was much less dramatic, from 2.69 in 1960 to 1.65 in 2019 - a decrease of 1.04 (38.7%). The United Kingdom's fertility-rate reached its all-time high in 1825, when it was 5.52; and it did not reach 1.74 until the year 2000. It therefore took the United Kingdom 175 years to experience a fall of 73.8%, whereas Colombia has experienced a very similar fall in only 59 years - about 3 times as fast.

In 2013 the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) issued a report entitled *Colombia's Ageing Future*. It stated, " At its peak in 2012, people under age 20 accounted for 37% of the population. But this percentage is projected to decline, and the largest cohort of Colombians has already been born, around 2007. The year 2030 will mark the end of the youth society in Colombia: young people will no longer be the largest demographic group. A large wave is moving through Colombia's population age structure as the large cohorts born when high fertility was the norm advance through their life cycle and move from youth to adulthood to old age. The size of the working age groups will peak in 2033 for ages 20-39 and in 2056 for ages 40-59. The population of older persons will increase rapidly throughout this century reaching a peak in 2090 at around 20 million people and then begin to decline gradually as the large birth cohorts of the early 21st century are replaced by successively smaller ones."

And the report warned, "Colombia is expected to become an aged economy in 2034. In that year, for the first time in the history of the country, older persons will consume more (of all goods and services, both public and private) than youth.... This will put pressure on governments, as many of these programs are provided by the public sector, and rely on families caring for older family members."

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Moreover, the catastrophic collapse in the birth-rate in Europe and the United States is being compensated for there by immigration policies that are depriving developing countries like Colombia of many of their brightest and most enterprising young people - or, in other words, of their most precious resource. This applies particularly to the recruitment of young doctors and nurses from these countries.

By offering these young immigrants easy access to benefits and unlimited leave to remain - and even granting them citizenship - the immigrant-*consuming* countries increase the probability that these young people will put down roots and fail to return to their countries of origin. Such policies are attractive to the host governments because they allow them to stave off the introduction of far-sighted but controversial policies that are pro-natalist, pro-motherhood and pro-family, such as those that are being implemented in Hungary and Poland.

And, of course, the short-sighted and antiquated anti-natalist policies that are still being pursued in most other developed countries - accompanied by the constant propagation of the myth of over-population - are strongly supported by big business because they favour their vested interests by helping to keep wages down; by keeping plenty of women in the workforce without the need for maternity leave; and by reducing the need to recruit, transport and train new temporary immigrants to replace other temporary immigrants who have had to go home when their visas expired.

However, immigrant-*providing* countries like Colombia will suffer from these policies because they will impede development; will increase still further the risk of the isolation and neglect of the elderly there; and will add to the pressures on their governments and on family members who have remained in their countries of origin. In future years such reckless encouragement by the apparently “liberal” and “enlightened” governments of developed countries of emigration from countries like Colombia may therefore come to be regarded as a form of self-indulgent exploitation that was as damaging in its social impact as the worst excesses of plunder committed in colonial days.

Moreover, no matter how ardently developed countries may promote multiculturalism and diversity within their own borders, in their *foreign* policy they tend to be imperialistically high-handed in their attempts to impose - in hypocritical pursuit of their own interests - their own liberal, post-modern, secular values on the more traditional and religious cultures of the developing countries. However, it is also noticeable that these countries tend to be much more muted and nuanced in their insistence on their concept of the rights of women, homosexuals

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and transexuals in their relations with traditionally *Muslim* countries such as Saudi Arabia than in those with traditionally *Catholic* countries like Colombia. This double-standard treatment has not escaped notice in Colombia.

As their very names proclaim, both **Let The Children Live!** and **Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños!** are staunchly pro-life organisations, firmly committed to the protection of the lives and well-being of children from the moment of their conception until the time of their natural death. The Trustees therefore view with the greatest regret the way in which Colombia has succumbed to the anti-natalist pressure of the international pro-abortion and pro-euthanasia lobbies. Unfortunately, the lack of clear leadership from Rome during the present Pontificate has given the local Catholic Bishops little encouragement to make more determined and better-organised attempts to galvanise their faithful into active opposition to the measures promoted by these lobbies.

In the Christian moral tradition, certain acts - including abortion, euthanasia and suicide - are considered to be *intrinsically wrong* in all cases, and can never be morally justifiable under *any* circumstances. This teaching received its clearest modern expression in St John Paul II's great Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* (1993). No matter how superficially attractive, benign or advantageous they may appear, it can never really be in a person's true interest to commit, participate in, consent to, or be the subject of, acts that are *intrinsically wrong*.

However, the Christian moral tradition firmly rejects the idea that the end justifies the means, it does accept the validity of the *Principle of Double Effect*, which takes into account the *intention* with which an act is performed. According to this principle, an act that is good - or at least morally neutral - in itself may be justified even if it has a foreseeable but undesired side-effect that it would be intrinsically wrong to cause deliberately. In such cases, every effort must be made to prevent the undesired side-effect; and the good effect must be at least equivalent in proportion to the bad effect.

For example, when an ectopic pregnancy places the lives of both a mother and her unborn child in grave danger, it would be justifiable to remove the fallopian tube in order to save the mother even if - as a wholly undesired side-effect - this is also likely to result in the death of the child: but every effort must be made to try to save the child, too - perhaps by re-implantation in the womb, if that is possible. Similarly, in some cases palliative treatment that is intended to reduce the suffering of a patient may be justifiable even if - as an undesired side-effect - it is also likely to hasten his death. But it is never licit to seek to kill an unborn child or a patient *deliberately*.

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Both **Let The Children Live!** and **Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños!** fully accept these moral principles, and endeavour to fashion and operate their policies in accordance with them. This is made clear to the charities' benefactors, and is endorsed by them by their continuing support. But vital though these principles are, the two charities also have very grave concerns on *prudential* grounds about the dangers posed to the lives or well-being of children in Colombia by a series of decisions by its Constitutional Court. The Trustees believe that these prudential arguments ought to carry weight even with those who do not share the charities' moral principles.

The current Colombian Constitution, adopted in 1991 after endorsement by a referendum, recognises *life* as a fundamental right (Article 11), and cites it as one of the founding principles in the constitutional preamble; and Article 2 recognises the "primacy and inviolability of life", excluding any possibility for abortion, and allowing the legislator to penalise such acts.

Rejecting a challenge to these Articles in 1994, the Constitutional Court confirmed that "the life of the unborn embodies a fundamental value, for the hope of its existence as a person, and its apparent helplessness requires special attention from the State." Thus Colombia's pro-life legislation was constitutional under the State's obligation to protect the life of "all persons", which "obviously" protected life during its formation and development, given that these stages were condition for the viability of birth, the origin of the legal existence of a person. In addition, the Court held that although the Constitution gives couples the right to decide their number of children, this right could only be exercised *prior* to conception, since conception creates a being who is existentially distinct from the mother.

In spite of this, on 21st February 2022 the Constitutional Court ruled to decriminalise voluntary abortion in all circumstances during the first 24 weeks of pregnancy. Abortions even after that stage are permitted in cases of risk of death to the mother, fetal malformation, or rape. This means that, in the whole of the western hemisphere, only Canada has abortion laws that are more liberal than those in Colombia.

The judicial activism of the present members of the Constitutional Court has therefore now circumvented the explicitly expressed will of the Colombian people in a decision that was even more tragic and unprincipled than that of the United States Supreme Court in their *Roe v Wade* decision of 1973. Happily, *that* decision was itself overturned on 24th June 2022; and this encourages the hope that a similar reversal may eventually take place in Colombia: but many, many innocent lives will undoubtedly be lost in the meanwhile.

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In the prevailing climate, it is also possible that Medellín's slum-clearance policies are also being influenced to some extent by anti-natalist attitudes. Perhaps this may help to explain why the authorities in Colombia are continuing to display such a blithe disregard to the lessons taught by the very negative social consequences of some of Britain's more misguided post-war slum-clearance schemes.

In Medellín, the support networks of tightly-knit slum communities and extended families in *barrrios* like *La Isla* - where some of **Funvini's** children live - are being broken up by the rehousing of their inhabitants in very small, poorly-built, inadequately-ventilated, high-rise flats in completely different parts of the city. Such cramped conditions make it difficult for families to accommodate elderly grandparents or more than one or two children. In any case, many of these high-rise flats are unsuitable for children because parents either have to keep their youngsters cooped up inside, or else allow them to go out to play unsupervised down in the street.

Colombia's Constitutional Court has also succumbed to the temptation to engage in judicial activism on the issue of euthanasia. On 11th May 2022 the Court decided to decriminalise assisted suicide by patients, in the presence of a doctor, if they are suffering from serious but non-terminal conditions. In 1997 a decision by the Court had made Colombia the first country in Latin America to decriminalise euthanasia if performed by a doctor at the request of patients or their families. Its latest ruling now makes Colombia only the fourth country in the world - after Belgium, Canada and the Netherlands - to permit assisted suicide.

In accordance with their pro-life principles, **Let The Children Live!** and **Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños!** remain firmly opposed to the ending by artificial means of children's lives under any circumstances. They are therefore deeply concerned that the Constitutional Court seems to be well set on a slippery slope that is likely to end before long in the legalisation of the euthanasia - or even the assisted suicide - of children.

The charities have noted with alarm the way in which judges in the United Kingdom are tending to side with medical experts against the wishes of the parents of terminally-ill or apparently brain-dead children, even to the point of denying the parents permission to accept offers of further treatment abroad, or to take their children to spend their last days in a specialised hospice. They do not believe that the wishes of desperate parents should be routinely over-ruled in these extreme and distressing cases. They therefore urge the government of the United Kingdom to pass legislation to require judges to presume that *any* medical option that offers parents

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some hope of saving their children's lives - short of their *indefinite* prolongation by artificial means after they have been certified to be brain-dead - would normally be in the children's best interests.

The Trustees fear that these tragic cases in the United Kingdom are likely to be being followed with keen interest by the members of the Colombian Constitutional Court. In a country in which corruption and intimidation are so rife, and in which criminal acts up to and including murder are so frequently committed with impunity, the risk of the abuse of euthanasia and assisted suicide is obviously enormous. And it is even greater yet in the case of children, particularly if financial interests are involved.

Medellín is a major centre for organ transplants, and Colombia has experienced scandals relating to organ-trading and organ harvesting. It does not require much effort to imagine the sorts of inducements or intimidation to which doctors or parents might be subjected in order to hasten the availability of the organs of a gravely injured - but otherwise healthy - child. And if doctors in the United Kingdom are required to take the costs of treatment into consideration, the pressure is likely to be much greater on doctors in Colombia's much less well-resourced health system to hasten the end of a seriously ill child.

Similarly, if procedures such as the *Liverpool Care Pathway* allow even *water* to be withdrawn from dying patients, and "Do Not Resuscitate" orders to be enforced against the wishes of patients or their families, the risk of the abuse of such measures is even greater in Colombia where **Funvini** has repeatedly had to help parents to obtain *tutelas* (judicial injunctions) to force the health service to authorise routine procedures for their children; and where most parents are even less well-equipped to prevent overbearing doctors from blinding them with science.

The Colombian Constitutional Court court has a well-established track-record both of giving the widest and most liberal interpretation possible to the constitutional right to the "free expression of the personality" (Article 16), and of imposing their implementation by third parties such as employers, schools and charities in an equally restrictive and illiberal manner. The charities are therefore concerned about the possible consequences if the Court decides to extend its forays into the delicate and controversial area of transgender issues.

On 28th July 2022 a highly critical review led by Dr Hilary Cass into the treatment of extremely vulnerable children at the Tavistock Child Gender Identity Clinic in London forced the National Health Service to take steps to close the clinic. According to an article published in *The Spectator* on the day the impending closure

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was announced, this decision was only taken after repeated attempts by well-informed whistleblowers to draw attention to possible cases of mistreatment by doctrinaire medical personnel had been dismissed as being motivated by mere “transphobia”. Even concerns expressed by the Care Quality Commission and the High Court were disregarded.

According to the article, the Clinic “is being dismantled because over several years it administered potentially life-changing treatments to often vulnerable children, sometimes involving drugs whose effects it did not understand and often without adequate record-keeping to track the welfare of those children.” Moreover, on 11th August 2022 iNews reported that the Clinic was facing mass legal action after children were prescribed puberty blockers there. The article stated that “Lawyers say up to 1,000 patients could join the litigation, with claims that former patients are facing ‘physical and psychological permanent scarring’.”

Dr Cass herself wrote, “As already highlighted in my interim report, the most significant knowledge gaps are in relation to treatment with puberty blockers, and the lack of clarity about whether the rationale for prescription is as an initial part of a transition pathway or as a ‘pause’ to allow more time for decision making...

We do not fully understand the role of adolescent sex hormones in driving the development of both sexuality and gender identity through the early teen years, so by extension we cannot be sure about the impact of stopping these hormone surges on psychosexual and gender maturation. We therefore have no way of knowing whether, rather than buying time to make a decision, puberty blockers may disrupt that decision-making process.”

In other words, puberty blockers might have had precisely the opposite effect to the one that was so strenuously claimed. And Dr Cass added, “A further concern is that adolescent sex hormone surges may trigger the opening of a critical period for experience-dependent rewiring of neural circuits underlying executive function (i.e. maturation of the part of the brain concerned with planning, decision making and judgement). If this is the case, brain maturation may be temporarily or permanently disrupted by puberty blockers, which could have significant impact on the ability to make complex risk-laden decisions, as well as possible longer-term neuropsychological consequences. To date, there has been very limited research on the short-, medium- or longer-term impact of puberty blockers on neurocognitive development.”

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This means that the drugs that were being given to some children at the Clinic may have disrupted their brain development and have left them less able to make complex decisions. Those drugs may therefore prove to have harmful long-term consequences for the mental functioning of the children who receive them.

If all this was possible even in the *United Kingdom*, the Trustees dread to think what horrors may ensue in *Colombia* if the Constitutional Court were to decide to give free rein to activist doctors to engage in such treatments over there. Moreover, it is highly likely that such decisions would result in the imposition of legal obligations on charities like **Funvini** to affirm unquestioningly the immature and ill-informed transgender caprices of young children and adolescents, in violation both of their own Christian convictions and those of the children's parents.

In Colombia, many drugs that officially require a doctor's prescription are, in fact, freely available for sale over the counter. There is also a lively black-market trade in counterfeit medicaments, so it is easy to imagine the danger of the sale of fake puberty-blockers directly to children by unscrupulous pavement pedlars operating near schools - or even by unscrupulous teachers or fellow pupils *within* the schools themselves. This has already happened with other illegal drugs.

Dr Cass's review has highlighted the fact that even the most dedicated and highly-qualified medical experts are by no means *infallible*; and that they are just as prone to getting dangerous bees in their bonnets as the members of any other profession. Of course, doctors need to have the freedom to make life and death decisions in certain circumstances: but in this they need to be guided by clear moral principles.

In a truly democratic state, it might well be best if these principles were to be established not by unelected judges, nor even by elected politicians, but by the *people themselves* in a referendum on a motion with unambiguous wording to amend the Constitution. And once adopted, any further reinterpretation of that Article proposed by the Constitutional Court should itself be subject to confirmation or rejection by the people in a further referendum. However, in Colombia - as elsewhere - politicians have proved to be adept at circumventing even the clear outcome of a referendum if that result is not to their liking.

In view both of their moral principles and of all these prudential concerns, both **Let The Children Live!** and **Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños!** will continue to do all in their power to protect vulnerable children from the insidious influence and the strident demands of the pro-abortion, pro-euthanasia and pro-transgender lobbies. As the British charity's Solicitor has confirmed, these views are *not* extremist: they are

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perfectly moderate and legitimate expressions of deeply-held and rationally justifiable convictions that are *not anti-anyone*, or anything-*phobic*. Like those of their benefactors, they are just *pro-Christian*, *pro-life* and *pro-children*. Any attempt to impose any other interpretation on the contents of this Report would constitute a misunderstanding of the Trustees' intentions, and a wilful misrepresentation of their views.

According to the *End of Childhood Index*, a statistical survey of 180 countries published by Save The Children in its *Global Children Report 2021*, Colombia ranked 132nd in terms of the best places in which to be a child. The United Kingdom was ranked 28th.

On the other hand, on 11th July 2022 *Time Out* published an article in which Medellín was ranked *third* in its list of *The 53 Best Cities in the World in 2022*. Medellín was only beaten by Edinburgh and Chicago. The article explained, "Every year, we quiz thousands of city-dwellers worldwide about life in their hometown right now. We want to know about the restaurant scene and the bar circuit. The theatre and the art galleries. The nightlife and the dating apps. What the neighbours are like and which neighbourhoods are actually cool. The idea is to create a global snapshot of city living, and point people in the direction of the places locals are really raving about."

Evidently, the survey that produced this very upbeat assessment of life in Medellín was only responded to by those fortunate few of its inhabitants who had the money to be involved in "the restaurant scene and the bar circuit" as customers rather than as waiters, cooks, washers-up or cleaners. The article is also unlikely to have reflected the views of the children who fell victim to sexual exploitation as a consequence of the city's "nightlife and the dating apps".

However, Medellín's annual Quality of Life Report *Medellín Cómo Vamos 2021* painted a much less rosey picture of the city than *Time Out*, based on more than 500 indicators, mostly taken from official sources. Luis Fernando Agudelo Henao, the Director of the Report, stated that it showed that since "the pandemic, the highest levels of poverty in the last decade were recorded. Although Medellín is not the city in Colombia with the most poverty, it is the one that has reduced it least after the pandemic." By the end of 2021 there had been a reduction of only 5.3 percentage points in the number of the city's inhabitants who were living in poverty (27.6%) compared to the 32.9% who were in that condition at the end of the lockdowns in 2020. These figures were the highest since 2013 (26%), and showed that all the ground gained in the intervening years had been lost.

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Similarly, the number of people living in *extreme* poverty (5.1% of the city's population) was only 4 percentage points lower than it had been at the end of the lockdowns in 2020; and it was still higher than in any year since 2012. Nine years of progress had been lost.

Inevitably, this decline has had the most severe impact on the most vulnerable members of the city's population. The number of babies whose birth weight in 2021 showed that they were malnourished was 11.2% - the highest percentage since 2014, when it had been 10.2%. The city's Health Secretariat estimated that 7.8% of the under six-year-olds in Medellín were chronically malnourished; and that 25% of them were at risk becoming so. And according to an article published in *El País* on 12th August 2022, by that date at least 166 children aged under five had died from malnutrition in 2022.

According to the last report for 2021 of Colombia's National Administrative Department for Statistics (DANE), the number of minors working in activities that are considered to endanger their physical or mental health decreased in 2021 from 5% of those aged under 18 to 4.8%. However, that meant that more than 500,000 children in Colombia were *still* involved in such activities; and some of the children helped by **Funvini** were amongst this number.

In 2020 a total of 53,903 cases of violence against children were reported to the authorities. However, **Funvini** suspects that many more cases were left unreported. Of the reported cases, 25,105 (46.6%) involved sexual violence; 15,801 (29.3%) involved negligence or abandonment; 11,077 (20.5%) involved physical violence; 1,860 (3.5%) involved psychological violence; and in 60 cases (0.1%) the type of violence was not specified.

The great majority of these victims (68.7%) were girls. In spite of - or perhaps even partly because of - the ready availability of inexpensive contraceptives, in 2020-21 there was an increase of 19.4% in cases of pregnancy amongst girls under the age of 14. Although causing such pregnancies is a criminal offence in Colombia, the Attorney General's Office reported that only 2% of such cases result in the conviction of the father.

It may appear paradoxical to suggest that the normalisation of the use of artificial contraception may actually be *contributing* to the rise in under-age pregnancies. However, in **Funvini**'s experience, the relaxed social mores this normalisation has encouraged have greatly increased the pressures on young girls to engage in sexual activity. And boys and men who have become accustomed to have consequence-less

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sexual relations whenever they have the opportunity are unlikely to exercise self-restraint if they do not happen to have a contraceptive with them at the time.

These relaxed social mores have also served to undermine the institution of marriage. According to a report in 2016 based on a study in 49 countries around the world by the Child Trends and Social Trends Institute, 84% of Colombian children were being born outside wedlock. This was the highest rate in South America. Conversely, among the countries included in the report, Colombia was the country that has the lowest percentage of adults of reproductive age (18-49 years) who were married (20%), and the highest who were cohabiting (35%).

These last figures were based on Colombian statistics from 2010, and included both Church and civil marriages. However, since then the situation has deteriorated dramatically still further. In 2010 the authorities reported that 131,447 civil marriages had taken place that year; in 2011 the number fell to 79,636; and in 2012 it fell to a mere 38,073. This meant that between 2010 and 2012 the number of new civil marriages had fallen by 71% - and this was certainly not because more couples were opting for Church marriages instead. And then in 2013 *The Economist* reported that Colombia's 2012 marriage rate of only 1.7 per 1,000 inhabitants had been the lowest in the whole world.

Unfortunately for Colombia's children, there is no sign that this collapse in the number of marriages is being reversed. According to Article 44 of the Constitution, "the rights of children prevail over those of everyone else", but most Colombian children are denied the right to live in a stable, low-conflict family with both biological parents under the same roof, although, according to the social scientific consensus, this is the single factor most conducive to their flourishing economically, educationally and socially.

Although it has been subjected to some challenges, this consensus has been well-established for many years. As Princeton University sociology professor Sara McClanahan said in her book *Growing Up with A Single Parent* (1992), "Children who grow up in a household with only one biological parent are worse off, on average, than children who grow up in a household with both of their biological parents, regardless of the parents' race or educational background." Many other scholars have subsequently come to similar conclusions, from Paul Amato at Penn State to Isabel Sawhill at the Brookings Institution to Melanie Wasserman at UCLA.

There are multiple indicators of the benefits of marriage for children. According to the U.S. Census, the poverty rate for single parents with children in the United States

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in 2009 was 37.1%, whereas the rate for married couples with children was only 6.8%. Rector called marriage one of the greatest weapons against child poverty. A study by Ginther and Pollack found that children growing up in the United States in traditional nuclear families were more likely to graduate from high school and complete college compared to those who were raised in blended or single-parent homes. Manning and Lamb found that adolescents in intact families had higher levels of academic achievement and were less likely to exhibit problem behaviours in school compared to peers living in homes where single mothers lived alone or with a cohabiting partner. The list just goes on and on.

A longitudinal study published in 2009 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that the quality of the parents' marriage had as much influence on the child's future mental and physical health and well-being as their own relationship with either parent. Children are nourished not only by the love their parents have for them, but also by the love that their parents have for each other.

Unfortunately, only a tiny minority of the children cared for by **Funvini** benefit from the advantages of a stable and non-conflictual marital home. The overwhelming majority were born outside wedlock and live with their mothers, often accompanied by the mother's current *novio* (boy-friend), and with little - if any - contact with, or support from, their biological fathers. In such families, skills in verbal communication and the articulation of emotions tend to be limited, and anger and stress tend to express themselves in violence. Instances of physical and sexual abuse by the "stepfathers" are rife. Criminal gangs sometimes serve as substitute families for youngsters who can no longer tolerate life at home.

A study of 177 of **Funvini**'s children conducted in 2022 showed that only *one* of these children - a chorister - was currently living with parents who had been married in Church. The parents of three other choristers had been married in Church, but were not currently living together. The parents of four of the Venezuelan children had had civil weddings. Only 38 of the children lived with both parents, whether married or not. A total of 96 children lived in households with adults who were in unmarried relationships; 73 of the children were being brought up by their mothers alone; and just two by the father alone. A "stepfather" figure was living with the mothers of 42 of the children; and a "stepmother" was living with the fathers of 6 children. A total of 30 children were living with grandparents or other members of their extended families.

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In comparison with the census of 2005, the census of 2018 shows an increase from 29.9% to 40.7% in the proportion of Colombian homes headed by a woman, who is usually the mother. Most such single mothers strive to do the best they can in very difficult circumstances. They are not only the main bread-winners but also have to assume the main responsibility for running their homes and caring for their families. These additional tasks tend to limit the hours that they can work, and the sort of jobs that they can do.

Many of the mothers became pregnant at a young age, and some of them are involved in prostitution. They therefore have little moral authority with which to try to dissuade their daughters from doing the same. This leaves them ill-placed to teach their children about the value of modesty, virginity, chastity and fidelity. Indeed, in some cases it was the *mother herself* who inducted her daughter into prostitution. One thirteen-year-old girl who turned to **Funvini** for help had been rebuked by her mother for refusing to accept an expensive cellphone from an adult gang-leader as an inducement to become his live-in girlfriend. Apparently, the mother hoped that if her daughter accepted this offer, the gang-leader would soon give her a house.

In the case of the boys, they mostly lack satisfactory role-models to help them learn how to behave as a man, a husband or a father. They are rarely taught to prepare themselves for the responsibilities of marriage, or about the inseparable bond that ought to exist between the unitive and procreative aspects of matrimony. On the contrary, all too often they become perpetual adolescents, unwilling or unable to make and fulfil long-lasting commitments; and alienated from the values of their religion, their culture and their society. This is probably reflected in the increase in the proportion of single-occupant homes, which increased from 11.1% in 2005 to 18.5% in 2018.

Moreover, the boys not infrequently become resentful of maternal authority, which they interpret as nagging; and they react by becoming violent towards their mothers, their girlfriends or their children. One of **Funvini**'s main objectives is to try to break the cycle in which an abused or abandoned child grows up to be an abusive or abandoning adult.

Funvini seeks to prepare some of its youngsters to assume leadership roles in their local communities, to equip them to resist what St John Paul called the "culture of death", and what Pope Benedict XVI referred to as "the tyranny of relativism". However, one of the greatest challenges it faces is recruiting staff who are themselves living in accordance with these principles, and who are able to share them with cheerful conviction

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Unfortunately, only a small proportion of **Funvini**'s employees who are parents are also married; and those who are married are all male. This means that even when the children are taking part in the charity's activities, they very rarely come into contact with a married woman. This makes it more difficult for them to learn to consider marriage as normal, and as a state to which they should aspire. This is a subject that has to be handled with great delicacy because nothing will be achieved if the children gain the impression that their parents or families are being criticised.

Funvini arranges several *talleres* (workshops) each year for the children's parents. These are designed to provide them with a forum in which common problems can be discussed, and at which classes can be given about such matters as parenting skills and budgeting. Those who are in particular difficulty can receive support in private from the charity's social-workers and psychologists; and those with legal problems can be referred to its lawyers.

Having surmounted the hazards of the Covid lockdowns, when so many of the children's parents had no income - and acquired debts - because they were not allowed to work, **Funvini**'s families are now being faced with the challenge of rampant inflation. By July 2022 consumer prices had risen by 10.21% from a year earlier: but the official figure for the poorest consumers was 11.9%. These figures were the highest for 26 years, and were 0.81% higher than the previous month. Electricity prices rose by 22.5% from a year earlier, while milk rose by 8.2% and beef rose 27.2%. According to the site *tradingeconomics.com*, food prices in general in Colombia were 24.6% higher at the end of July 2022 than they had been twelve months previously. At the end of the month, the *Banco de la Republica*, Colombia's central bank, raised its key interest rate to 9%.

The cost of Colombia's imports has increased because of a fall in the value of the peso against the U.S. dollar. On 20th August 2021 the peso had been worth US\$000258493 (mid-market rate): but on the same date in 2022 it had fallen by 11/5% to US\$000228773. On 20th August 2021 the pound had been worth Col\$5,272.64; and a year later it had fallen by 1.9% to Col\$5,170.33. In the meanwhile, however, it had fluctuated from a high of Col\$5,521.36 on 5th January 2022 to a low of Col\$4,705.27 on 5th June 2022 - a difference of 14.8%.

A factor that has contributed to the instability of the Colombian peso has been uncertainty first about the outcome - and subsequently about the consequences - of the Presidential Election on 29th May 2022. The outgoing government of President Ivan Duque was not considered to have been very successful in its management of the Covid crisis or the economy, and there were increasing signs of social unrest.

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On 28th February 2021 a series of coordinated protests began in most of Colombia's principal cities. These were triggered by the announcement of a long-overdue reform in the country's tax-system. The protests were sometimes very violent; and they sometimes provoked a violent reaction from the authorities and from armed groups and individuals. National highways were blocked, and some towns were virtually in a state of siege, with vital supplies, including the Covid vaccines, being prevented from passing. There were deaths and serious injuries on both sides.

An article in *Semana* on 17th July 2021 reported that the authorities had clear evidence to show that *Primera Linea* (the Front Line) the young leaders of the disturbances, had links with dissident factions of the left-wing FARC and ELN guerrillas and other criminal groups who were hiding behind legitimate protesters and fomenting the unrest for their own nefarious purposes.

Although, the worst of the violence was in Bogotá and Cali, riots also occurred in Medellín, and these involved a lot of senseless destruction of public property, such as traffic lights and bus-shelters. On some occasions, the rioters in Medellín sought refuge in the *barrios* to the North of the city-centre in which many of **Funvini's** children live. When the police used tear-gas against the rioters, the gas was often unable to disperse in the narrow streets of these *barrios*, and seeped into the surrounding houses, causing pain and distress to the occupants - particularly to the children.

The children were affected on the occasions when their schools - and *Casa Walsingham* as well - had to close on several occasions as a precautionary measure when further trouble was expected. The income of their families was hit when the disturbances prevented their parents from working, and when the roadblocks led to shortages of essential commodities, and to a consequent rise in prices.

In the elections, President Duque was ineligible to stand again because of Colombia's term-limit rules. There are no significant right-wing parties in Colombia, and the centre parties were divided, whereas the left united around the controversial figure of Gustavo Petro. The election was held in two rounds, with the runoff between the two candidates who had obtained most votes in the first round. These were Gustavo Petro and Rodolfo Hernández. Petro emerged as the victor in the second round with 50.42% of the votes, and has become the first far-left President in Colombia's history. In spite of the enthusiastic support of Medellín's mayor, Petro was decisively defeated by a margin of 30.89% in Antioquia, the Department of which the city is the capital.

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Petro is such a controversial figure because he belonged to the M-19 guerrilla group, which he joined at the age of 17. Second only in size to the notorious FARC guerrillas, the M-19 was responsible for such outrages as the kidnap and murder of the union leader José Raquel Mercado (1976); the siege of the Dominican Republic Embassy in Bogotá (1980), in which 14 Ambassadors were taken hostage; and the siege of the Palace of Justice (1985), in which some 300 lawyers were taken hostage, and more than 100 people - including 11 Justices of the Supreme Court - were killed in the cross-fire when the army stormed the building. It is suspected that M-19 also had links with the Medellín drug cartel. After its demobilisation, the M-19 evolved into a political party called the M-19 Democratic Alliance.

In his campaign, Petro had made many promises of social investment, but scanty details of how these were to be paid for. However, his election has caused alarm because of his friendly links with the regime of Hugo Chávez and Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela, which has effectively wrecked the economy of that petrol-rich country, and caused millions of its citizens to seek refuge in Colombia.

Maduro rode roughshod over the victory of his opponents - by 109 seats to 55 - in the National Assembly elections; and on 4th February 2016 he proclaimed that he would “stop by hook or by crook the opposition coming to power, whatever the costs, in any way.” The British government therefore does not recognise the legitimacy of Maduro’s regime. Although Petro has not given Maduro his unconditional support, neither has he described him as a dictator, or denounced the human rights violations committed by his government. Most of the Venezuelan refugees in Colombia are very critical of Maduro, and they view the possibility of a *rapprochement* between Colombia and the Venezuelan regime with concern because they fear that it could expose them to Maduro’s vengeance.

As a former guerrilla, President Petro does not enjoy the confidence of many of the members of the Colombian armed forces or the police. General Eduardo Zapateiro, the Commandant of the army, resigned in order to avoid having to honour Petro at his inauguration; and shortly afterwards at least 30 other generals followed General Zapateiro’s example. Many Colombians fear that President Petro will try to take Colombia down the Venezuelan path, and that his policies are likely to produce a degree of polarisation that could lead to a serious upsurge in violence - or even plunge the country back into armed conflict. The outlook for Colombia under its new government is therefore decidedly uncertain.

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Sadly, violence is still all too frequent in Colombia. The situation has certainly improved over the last twenty years, and the number of murders in the country has fallen from 69,448 in 2002 to 13,709 in 2021. This was an increase of 13% on the 2020 total. However, in comparison there were 710 recorded homicides in England and Wales in the year ending 31st March 2022. The homicide rate in Colombia has been stable since 2014, with the numbers varying between 24 and 26.1 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. In 2021 it rose to 26.8 per 100,000 inhabitants. In England and Wales in 2021-22 the homicide rate was 1.2 per 100,000 inhabitants.

The very name of **Let The Children Live!** is an anguished cry of protest about the number of children who have fallen to violence in Colombia. When Fr Peter chose Medellín as his base when he went to live in Colombia in 1994, he did so because at that time that was where the violence was worst, and he had lost count of the number of children whom he had known who had been killed in the city; so it seemed to him that the need for the work he was hoping to do was greatest there.

Although Medellín is no longer ranked as one of the world's fifty most dangerous cities, it can still be a very hazardous place in which to grow up for the children of its streets and *barrios populares* (slum neighbourhoods), where criminal gangs called *combos* continue to have great power. The study *Gobierno criminal en Medellín* published by the EAFIT University in October 2020 reported that there were around 350 *combos* in Medellín, most of which were subordinate to one of between 15 and 20 criminal *bandas* that were operating in the city.

The authorities estimate that about 43% of the *Grupos de Delincuencia Organizada* (Organised Crime Groups) in Colombia are based in Medellín, and the degree of their organisation and coordination is greater than that of the criminal gangs in any other Colombian city. This was confirmed by reports that the fact that the highways leading to Medellín were not blocked by the protests was due to the threats that these groups had issued because such blockages would have impeded the circulation of drugs, and so would have reduced their profits.

In an article in *El Tiempo* on 25th April 2021 José Alberto Mojica Patiño reported that between 1st January 2015 and 28th February 2021 a total of 688 children were murdered in Medellín. In contrast, according to the Office of National Statistics, in the whole of England and Wales - with a total population about 26 times greater than that of Medellín - in the eleven years from April 2009 and March 2020 there were 513 homicides of children under the age of 16.

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If the murder rate in England and Wales had been similar to that in Medellín, there would have been 32,604 child victims over the 11 year period. Conversely, if the rate in Medellín had been that of England and Wales, there would only have been about 10 child victims in the city - instead of 688 - over the six year period.

According to the November 2020 Bulletin of the Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal, a total of 511 children were murdered in Colombia in the first eleven months of 2020. Colombia's Child Homicide Rate per 100,000 inhabitants aged 0-19 was 20.6, which meant that it was the third worst in the world, exceeded only by Lesotho (21.9) and Venezuela (25.1). The Child Homicide Rate in the United Kingdom was 0.6. This means that a child in Colombia was 34.3 times more likely to be the victim of homicide than a child in the United Kingdom. In the first four months of 2022 a further 214 minors were murdered in Colombia. That meant that at least one child had been killed every 14 hours.

The authorities claim that in 2021 - for the first time in at least 40 years - no child under the age of 14 was murdered in Medellín. However, 9 youngsters between the ages of 14 and 17 were killed there during the year. In 2019 five young people with connections to **Funvini** were killed: two of these were minors. Fortunately, none of **Funvini's** children have died as a result of violence since then.

Colombia was hit hard by the Corona virus. By the middle of August 2022 there had been more than 6,290,000 cases and more than 141,000 deaths since the pandemic began. In Bogotá, which had had 29.4% of the cases, more than 1,848,000 people have had the virus, and there have been more than 29,000 deaths. Antioquia, the Department of which Medellín is the capital, has been the next-worse affected area, with more than 941,000 cases, and more than 18,000 deaths. None of **Funvini's** children died from the virus, although some of their family members did.

The number of new cases of the virus in Colombia peaked at the end of June 2021, when the seven-day average (SDA) was 31,256. By mid-August the SDA of new cases had fallen to 4,285. Similarly, the SDA of deaths fell from 678 to 154 in the same period. By the middle of August 27% of Colombia's population had been fully vaccinated, and 40.6% had received at least one dose of the vaccine. Colombia was removed from the United Kingdom's Covid Red List on 1st November 2021.

By the middle of August 2022, all of **Funvini's** staff had received 2 anti-Covid vaccinations; all but one had been given 3 doses of the vaccine; and all seven employees who were aged over 50 had had 4 doses. As for the children, 16.4% of **Funvini's** population had received 3 doses; 63.8% had had two doses; 9.6% had had

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only one dose; and 10.2% not had any vaccinations. Of the unvaccinated children, 72.2% had been ineligible because they were still aged under 3, or had had their third birthday only recently; one child claimed to have been vaccinated but had not yet produced his carnet; another child has had a virus which has prevented her vaccination, and the remaining 3 children had only recently entered **Funvini**'s programme, and arrangements were being made for their vaccination.

In compliance with the sanitary protocols it had imposed during the covid crisis, **Funvini** paid for 250 PCR Covid tests for children; one for a young mother; and 200 for members of its staff. Some of these individuals had to be tested on multiple occasions over this time. Fortunately, the results of only four of the children and twenty of the adults were positive: the rest (94.6%) were negative. The tests provided by the Colombian authorities for a further six adults were also positive. None of **Funvini**'s children has tested positive since 24th November 2021; and none of its staff has done so since 15th January 2022.

The total cost of the tests was about £20,000; but the Trustees consider that the remarkably low rate of infection in **Funvini** bears witness to the efficacy of the protocols drawn up by Fr Peter and his team, and to the fidelity with which they were implemented. Fr Peter himself has had two mild bouts of the virus.

The Covid pandemic initially had one positive aspect in Medellín: the lockdowns in 2020 kept people off the streets, and this resulted in a decrease of 216 (38%) in the number of murders in the city that year. However, as the restrictions were lifted, the number of murders began to rise again, and by the end of 2021 there had been 403 killings. This was an increase of 9% in comparison to 2020, but a fall of 33% in comparison to 2019. In the first six months of 2022 a further 192 murders were committed in the city.

Let The Children Live! receives the support of all sorts of people of good will. Most of them are Christians of one kind or another, but some are of different religious persuasions. The Trustees are most grateful for the spiritual support of all the individuals and groups who prayed for the children in response to the charity's intercession list.

Unlike **Let The Children Live!**, **Funvini** is an explicitly Roman Catholic organisation. Although it certainly does not exclude non-Catholics, and it provides its services on the basis of need rather than creed, the great majority of its children - in common with the majority of the population of Medellín in general - are Catholics. **Funvini** considers that enabling them to participate in the sacramental life of the

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Church is a very important and integral part of the charity's work. It therefore provides Catechism classes for those who wish to be prepared for the Sacraments, and who for one reason or another are not able to attend catechism classes in their own parishes.

In 2020, 22 such children were being prepared for their First Communion when the pandemic began; but 10 of them were unable to continue, either because they left Medellín, or because the lack of an adequate internet signal prevented them from participating in virtual catechesis classes. Six of the remaining candidates made their First Communion on Christmas Day 2021; and the other six did so at the Easter Vigil Mass in 2022. Both of these Masses were celebrated in the Chapel of *Casa Walsingham*. Normal catechism classes have now been resumed at *Casa Walsingham*, and it is expected that 14 children will be ready to make their First Communion at Christmas 2022.

A total of 180 families (115 Colombian and 65 Venezuelan) families received help from **Funvini** in 2021. By the middle of August 2022, the total for the present year had reached 140 families (75 Colombia and 65 Venezuelan). The number of children who regularly took part in **Funvini**'s programmes in 2021 was 180: but an additional 154 children participated on an occasional basis: and a further 256 children - most of whom were younger brothers or sisters of who were involved in **Funvini**'s programmes - benefitted from the food-parcels **Funvini** gave to their families. The fluctuations in the numbers of the children was mostly due to the fact the Venezuelan refugee population in Medellín was - and still is - very unstable because families tend to move from *barrio* to *barrio*, and from city to city, as they attempt to find a better place in which to live, and a better way with which to try to scratch a living.

Thirty young adults who were former members of **Funvini**'s programmes also benefitted from the food-parcels in 2021; as did 430 of the children's adult family members. Obviously, the welfare of the children depended heavily on that of the adults in whose care they were, and the children could not be prevented from sharing the food-parcels with them. The total number of beneficiaries in 2021 was therefore 590 children and 460 adults.

As in previous years, the children were graded by a "traffic light" system, according to their characteristics and their perceived degree of deprivation and vulnerability, according to various criteria. In the red category of greatest need or danger were 159 children; there were 76 in the amber category; and 113 in the green category. Some children were re-categorised during the course of the year in response to changes in their situation. It is important to understand that *all* of the children were deprived and

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at high social risk. The “traffic light” system was only indicative of the relative *degree* of their deprivation and risk. It has proved useful in prioritising the use of **Funvini**’s limited resources to benefit most the children whose need or danger is considered to be greatest.

In August 2022, the number of children regularly taking part in **Funvini**’s programmes was 177; an additional 32 children were participating occasionally. Of this population, 53% were Colombian and 47% were Venezuelan. A further 178 younger children were benefitting from food-parcels. In total, 387 children were therefore being helped.

In the course of 2021, the charity assisted 147 boys and girls to receive various types of medical attention. These included vaccinations against influenza for 127 children; and 18 of its staff were also vaccinated. **Funvini** has arranged to provide the current vaccine for 133 children and 29 staff in September 2022. These vaccinations are particularly necessary in Medellín because the high level of pollution in the air in the city causes many respiratory problems amongst the children, and a bad bout of influenza could seriously aggravate these. The authorities declared an amber alert about the air quality in Medellín on 2nd March 2021 and a yellow alert on 7th February 2022. On each occasion, emergency measures had to be taken to try to reduce the smog by which the inhabitants were threatened.

Additionally, **Funvini** paid insurance policies to provide a total of 223 children with accident and emergency health cover for all or part of the year. The policy covered 173 children at any one time, but the departure of some children - when they entered other institutions, moved to distant *barrios*, or left the city altogether - meant that their places could then be assigned to new arrivals.

In accordance with its Catholic principles - and, indeed, with its very name - **Funvini** fully shares the commitment of **Let The Children Live!** to safeguard the lives of children from the time of their conception onwards. When young girls belonging to any of its programmes become pregnant - or other pregnant teenagers turn to it for help - **Funvini** therefore does all it can to provide care for them and their babies both before and after the birth.

The charity ensures that these girls are given the necessary medical checks; it gives them basic training in child care; and it helps with supplies of food, nappies and other essentials. **Funvini** also encourages the girls to continue with their education; and it gives them the chance to meet together regularly for recreation and mutual support. In 2021 the beneficiaries of the St Maria Goretti group included 26 of these young

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mothers and their babies. All of these girls were aged under 18, and the youngest was only 13 when she joined the group, although she was 14 by the time her baby was born. Two other babies were born to members of the group in the course of the year.

With **Funvini**'s help, all but one of these girls were enabled to continue with their secondary schooling, or to begin vocational training. The girl who could not go to school was a Venezuelan refugee who joined the group in the final quarter of the year, and had not yet been able to obtain the Colombian documents required for matriculation. Four of the girls belonged to **Funvini**'s School Project. Of these, two completed their *Bachillerato* (High School Diploma), in 2021, and another is hoping to do so in December 2022. One of the girls who graduated in 2021 had sought **Funvini**'s help when she became pregnant at the age of 11, and she has belonged to the St Maria Goretti group ever since. Her son was born shortly after her own twelfth birthday, and her graduation took place on his fifth birthday. **Funvini** is currently paying for her training as a beautician. She now has a real chance of building a decent future for herself and her son.

In addition to the members of the St Maria Goretti group, **Funvini** helped to matriculate, or re-matriculate, a total of 163 children in local schools in 2021. In order to keep their school places, pupils in Colombia have to be re-matriculated every year. With support from **Funvini**'s teachers 140 (85.9%) of these children completed the year successfully, and were promoted to the next grade. In view of the characteristics of this population, this was a good result. Although 23 (14.1%) of the children were unsuccessful, it is encouraging to note that none of these gave up going to school altogether.

However, **Funvini**'s staff have reported that they are concerned at the way in which many of the teachers in the local schools are continuing to overload their pupils with homework whilst managing to teach them very little in class. In English and mathematics, for example, many children gain promotion to the next grade year after year without having mastered even the present tense of the verb *to be*, or the basic principles of multiplication and division. Similarly, many of the pupils in higher grades have not become fluent in reading, and actually have a deep aversion to reading. **Funvini** is therefore engaged in a constant battle to try to remedy these defects, and to change this attitude.

In 2021 **Funvini** continued to pay for a specialist teacher - who is also a psychologist and who was aided by another paid teacher - to help a further 42 children in the *Sala VIP* at *Casa Walsingham*. All these children had special educational needs, but with this extra support, 37 (88%) completed the year successfully and were promoted to

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the next grade. Without this help it is unlikely that *any* of them would have done so. A further two children also attended the *Sala VIP*, but they returned to Venezuela without completing the year.

All 277 youngsters who belonged to **Funvini**'s programmes in December 2021 were given presents of toys, clothing and sweets by the charity over the Christmas period. An additional 40 children who came along in the hope of presents were not sent away disappointed. In many cases, these were the only presents the children received, so it is easy to imagine how much excitement and pleasure they generated. Once again, all of the funds needed to fund the festivities and to buy the presents were raised in Scotland by Mr George McAleenan. The Trustees are most grateful for this.

Many of **Funvini**'s beneficiaries reach the age of 18 before they have completed their secondary education, and would stand little chance of finding honest employment if they were forced to leave school and go out looking for work without any qualifications. In 2021 six such young adults received support from **Funvini**'s *Extension* group to enable them to continue with their vocational training or their courses at university.

At the end of the year, one of the girls, a former chorister, gained a degree in healthcare administration. Two boys, who were also at university, completed their courses, one in law, and the other in international commerce. However their graduation ceremonies did not take place until 2022. Two other boys continued their vocational training in sport technology and cooking, respectively. And the sixth young adult successfully completed his secondary education. He is currently in his second term at university, reading zootechnics.

Former pupils of **Funvini** who have been to university also include a psychologist, a doctor, an industrial engineer, a hospital manager, a business manager, a musician and a computer engineer. They all came from families with very restricted means, and it is unlikely that any of them would have been able to fulfil their potential without **Funvini**'s help.

For some years *Casa Bannatyne* has served as the base of **Funvini**'s choir, *Cor Videns*. This was formed in 2004 in the hope that it would develop into a first-class children's choir which would give the city's invisible, forgotten children, whose cries so often go unheeded, a voice that would eventually be heard around the world. Although it was originally a mixed group, the choir is now only for boys because there are plenty of other choirs that are either mixed or only for girls.

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The name *Cor Videns* - the Seeing Heart Choir - was inspired by a passage by Pope Benedict XVI in his Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* (31,b) in which he said, “The Christian’s programme—the programme of the Good Samaritan, the programme of Jesus—is ‘a heart which sees’. This heart sees where love is needed and acts accordingly.” The Trustees hope that *Cor Videns* will help its hearers to develop such a “seeing heart”, and to respond generously to the charity’s appeals.

Although most of the choristers who are admitted as full members of the choir stay for at least five years, it is inevitable that each year some of them should leave. In some cases, this is because they grow up and leave school and no longer have the time; in others because they have competing interests, such as football; and in others it is for family reasons, such as a move to another town. Some of the Probationers also leave because they are not willing to make the necessary commitment, or because they fail to reach the required standard. In order to maintain a balance between a strong top line and a stable nucleus of experienced singers it is clear that *Cor Videns* will eventually need to have at least 20 fully-fledged choristers and a similar number of Probationers.

Because there are no other choirs like *Cor Videns* in Medellín, it often takes quite some time for the children and their parents to appreciate fully all the advantages of belonging to the choir. These normally include travel to other cities or abroad; opportunities to learn to play musical instruments; and attractive educational and recreational activities. These elements will have an important part to play in promoting the future stability of the choir.

On school days, the admitted choristers normally stay on in *Casa Bannatyne* after choir practice and spend the night there. This arrangement has proved very popular both with the children and with their parents, and it provides the choristers with valuable extra time not only for additional musical and recreational activities, but also for them to receive help from **Funvini**’s teachers with their school homework.

For some of these children, the stays at *Casa Bannatyne* provide a much-needed respite from hunger, neglect or mistreatment at home. It is important to note that many of the children in the choir suffer from the same socio-economic and family problems as most of the other children in **Funvini**’s care. Some have required medical care or therapies which their families would not have been able to afford.

When Fr Peter is in Colombia, the choristers normally go home on Friday evening and come back into residence at *Casa Bannatyne* on Sunday morning in time to sing at Mass there at noon. The Oratory is too small to accommodate everyone, so the

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dining-room has to be converted into a temporary Chapel. On the other hand, when Fr Peter is away, the choristers remain in residence until Saturday afternoon. They then go home, and do not return until after school on Monday. However, it often happens that one or more of the choristers asks *not* to go home for the weekend for some reason; and, if their parents agree, they are allowed to remain in residence.

Two boys left the choir at the end of 2021, so it currently has only ten admitted members. It is therefore only at half its normal strength, because auditions had to be suspended until the schools starting working normally again after the pandemic. More boys whose voices have broken will have to leave at the end of 2022 in order to maintain the balance between broken and unbroken voices, so it is essential for new talent to be recruited.

In order to keep the cost of transporting the choristers to and from their homes and schools to *Casa Bannatyne* as low as possible, auditions are only held in schools in the area where the house is situated. Three auditions were held during the first eight months of 2022, and a total of 302 boys took part. Of these, 150 continued with the selection process, which eventually yielded a harvest of three aspirants and three probationers. It is hoped that further auditions will be held later in the year.

In December 2021 *Cor Videns* put on a musical play for their families and friends. In preparation for this event, **Funvini** took on a part-time drama-teacher, Señorita Ingrid Gutiérrez, who succeeded in generating great enthusiasm for the play amongst the cast. The performance took place in a local community-theatre, and fortunately a chaotic dress-performance actually led to a very successful first night. On the strength of this, Señorita Gutiérrez was then taken on as a permanent member of **Funvini**'s staff, but still only on a part-time basis.

In May 2022 *Cor Videns* was one of the choirs chosen to take part in the 10th annual festival *El Canto Nos Une* (Singing Unites Us). This is always held in Medellín, but choirs from all over Colombia were invited to provide a video recording of an item from their repertoire in order to compete for an invitation to take part. It was therefore quite a feather in *Cor Videns*'s cap that they were among the 12 choirs who were selected. The repertoire was intended to provide a musical journey around the world, so the choirs had to learn pieces in six different languages, and in a wide variety of styles. This required a good deal of intensive preparation and rehearsal.

The concert took place on 16th August, and about 400 young singers took part. Although some of the other choirs included a few boys, the great majority of the choristers were girls. *Cor Videns* was the sole boys' choir at the event. The singers

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were accompanied by the Symphony Orchestra of EAFIT university, and the Principal Conductor of the concert was Kirlianit Cortés, Director of the Vienna Boys' Choir. The Trustees were delighted to hear that he singled out *Cor Videns* for special praise, and said that the purity of their voices was similar to that of his own choristers in Vienna. The event was a great success, and the boys all hope that *Cor Videns* will maintain the standard required to be invited to take part in next year's concert.

In order to maximise classroom use, state schools in Colombia have traditionally had a shift in the morning and another in the afternoon, thereby enabling two separate populations of teachers and pupils to use the same buildings every day. However, the Colombian government decided to phase this system out, and to require all of its schools to change to a single, longer shift which is called the *jornada única*.

The introduction of the *jornada única* was already having a considerable impact on **Funvini** well before the Covid pandemic. The great majority of the charity's children go to school, and in former years they had always been able to attend its programmes during the shift when they were not at school. But in recent years an increasing number of the children have been unable to take part in **Funvini**'s activities at all on weekdays because the new school day begins too early for them to come before it starts, and finishes too late for them to come once it is over.

In order to accommodate in the *jornada única* the children who hitherto studied in two separate shifts, the construction of an additional 50,000 classrooms in Colombia's schools would be necessary. To help with this, in 2016 the government signed contracts for the construction of 55 "mega-colleges" in Antioquia. Although building work on some of these started so long ago, a report on *Hora 13 Noticias* on 3rd August 2022 stated that 35 of the mega-colleges were still not ready. However, the process of the introduction of the *jornada única* has continued to go ahead regardless of these delays. Unsurprisingly, this has resulted in considerable overcrowding in many existing schools, and extra pressure on their facilities.

The average number of pupils in Medellín's primary schools is now 40 per class; and in the city's secondary schools it is 35. The average class size in the secondary schools attended by the choristers is 39.5. However, one of the choristers currently has 51 other children in his class! These average figures are 50% higher than in British state schools, where the figures are currently 26.6 and 22.3, respectively.

With such large numbers, the teachers in Colombian state schools are unable to provide their pupils with much individual support, and little provision is made for those with special educational needs. The extra individual support provided for some

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of these children in the *Sala VIP* at *Casa Walsingham* is therefore more essential than ever. If the introduction of the *jornada única* were to prevent them from attending it, there is a real danger that they might drop out of school altogether, and then end up in the gangs or on the street.

Another group of children upon whom the introduction of the *jornada única* is threatening to have a negative impact are the members of *Cor Videns*. At present, the choristers normally attend the morning shift in their respective schools, and have choir practice or musical theory classes at *Casa Bannatyne* in the afternoon. The *jornada única* would make this impossible.

However, one of the Colombian government's objectives in extending the school day is to make time available for cultural and sporting activities, which will then be incorporated into the curriculum. Therefore, if **Funvini** were to set up its own school, not only would the choir be able to continue to function as usual, but also its members would receive academic credit for the musical formation they receive in it.

In view of all this, the local educational authorities in Medellín have for years been encouraging **Funvini** to set up its own school, with a flexible time-table and special teaching methods specifically designed for the particular talents and needs of its children. They said that **Funvini** was already doing much of what would be required in a school, and in September 2019 the planning authorities granted outline permission for *Casa Walsingham* to be used officially as a school. However, the process of preparing to open the school had taken several years, and during this time the Education Ministry had imposed regulations requiring newly-licensed schools to have a certain minimum area for physical education and sport available on site.

Unfortunately, *Casa Walsingham* has no such area of its own, and its sporting activities have also had to take place in local public parks and sports grounds. This means that in order to be able to obtain a licence for its own school, it will have to buy or rent additional premises which include an adequate space for physical education and sport. Lack of funds to cover the very considerable expense that this would involve has therefore forced **Funvini** to suspend its plans to apply for its own licence. The Trustees very much hope that the necessary extra funds will eventually be obtained.

In the meanwhile, however, the local educational authorities have arranged for **Funvini** to enter into an alliance with an existing, fully-licensed school to provide an 'umbrella' structure under which the charity is allowed to continue to run pilot programmes for a small number of its youngsters without actually having a licence of

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its own. The regulations restrict this to pupils who are aged at least 15. Some of their lessons take place in *Casa Walsingham* and are taught partly by teachers from the ‘umbrella’ school, and partly by those of **Funvini**: and their Grade Certificates are issued by the ‘umbrella’ schools.

Funvini hopes that the *School of the Children of the Holy House of Our Lady of Walsingham* - or the *Holy House School*, for short - will eventually include three elements:

- primary for children aged between 10 and 15 with special educational needs;
- secondary for older children from the street programme; and
- primary for choristers of *Cor Videns*.

Four of the boys and two of the girls belonging to the School Project completed their secondary education in 2021. This brought the total of number of students who had graduated through the School Project since 2017 to 20, (11 girls and 9 boys), none of whom would, in all probability, have managed to complete their secondary education without this help. Small though the scale of the Project may be, the Trustees consider that these results to be very encouraging.

Having announced in December 2020 that the schools would be opening as usual in 2021, the Colombian government was forced by opposition from the teaching unions to adopt a policy of *alternancia*. This meant that the schools would be semi-open, but that social-distancing would still be required, and the number of children in each classroom would be restricted, so the pupils would have to have a mixture of lessons in school and virtual classes at home.

Each school was left free to interpret *alternancia* in its own way. Some brought the children in for half a day on alternate days; others on several consecutive days; others during alternate weeks; and others kept changing. This made it very difficult for **Funvini** to give the children the extra support at *Casa Walsingham* that they needed when they were not in school. However, as from August 2021 **Funvini** has at last been allowed to serve the children with lunch again. That was a big step towards a return to normality. During the remainder of the year, more than 15,500 lunches were served at *Casa Walsingham*. In 2021 a further 5,000 were served at *Casa Bannatyne*. The children who stayed there were also given breakfast and dinner.

For many of these children, their lunch at *Casa Walsingham* - together with the healthy snack they are given either in the morning or the late afternoon - was and is their main source of nourishment. As a result of the alarming rise in food prices in 2022, the children are becoming even more reliant on the food provided by **Funvini**.

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The charity's first priority must always be to try to keep its children *alive*, so if its income fails to keep pace with inflation, other activities may have to be sacrificed in order to concentrate its resources on this vital aspect of its work.

Whilst the social-distancing rules were still in force, the number of children who could be admitted to *Casa Walsingham* at any one time was very restricted. If more children turned up than could be accommodated in that shift, they had to be sent home; whereas in other shifts the turnout might suddenly be unexpectedly low, and there were a number of unused places.

In order to maximise the number of children who could attend, *Casa Walsingham* started opening on Saturdays as well as during the week in February 2021; and it has continued to do this in term-time ever since. Groups of the children who were having the greatest difficulties with the *alternancia* system were invited to come into residence at *Casa Bannatyne* for more intensive academic support from **Funvini's** teachers during the periods when the choristers were at home.

Both *Casa Walsingham* and *Casa Bannatyne* are desperately short of space. Because *Casa Walsingham* is in a conservation area, there is little that can be done there, although **Funvini** hopes to be allowed to enlarge the Chapel by extending the pitched roof over a wing that currently has a flat roof. This was in the plans when approval for the construction of that wing was granted; but that was back in 2007, so fresh permission will now be needed. This wing already contains a well for a lift, and if planning permission is granted, this would be extended to make all five floors accessible to the disabled, as and when funds become available for the purchase of the lift itself.

Plans for the extension of *Casa Bannatyne* have now been drawn up, and the process of obtaining the necessary planning permission has been started. However, in Colombia, it is never easy to estimate how long this process will take: it may be months or years. The idea is that an additional floor should be erected over about two-thirds of the house. This will provide a library, a multi-purpose class-room/performance space; two offices; two loos; storage space for the choir's vestments, uniforms and instruments; and a central control point for the electronic and telecommunications system.

The extension will involve roofing over an internal utility patio, and the partial covering of another internal patio. However this will enable the construction of an additional dormitory and bathroom on the ground floor, and of an extension to the dining-room and the Oratory on the second floor. Provision will also be made for the

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installation of a lift in order to make all three floors accesible to the disabled. It is hoped that it may also be possible to gain some space between the kitchen on the ground floor and the new third floor.

Unfortunately, the cost of building materials has been increasing so rapidly in 2022 that architects are now unable to provide reliable estimates. All that they can say at present is that the cost of the planned extension will be at least the equivalent of £100,000, at current exchanges rates. This is a much larger sum than they had indicated originally. The only thing that is clear is that the longer this work is postponed, the greater the eventual cost will be. However, although this extra space is so urgently needed, the extension will not be built until this cost can be borne without harming **Funvini**'s operational budget.

Between January 2021 and August 2022 **Funvini** upgraded 13 of its computers and bought six new machines thereby greatly improving the technology available to its children and staff. Fortunately, this process took place before the recent sharp rise in prices. However, in some cases, two or three members of staff still have to share a single computer; and children doing their homework often have a lengthy wait until a machine becomes free: so the number of computers is still far from sufficient, and more will have to be bought when funds are available.

Other future projects include:

- building and equipping the extension at *Casa Bannatyne*;
- extending the Chapel at *Casa Walsingham*;
- improving the air-conditioning in the Chapel at *Casa Walsingham*;
- installing a lift at *Casa Walsingham*;
- providing regular dental care for all the children at *Casa Walsingham*;
- providing more amplification and lighting equipment for the Choir;
- designing and buying a definitive uniform for the Choir;
- enabling **Funvini** to buy a minibus to transport the Choir;
- helping **Funvini** to provide more vocational training, tertiary education and employment opportunities for its young adults; and
- changing the telephone systems at both *Casa Walsingham* and *Casa Bannatyne* from analogue to digital to prevent them from being interrupted for weeks at a time by the repeated theft of sections of the copper analogue cables in their respective parts of the city.

If sufficient funds were ever to become available, *Casa Bannatyne* would be sold and replaced by a larger building and sufficient land for a school somewhere in the *Oriente Antioqueño*, the large plateau outside and above Medellin where the

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international airport is located. However, **Funvini** has been hoping and praying for this for many years, and the shortage of space is so acute that it is clear that the extension of *Casa Bannatyne* cannot be postponed indefinitely in the hope that the dream of a completely new home may eventually become a reality.

The Trustees continue to be very concerned about the impact that the continuing crisis in Venezuela is having in Colombia. Three countries - Colombia, Brazil and Guyana - share land borders with Venezuela, but at 1,378 miles its longest border is that with Colombia; and it is Colombia that has received the greatest number of refugees - although these are now officially referred to as “migrants”.

Dr Juan Francisco Espinosa, the Director of the official border agency Migración Colombia, stated in *El Tiempo* (3rd March 2021) that at the end of 2020 there were 1,729,537 Venezuelan migrants in Colombia. However, by the end of the following month, the total had risen to 1,742,927 - an increase of 13,390, in spite of the fact that the frontier between the Venezuela and Colombia was officially closed. According to Dr Espinosa, 54% of the Venezuelans in Colombia had entered the country by irregular means, without passing through official immigration formalities. This meant that the real number of Venezuelans in Colombia was probably considerably greater than those given in these official figures.

Dr Espinosa explained that all of the Venezuelan migrants who were in Colombia before 1st February 2021 were entitled to benefit from a Temporary Protection Statute, however they had entered the country. For the next two years all Venezuelan migrants who entered Colombia by regular means would also be able to benefit from this Statute, which for the next ten years would entitle them to free healthcare and education, and to work in Colombia legally. However, those who arrived by irregular means after that 1st February 2021 would not be covered by the Statute, and would be liable to deportation.

Dr Espinosa estimated that in January 2021 there were about 90,100 Venezuelans in Medellín. Many of the refugees are having to survive by “*el rebusque*” - a very broad term which could cover taking part in any form of unofficial economic activity from labouring or begging to prostitution or delinquency. On 30th July 2021 Caracol Radio reported on the number of Venezuelan children who were being forced by poverty to work in the streets of Medellín, selling sweets or cleaning car windscreens; and on the number of Venezuelan mothers who were engaging in similar activities accompanied by babies or toddlers. The children of families who have to live like this are obviously in very great danger of every type of exploitation and abuse.

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According to Medellín's Secretary of Education, 26,453 Venezuelan children had been matriculated in the city's schools in 2021, but a substantial number of such boys and girls had not been matriculated. Part of the problem was that many of the Venezuelans were not aware that their rights under the Statute included the education of their children; and others, who had entered Colombia by irregular means were reluctant to have any dealing with the Colombian authorities in case this might result in their deportation.

When **Funvini** tried to obtain accident and emergency health insurance cover for some of its Venezuelan children in 2021 it proved to be extremely difficult because of their lack of Colombian identification. Apparently, the computer software used by Colombian insurance companies is only designed to accept Colombian identity details. Some of these children did not have even their *Venezuelan* identity documents because their families had destroyed them when they entered Colombia "irregularly", in the hope that this would make it more difficult for the Colombian authorities to repatriate them against their will. The situation of these children was particularly precarious because without proof of their identity, not only were they unable to benefit from **Funvini**'s insurance policy, but also they could not be enrolled in the Colombian education and healthcare systems. Furthermore, without identity documents, the *parents* of these children were unable to work legally, so the whole family was at risk.

Once this problem had been identified, Fr Peter suggested that **Funvini** should take on an extra social-worker to help as many Venezuelans as possible to obtain the documents they so badly needed. When this had been done, **Funvini** made an agreement with several statutory and charitable organisations to hold 4 "Legalisation Days" at *Casa Walsingham* between December 2021 and May 2022. Officials took the details, photographs and blood-types of the refugees, and social-workers explained their rights under - and the procedures of - the Colombian health and education systems.

A total of 619 Venezuelans took part in these events: (126 children who were already enrolled in **Funvini**'s programmes; a further 184 children from outside **Funvini**; and 435 of their adult family members). As a result of their participation, the situation of all these refugees has now been "regularised": they can remain legally in Colombia for up to ten years; the adults can seek legal employment; and the families can be admitted to Colombia's health and education systems. The Trustees consider this timely and relatively inexpensive initiative to have been a great success because it has made such a valuable contribution to the future welfare of so many children and their families.

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A total of 108 Venezuelan refugee children belonged to **Funvini**'s programmes in 2021. They ranged from 6 to 16 years of age, and school places were obtained for all but one of them of them. The sole exception was a girl who entered **Funvini** without identity papers in the last quarter of the year. The Trustees were pleased to note that 94 (88%) of those who went to school succeeded in gaining promotion to the next grade. Eleven (10%) of the children did not gain promotion; and the other two returned to Venezuela before the end of the year. Twenty-two (20%) of the children had special educational needs, and received extra support in the *Sala VIP*.

So far in 2022, the number of Venezuelan children who have been admitted to **Funvini**'s programmes has been 76; and school places have been obtained for 72 (95%) of them. Sixteen of the children entered **Funvini** after the legalisation amnesty period ended in May 2022. However, because the access of children to education is classed as a human right, it was possible to obtain school places for 12 of them because they still had their Venezuelan identity papers. The other 4 children cannot be matriculated at this stage in the school year, and will have to wait until the next one begins in January 2023.

In 2021 a further 46 Venezuelan children were helped by **Funvini** on an occasional basis; and another 96 - who were mostly younger brothers and sisters of the other children - benefitted from **Funvini**'s food-parcels but were not formally admitted to its programmes. The number of Venezuelan children who are currently being helped on an occasional basis stands at 25; and a further 105 younger brothers and sisters are also receiving indirect benefits.

According to a report in *El Colombiano* on 9th February 2022, Migración Colombia, the official border agency, estimated that at that stage there were currently 1,842,390 Venezuelan citizens in Colombia; and that 264,000 (14.3%) of these people were in Antioquia. This meant that the Department where Medellín is located was second only to Bogotá in the number of Venezuelans it had received. However, in July 2022 Migración Colombia reported that the number of Venezuelans in Colombia then stood at 2,477,588. The discrepancy at national level of 34.5% between these figures and those issued only five months previously may well indicate that the number of Venezuelans in Antioquia was actually around 355,000.

Migración Colombia claimed that 96% of the Venezuelans - who are now officially referred to as "migrants" rather than "refugees" - had "regularised" their status: but that still left at least 4% of them (around 100,000 people) in an "irregular" state. If 4% of the Venezuelans in Antioquia were in that category, that would mean that around 14,000 people there remained "irregular" and undocumented. **Funvini** is

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worried that there are still many Venezuelan children in Antioquia - and in Medellín itself - who have limited access to education and proper health care, and whose parents are unable to work legally. As has been mentioned above, **Funvini** is currently helping 16 children who are in this “irregular” situation. It is not yet clear how the new Colombian administration is proposing to resolve this problem.

From March to October 2021 **Let The Children Live!** was involved in a selection process amongst charities who were competing to be adopted for two years as the National Action Project of the Knights of St Columba (KSC), a Catholic men’s organisation in the United Kingdom. Thanks to the energetic advocacy of Mr Ray Pealing, the Provincial Grand Knight of the KSC’s Liverpool Province, the charity passed successfully through round after round of the process, until it reached the final stage of Supreme Council - and emerged victorious. in the face of stiff competition from a number of other very worthy charities. The Trustees are, naturally, delighted at this success, and at the fact that **Let The Children Live!** was well able to hold its own amongst its peers.

The two-year period of **Let The Children Live!** being the National Action Project of the KSC is due to start at the meeting of the Supreme Council in Jersey in October 2022. Miss Pauline Allan, the charity’s Administrator, has been invited to give a short address to this meeting in order to try to encourage the members of the Supreme Council to do everything possible - in a very difficult financial climate - to raise funds for their new project. Fr Peter has proposed that rather than just making another conventional presentation, the best way to do this might be for Miss Allan simply to introduce a video about **Funvini** in which the children would be able to display their creativity and sense of fun; and then for her to answer any questions afterwards.

Funvini is determined to respect the dignity of its children, and to avoid reinforcing negative stereotypes by presenting them as helpless victims who can only beg for aid. Although terrible things have certainly happened to many children in Colombia, the children there do not generally see *themselves* as helpless victims; and neither would they wish to be portrayed as such. On the contrary, they frequently display a remarkable degree of resilience, and a great capacity for joy. The Trustees believe that their determination to put the past behind them, and not to allow it to blight their future, is a far healthier attitude to life than wallowing in the self-pity and resentment of the sectional victimhood that some organisations seem to promote.

In order to reflect this, it is hoped that most of the video will be devoted to the acting out by the children - in exaggerated, silent-movie style - of a story in which latter-day knights in Britain provide the funds to enable Colombian children to drive away - but

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not eradicate - the modern dragons of hunger and ignorance by which they are menaced. It is hoped that if this simple tale succeeds in both amusing and touching the hearts of the Supreme Council, they will arrange for the video to be shown to the KSC at their local meetings around the country, and that it will enthuse them to make great efforts on the children's behalf.

This project seems to have fired the imaginations of **Funvini**'s children and staff, and many of them have been taking part in the preparations for the filming, rehearsing as actors or making costumes and props. The skills of Señorita Gutiérrez, the drama-teacher have been of great value in selecting and training the cast. And Señora Diana Builes - a former pupil of **Funvini** who has been on its staff for many years - has had ample opportunity to use her skills in handicrafts. Filming began in early September 2022.

In June 2022 **Funvini**'s children and staff celebrated The Queen's Platinum Jubilee with as much enthusiasm as they had done for the Golden and Diamond Jubilees. Once again, they didn't see why British children should have all the fun; and in a country that has suffered so much from political corruption, the example of a Head of State who had devoted so many years of selfless service to her people seemed something worth studying and celebrating. *Casa Walsingham* was bedecked with Colombian and British flags, and with images of the Her Majesty, rather to the bemusement of the neighbours.

However this was very much a *Colombian* celebration: Fr Peter was in Britain, and no British people planned or took part in it. Those involved simply wanted to express their grateful solidarity with their British benefactors. And, of course, in Colombia no excuse for a party could be allowed to go to waste.

The children spent some time learning about the Coronation Service and all the symbolism it involved. They then prepared to re-enact on 2nd June the principal ceremonies of the Coronation - complete with a Queen, Bishops, train-bearers, choristers, soldiers and cheering crowds. There were separate performances for the morning and afternoon shifts, which largely involved separate 'casts', who also enjoyed a special meal, a cake and toasts. To round off the celebrations, the following day 70 children went on an outing to *Los Tamarindos* water park, and they were all given a new pair of shoes in Her Majesty's honour.

The Trustees and staff of **Let The Children Live!** received the news of Her Majesty's death with the greatest sorrow.

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Finance

In 2020 the charity met its objects by making donations in cash and in kind to a total value of £482,427 to support **Funvini's** work in Colombia. This sum was £90,711 (23.2%) more than the total that it had donated to **Funvini** in 2020. This represented 70.1 % of total expenditure, which was 2.8% more than the equivalent proportion the previous year. A further £78,158 was expended on fieldwork in Colombia, which was 2.2% more than in 2020. Thus a total of £560,585 - which was 82.4% of all expenditure - was devoted to **Funvini's** activities.

For a second year, the charity was not able to make any investment in Development Education in Britain because the Covid regulations prevented the charity's staff from giving talks in schools. Fortunately, it has been possible for some such talks to be given in 2022.

In accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), the charity's administrative expenditure is classified under the heading of 'Support Costs', and included in the total for Charitable Activities. In 2021, these Support Costs amounted to £93,788, which was 6.5% more than the previous year, and represented 13.7% of all expenditure, which was very slightly less than the 2020 proportion. This brought the total spent on Charitable Activities to £654,373 (96.1% of all expenditure). This was clearly a most satisfactory result, but the Trustees emphasise that it is most unlikely that **Let The Children Live!** will be able to continue indefinitely this feat of devoting about 95 pence in every pound of expenditure to its Charitable Activities.

Moreover, the Trustees realise that many of the charity's donors are unlikely to consider that Support Costs - no matter how necessary they may be - actually constitute expenditure on the charity's *objects*. The Trustees always preserve a clear distinction in their own minds between the *ends* for which the charity exists and the *means* which have to be adopted to achieve them; and they will continue to endeavour to keep all administrative expenditure - and any bureaucratic procedures that tend to engender it - to a minimum.

None of the Trustees received any remuneration or were repaid for any expenses during the year, so the only expenses to be classified under the heading of Governance were the aggregated Independent Examination fees, which were £3,888 (0.6% of total expenditure). It must be noted, however, that under the present SORP, Governance is classified under Support Costs, and is therefore counted as a Charitable Activity.

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In accordance with the SORP, the money the charity spends on generating funds is classified as ‘Expenditure on Raising Funds’. In 2021 this amounted to £26,280 , which was only 2.3% more than the previous year, and was 3.9% of total expenditure, which was very slightly less than this proportion of expenditure had been in 2020. The total spent by the charity on income generation was 4.0% of its income, excluding the extraordinary income received from statutory sources because of the pandemic.

The Trustees realise that as competition for scarce resources becomes increasingly intense, it is unlikely that the charity will be able to sustain such a low level of expenditure on fund-generation. On the contrary, they think that, unfortunately, it is very probable that in future the proportion of expenditure taken up by fund-generation will have to increase considerably.

In the last sixteen years fund-generation has never taken up more than 5.5 pence in each pound that the charity has expended. This compares very favourably with the proportion spent on fund-raising by most other charities. In the *UK Civil Society Almanac 2015* the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) estimated that 11.6% of the charity sector’s overall expenditure was spent on fund-raising in 2013/14.

The survey *Top 100 Fundraisers Spotlight*, which was published in March 2018 by Charity Financials, produced similar findings. In 2016/17 “across the top 100 fundraisers, average fundraising costs were 17% as a proportion of fundraising income”; and “as a proportion of total income fundraising costs were 10%”. One charity actually spent 38% of its total income on fundraising!

Although, quite naturally, the Trustees are pleased that these figures show that a small charity like **Let The Children Live!** is so much more efficient than many of these large bodies, they are concerned that the profligacy of some of them tends to tarnish the image of charities in general, and may lead to calls for yet more regulation.

The Trustees were therefore pleased to see that the Charity Commission includes charitable spending ratios in the beta version of its information about each charity. They note what the Commission says about the need to put these ratios in context; and they are very much aware that any charity may experience a difficult year - or a series of difficult years - when the results of its fund-raising campaigns are not very good, or when the cost of fund-generation increases sharply. Consequently, they think that it would be helpful if the Commission were to include these ratios for the *previous five years*, as is done with the charity’s financial and compliance histories.

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The Commission already has this information in its system, so this could easily be calculated automatically, without involving charities in any extra work.

It would also be helpful if the Charity Commission were also to publish on each charity's page the average fund-generation ratios for the previous five years of *all charities of similar size*, dividing them into bands by income. This would put pressure on less efficient charities to improve their performance, and make it easier for prospective donors to find charities that are particularly efficient.

The weight of any additional bureaucratic burden tends to fall disproportionately on smaller charities, and to make them less efficient. Any further tinkering with the SORP and other regulations is also especially injurious to them. Like increased health and safety requirements and the new GDPR, *increased accountability and transparency requirements come at a cost*; and it should not simply be assumed that this cost is always justified.

In the case of the GDPR, for example, although the public may have benefited if the excessive persistence of some charities - particularly the larger ones - in badgering people for money has been curtailed, it should also be recognised that the GDPR now prevents small charities like **Let The Children Live!** from asking former donors for renewed help in times of crisis, unless the donors have previously given their explicit consent. The benefits brought by the GDPR in terms of increased donor privacy therefore need to be weighed against the harm caused to beneficiaries when charities are no longer able to help them in an emergency. The Trustees therefore hope that the government will take advantage of Brexit to adjust the GDPR in order to reduce their negative impact on charities.

The Trustees also believe that the Charity Commission should be required to monitor and publish details of the effect on *small charities* of any regulatory change in order to ensure that the benefits actually obtained really are proportional to the extra cost imposed on them in time, money and efficiency.

In 2021 the Linked Charity repaid the Reporting Charity £1,800 for expenditure that the latter had incurred on the former's behalf. Similarly, the Reporting Charity repaid the Linked Charity £4,632 for expenditure that the latter had incurred on the former's behalf. These transactions only constituted *internal* transactions between the linked charities, and so they had to be excluded from their aggregated accounts.

Moreover, at the end of 2021 the Linked Charity owed the Reporting Charity £2,052; and, for its part, the Reporting Charity owed the Linked Charity £4,567. These only

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constituted *internal* debts between the the linked charities, so they also had to be excluded from the aggregated accounts.

Excluding the internal transfers, the total aggregated income of the two charities in 2021 was £676,518. This was a fall of £68,090 (9.1%) in comparison to the total aggregated income £744,608, net of internal transfers, that had been received in 2020.

The £83,686 that the charity received from legacies in 2021 was £125,887 (60.1%) less than in 2020. The charity's income from Trusts in 2021 fell by £5,839 (17.0%) to £28,523. Its income from these two extraordinary sources in 2021 was therefore £112,209, which was 17.1% of its total income. Although most welcome, such extraordinary income is completely unpredictable, and the dramatic fall in the income from legacies reinforces the Trustees' conviction that it would be unwise for the charity to rely too heavily on these sources of income.

The Trustees are very grateful for the generosity of those who kindly donated goods for the charity's shop in Walsingham to sell. Thanks to Mrs Seals and her team of faithful volunteers, in 2021 income from sales there rose by £6,393 (125.8%) to £11,475 once the Covid regulations were relaxed. A further £2,134 was received in donations made at the shop, bringing its total income to £13,609.

However, its running-costs amounted to £14,370, so it would have made a net loss of £761 had the charity not received £1,705 under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to protect the job of the Manageress, and a Coronavirus grant of £11,240 from North Norfolk District Council. The total received from statutory sources therefore amounted to £12,945. This was £4,000 (23.6%) less than in 2021, but it converted the year's result into a net profit through the shop of £12,184!

Income from these two statutory sources ceased to flow before the end of May 2021, and they will therefore not provide any such extra boost to the shop's income in 2022. The Trustees recognise that, in normal times, the shop is an important point of contact with the charity's supporters. It also helps **Let The Children Live!** to retain its identity as Walsingham's own special charity. Nevertheless, the viability of the shop will have to remain under annual review.

In 2021, the charity's *extraordinary* income from legacies, Trusts and statutory sources amounted to £125,154. This was £135,726 (52%) less than the previous year's total. It constituted 18.5% of its aggregated income, in comparison to 35.0% of the total for 2021.

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The charity's aggregated *ordinary* income - i.e. net of internal transfers and all kinds of extraordinary income - in 2021 was £551,634. In comparison, in 2020 this *ordinary* income had amounted to only £483,361. This meant that although its *total* income fell by £68,090 (9.1%), its *ordinary* income actually rose by £68,273 (14.1%). This was encouraging, because it confirmed that the charity's base support was holding up surprisingly well, in spite of the problems caused by the Covid pandemic, and the Trustees are most grateful for this.

Traditionally, most of the charities' income has been generated by appeals in Roman Catholic parishes. However, the Trustees realise that the combination of the Covid lockdowns and the cost-of-living crisis have hit the income of many parishes very hard. Moreover, the size of congregations in some parishes is smaller than it was before the pandemic. All this is tending in turn, to diminish the income that dioceses receive from their parishes, and some Bishops are banning charities from making appeals at Mass in their territory.

Even in ordinary times, Parish Priests tend to be inundated by requests for appeals by charities, and they are also required to hold quite a number of collections for causes chosen by their Bishops. Competition amongst charities for limited parish collection 'slots' is therefore now more acute than ever. The Trustees therefore anticipate that the charity's total income from parish appeals in 2022 and 2023 is likely to show a sharp fall.

Unless the charity receives more substantial windfalls from Trusts and legacies - which is very uncertain - they will not be able to meet the whole of **Funvini's** future funding needs. If these are to be met, additional regular income will be required from other sources. It had been hoped that one such source would be **Let The Children Live! Inc.**, the charity's independent offshoot in the United States. This is recognised by the Inland Revenue Service (IRS) as a 501(3)(C) not-for-profit charitable corporation, so its benefactors are able to offset their donations to it against tax.

The Trustees continue to extend their deepest sympathy to one of their American colleagues, Mrs Margaret Pichon and her family on the death of her husband, Arnaud, on 16th August 2021. Mr and Mrs Pichon kindly welcomed Fr Peter to stay at their home many times when he visited Houston to make appeals in the Ordinariate Cathedral our Lady of Walsingham.

The Trustees are extremely grateful to both of their American colleagues for all their work in setting-up and running **Let The Children Live! Inc.** Unfortunately, however, these ladies are now able to devote only a limited amount of time to their

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charity's affairs, and unless they are able to recruit some new members to its Board, the future of the American charity seems very uncertain. If it were to close, the income **Funvini** receives from the United States would probably be lost because Americans tend to be reluctant to make donations that are not tax-deductible. This loss would obviously be a serious blow.

In the last few years legacies to the British charity have played a vital part in enabling it to fund most of **Funvini**'s work. A substantial legacy can make an enormous difference to a charity like **Let The Children Live!** It is therefore unfortunate that benefactors who wish to leave most of their property to charity so often decide to divide it amongst *several* good causes, instead of maximising the impact of their legacy by leaving the lion's share to *one* small charity.

The Trustees are deeply grateful to those who have remembered the charity in their Wills. The additional income from this source has been especially important during the months when normal fund-raising activities have been impeded by the Covid lockdown regulations. The children in *Casa Walsingham* remember their deceased benefactors every working day at the noon Angelus. They are also remembered at various special Masses in the Chapel there.

The Trustees also wish to express their gratitude to everyone who has requested that, when they die, donations should be sent to the charity in lieu of flowers; and to all those who have made this request after the death of a loved one.

Most of the money received by the charity in 2021 was the fruit of the generosity of a large number of individual donors and of parishes and other groups. It is not possible to name them all here, but the Trustees wish to express their warmest thanks to all of them.

The Trustees are also most grateful to:

- Caring and Sharing for continuing to support to **Funvini**'s educational project; and for unrestricted donations from:
 - The de Vitre Fund;
 - The Dromintee Trust; and
 - A charitable Trust that wishes to remain anonymous.

In 2010 a benefactor made a loan of £200,000 to the Trust; and in 2011 he increased this loan to £225,000. The benefactor has asked to remain anonymous, but he is not a Trustee; and the Trustees, the Independent Examiners and the Charity Commission are aware both of his identity and of the source of the money. With the benefactor's

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agreement, this sum was subsequently loaned to **Funvini** in order to mitigate the effects of the fall in its income caused by the recession.

As security for the loan, **Funvini** pledged *Casa Bannatyne*, the smaller of its two properties in Medellín. The property cannot now be sold without the consent of **Let The Children Live!** Whether the value of this property goes up or down, the benefactor has agreed with the Trustees that whatever its market value may happen to be at the time of repayment shall be the amount that is to be repaid to him. Because it is interest-free, the Trustees consider that this is the best way to try to ensure that it retains its value in real terms, without endangering the liquidity either of **Let The Children Live!** or of **Funvini**.

All being well, the loan will not have to be repaid until September 2029, but under certain circumstances **Let The Children Live!** would have to make earlier repayment to its benefactor. In that event, it would be necessary for **Funvini** to repay its loan early, too. The mortgage therefore stipulates that **Funvini** must repay its loan at any stage at the charity's request, within a maximum of one year.

On 13th June 2019 the Trustees of the Linked Charity and the Directors of the Reporting Charity signed the necessary documents to transfer to the latter the liability of the benefactor's loan to the Linked Charity, and the mortgage securing the Linked Charity's loan to **Funvini**.

Property

Let The Children Live! itself does not own any land or buildings. In 2018 the Reporting Charity took over from the Linked Charity the leases of a three-room office in Doncaster and of a small shop in Walsingham. It also took over responsibility for the rental of a flat near Oxford to serve as a base for Fr Peter and his colleagues during their fund-raising visits to Britain. The five-year lease of this property expired in February 2019, but fortunately the landlord has generously agreed to allow the tenancy to continue at the existing rent.

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Human Resources

The Trustees are most grateful for the continued devoted service of its four employees:

- Fr Peter Walters, the Executive Director;
- Miss Pauline Allan, the Administrator;
- Mrs Shirley Davies, the Book-keeper; and
- Mrs Jackie Seals, the Manageress of the charity's shop in Walsingham.

In accordance with the provisions of the 2014 Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations, the employees whose contracts were transferred from the Linked Charity to the Reporting Charity were entitled to continue to enjoy the same terms and conditions of employment with the Reporting Charity as they had had with the Trust. The basis on which their salaries had been established when they entered the employment of the Linked Charity was therefore not subject to any review or benchmarking when they entered that of the Reporting Charity. The same applied to the non-contributory pension scheme on a sliding scale according to age which the Linked Charity had established for personnel normally based in Colombia, in view of the additional risks involved in living and working there.

However, the Trustees are aware that because, in particularly difficult years - and again in both 2020 and 2021 - the charity's Key Management Personnel refused to accept any increase in pay, their salaries had not always kept pace with inflation. They accepted a 5% increase in April 2022, but with inflation running at more than 10% in August, it is clear that their salaries are falling still below the benchmarks that the Linked Charity adopted when they entered its employment. When funds permit, the Trustees therefore intend to raise the salaries of its existing Key Management Personnel to a level closer to those currently paid to those with similar experience and responsibilities in other charities of comparable size. The terms and conditions of any new Key Management Personnel will be decided on a similar basis.

Sums of money were often given to the charity without any indication as to whether they were straight donations or the results of fund-raising activities. It is therefore impossible to estimate how many hundreds of volunteers may have been involved in one way or another. The Trustees are very grateful to them all.

The Trustees wish to express their special gratitude to:

- Miss Pauline Allan, Mr Brian Coogan, Mr Slade Baylis and Micron 21 for updating and managing the charity's web site; and to

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- all the members of the charity's informal support groups.

The Trustees also wish to pay tribute to the tremendous voluntary work done in promoting the charity in Scotland by Mr George McAleenan and Mr Peter Lavery.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken account of the Charity Commission's general guidance relating to public benefit when reviewing the charities' achievements and performance.

Risk Management

The success or otherwise of **Let The Children Live!** is evaluated by the Trustees in terms of the extent to which they manage:

- to sustain or increase the charity's income;
- to send funds to Colombia that fulfil or exceed the budget agreed with **Funvini**;
- to enable **Funvini** to maintain or increase the numbers of children in its projects;
- to enable **Funvini** to maintain or improve the quality of care it provides;
- to raise public awareness and understanding of the situation of the street-children;
- to control and cover the charity's fund-raising costs; and
- to maintain a prudent level of reserves.

The charity continued to try to raise public awareness and understanding during the year, but - as has been mentioned already - the UK's Covid regulations prevented the charity's staff from making visits to schools.

Although the charity's donations to **Funvini** in 2021 had been increased by £90,711 (23.2%), the aggregated net assets of £364,570 held by the charity at the end of the year were only £4,135 lower than they been a year previously. This meant that its net expenditure in 2021 had been a mere 1.% more than its net income, and the Trustees consider this to have been a very satisfactory result.

It is always frustrating that many of the factors that have a negative impact on the charity's work are beyond the power of the Trustees to control. However, they remain very conscious of their duty to try to evaluate and monitor the various risks to

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which the charity is exposed, and to take what measures they can to try to reduce or manage them. Amongst these risks and measures, they wish to draw particular attention to the following:

a) Although neither the Linked Charity nor the Reporting Charity had any children directly in its care, the Trustees' prime concern continued to be to ensure the well-being of the children who benefitted from the services of the institutions which they helped to fund. It therefore remained their policy that they would only consider applications for funding from organisations that were duly constituted according to local law and which had implemented, or were actively in the process of implementing, a child protection policy that was in general accord with that of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, adapted to the local circumstances and culture.

In order to minimise the risk both of child-abuse and of financial mismanagement it remained the Trustees' policy to restrict the charity's activities to geographical areas of which they had a fair degree of knowledge and in which they could exercise a reasonable degree of oversight. This meant making donations only to Colombia, and concentrating them on the city of Medellín, where **Funvini** is based.

Funvini was one of the first charities in Colombia to implement a proper Child Protection Policy in all of its programmes. This policy is subject to frequent review, and **Funvini's** designated Child Protection Officer confirmed that the provisions of the Policy had been adhered to properly in 2021, and were continuing to be so in 2022.

b) In May 2018, Medellín's health and safety authorities made very detailed inspections of *Casa Walsingham* and *Casa Bannatyne*. They found the facilities in both buildings to be up to the required standards, and renewed their operating licences for two years. In March 2020 **Funvini** applied for another inspection in order to renew the licences for both buildings, but because of the backlog caused by the Covid emergency, by the middle of August 2022 neither property had yet been inspected. However, the existing licences remain valid in the meanwhile.

Colombian health-and-safety-at-work regulations are now so complex and extensive that even a small organisation like **Funvini** has to employ a full-time, qualified officer to supervise their implementation. All of the staff have to attend numerous safety workshops; and emergency evacuation drills are held with the children both in the daytime and at the dead of night.

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c) In 2020 **Let The Children Live!** implemented appropriate biosecurity protocols to protect its staff at its Doncaster office, and the Manager, volunteers and customers at its shop in Walsingham. These remained in force in 2021 until the government lifted all such requirements.

d) Although Medellín no longer appears in the list of the world's 50 most violent cities, the issue of safety continues to be one of the greatest importance for the Trustees. They have therefore continued their policy of not inviting foreign volunteers to work in Colombia on its behalf. On the other hand, when foreigners who in any case intend to visit Colombia - entirely at their own initiative and risk - ask if they may visit *Casa Walsingham* or help with the work there, they are always referred directly to **Funvini**.

In such cases **Let The Children Live!** can, of course, accept no liability for their conduct or their welfare. For its part, **Funvini** requires any foreign volunteers it accepts to provide a current International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) or equivalent clearance document.

e) The unrestricted funds held by the Linked Charity effectively serve as a reserve for the Reporting Charity. The Trustees aim to maintain reserves in unrestricted funds which, when combined with those of the Reporting Charity, amount to at least £150,000. This is equivalent to about three months of the Reporting Charity's unrestricted charitable expenditure. They provide a buffer in case of fluctuations in the charity's income and in the value of the pound against the peso.

The Trustees consider that, in normal circumstances, this level of reserves would provide sufficient funds for both charities to continue to operate, although they hope to maintain a higher level of reserves in order to ensure greater stability in the funding of **Funvini**'s work. They realise, however, that this will not be possible in years when the charities' income falls substantially.

Although the Trustees are under no *contractual* obligation to provide any particular level of support to **Funvini**, they are acutely aware that the welfare of hundreds of children in Medellín depends on the funds sent by **Let The Children Live!** The Trustees do not believe that the charity's supporters would wish it to maintain a rigid policy of maintaining any particular level of reserves above that required to comply with its legal obligations if **Funvini**'s children were to be exposed to danger or hardship in consequence of this.

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Moreover, they suspect that if really substantial reserves were to be maintained, some donors might decide to switch their giving to charities that appeared to be in more immediate need of their support. The charity's reserves policy must therefore remain a very flexible one.

The charity's aggregated balance of unrestricted funds on 31st December 2021 was £364,570. Although this sum was considerably in excess of their normal reserves policy, the Trustees considered it to be appropriate in view of the risk of a sharp drop in income in the aftermath of the Covid pandemic. Before the end of 2021 they had realised that inflation was likely to increase substantially in 2022: but they could not, of course, have anticipated the additional problems that the war in the Ukraine is causing.

f) The charity does not possess any investments. The Trustees have done their best to protect the charity's funds against the fluctuations of the currency markets by keeping these in a mixture of pounds, US dollars and euros in order to spread the risk. However, the fate of the euro has become so uncertain that reserves are not now being kept in this currency, and the account is only being kept open to receive the donations that are occasionally received in it.

Funvini maintains an account in US dollars at its bank's branch in Panama so that donations sent from Britain can be converted into Colombian pesos when the exchange rate is favourable, rather than being converted automatically into pesos, regardless of the exchange rate, as has to happen when donations are sent direct to Colombia.

g) Since 2010 **Let The Children Live!** has sent its donations to **Funvini** via foreign exchange companies such as Custom House, Western Union and Moneycorp. The Trustees initially decided to do this because these companies offered more favourable exchange rates and lower transfer fees than Barclays provided. In more recent years, however, the use of these companies became the only practical means to send its donations because Barclays no longer permitted the transfer form to be signed by two authorised signatories in their own homes, but required them to come in together to sign the form in one of their branches. This was not practical, because the signatories live more than 180 miles - and more than three hours' drive - apart. Unfortunately, Barclays does not permit its customers to make transfers to Colombia via electronic banking.

Over the years, a total of more than £5,500,000 has been transferred to **Funvini** by means of these foreign exchange companies. This has involved more than 130

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individual transactions, and these have been made with no difficulties and no losses. However, the Charity Commission has become concerned about the use of foreign exchange companies because - although their use by charities is perfectly legal - they are outside the regulated banking system, and their use involves a greater element of risk than transfers effected through the regulated banking system.

In 2019 the Charity Commission asked charities that used foreign exchange companies to mention this in their Annual Return; and this the charity duly did. As a result, the Commission summoned the Trustees to a virtual Compliance Meeting, which took place on 23rd June 2020. The representatives of the Commission expressed their concerns about the possible risks involved in the making of transfers to Colombia outside the regulated banking system.

The Trustees, for their part, explained why they considered this practice to be necessary in their case, and the steps they had taken to try to manage the risks involved. They also showed that a proper paper-trail existed for each transaction, and that no funds had ever been lost. Neither at the meeting nor subsequently was the Commission able to suggest a more practical way to effect these transfers.

The Trustees consulted their Solicitor about this practice, and he confirmed that it was legal, and that it was still within their powers to employ it. They therefore informed the Commission that whilst this continues to be the case they would continue to make use of foreign exchange companies to make transfer to **Funvini** until an alternative that is practical in their circumstances becomes available.

The Trustees reviewed this policy at their meeting on 16th June 2022. They decided that in view of the fact that it had continued to work perfectly satisfactorily, and that they had not become aware of any better alternative options, it would remain in force until it was reviewed again at their Summer meeting in 2023, unless there had been any significant developments in the meanwhile.

h) The Trustees do not know what the full impact of the 2022 cost-of-living crisis in the United Kingdom will have on the charity's ability to raise funds in the medium and longer term. In the short term, however, it is already clear that its impact has been - and continues to be - very severe. In the first six months of 2022, the two charities' combined income was 33.8% lower than it had been in the first semester of 2021.

Admittedly, 44% of this decrease was a result in a fall of 70.4% in the amount received in legacies, which is always completely unpredictable; and that that decline

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could reversed at any moment by the arrival of a substantial legacy. But the fact remains that the charities' income has gone down substantially at a time when its costs are rising substantially; and that it is likely to be harder than ever to make up the resulting shortfall.

i) In December 2012 the charity introduced the facility for credit card donations to be made online. In order to do this, the charity registered with the charity donation system CharityCheckout - now known as Enthuse - which continues to handle the whole process of taking credit card donations, and of paying them into the charity's bank account. No sensitive information now has to be handled by, or to pass through, the charity's web site.

The Trustees have implemented an anti-money-laundering policy in order to reduce the risk that anyone might try to make use of the charity for that purpose. There are no indications that any such attempt has ever been made.

j) Christianity is the force that motivates the great majority of the charity's donors, but an increasingly - and sometimes aggressively - secular society is not conducive to the flourishing of charities that, like both **Let The Children Live!** and **Funvini**, remain firmly Christian in their ethos. The officials from the Charity Commission who attended the Compliance Meeting readily admitted that they had little experience of dealing with Christian charities; and they obviously had no real understanding of their particular ethos. There is a danger that such a lack of understanding could result in misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

The charity's Solicitor confirmed that he considers that the moral views that the charity and its supporters uphold "might be conservative but they are not radical". These views are not universally popular, and the Trustees are aware that they have a duty to "consider the charity's reputation". They know that the charity could fall victim to the 'cancel culture' because the era in which Christians could disagree with some of the conventions and assumptions of secular thinking and still expect to be respected as decent members of society at large seems to be drawing to an end.

However, the Trustees believe that the damage that would be caused to the charity's reputation among its supporters by being perceived to have abandoned or diluted its Christian principles would heavily outweigh any possible advantages of such action, even in merely prudential terms. Moreover, this would threaten the future existence of **Funvini** - and hence the welfare of the children who depend on it - because, as a specially Catholic charity, **Funvini** would not be able to accept funding from a source that was not in sympathy with its own moral views.

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The Trustees are therefore concerned that there is a danger that their duty to “consider the charity’s reputation” may be interpreted in some quarters as a duty not to express views, or to fund activities, which - even though they are perfectly legal - are unfashionable. This, in turn, is likely to result in an unwholesome tendency towards excessive caution and self-censorship by charity Trustees who became afraid of being considered ‘politically incorrect’.

k) The Charity Commission also expressed their views about the reporting by the charity of the criticisms expressed by Venezuelan refugees in Medellín of the policies and failures of the extremely socialist Venezuelan government, which they blamed for the events and conditions that had obliged them to seek refuge in Colombia. However, it is hardly to be expected that many admirers of the present Venezuelan regime will be found amongst those who have had to flee from it or from the consequences of its policies.

The Trustees consulted their Solicitor on this point, and he said: “The Commission’s guidance is clear that charities can campaign for a change in the law, policy or decisions where such change would support the charity’s purposes. Charities can also campaign to ensure that existing laws are observed.” Therefore if the charity “identified government policy that negatively impacted on your beneficiaries then ‘speaking out’ on such an issue would be acceptable”.

Although the Trustees certainly do not consider it to be the charity’s mission to campaign on political issues, they therefore reserve the right to criticise - and to publish comments by third parties that are critical of - the Venezuelan government, the Colombian government, or the British government, or any other body that they believe to be wholly or partly responsible for any policy, decision or situation they consider to be prejudicial to the welfare of the children - born or unborn - whom **Funvini** serves.

l) It has yet to be seen what policies the new Colombian government is going to adopt. However, if these were to be considered hostile to western interests - perhaps involving the nationalisation without adequate compensation of private companies in which there had been a considerable level of foreign investment - Colombia could become the target of sanctions that would make it difficult or impossible to send funds there from the United Kingdom or the United States. Such sanctions would obviously have an immediate and disastrous effect on **Funvini**. The Trustees will therefore continue to monitor developments in Colombia with close attention.

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m) Another cause for possible concern may be the failure of the new Colombian government to support the Resolution of 12th August 2022 of the Permanent Council of the Organisation of American States (OAS) condemning the persecution of the Catholic Church by the dictatorial Nicaraguan regime. The Resolution was passed by 27 votes, with 4 abstentions and 1 vote against. Colombia was one of only 2 countries - the other being Nicaragua itself - that did not even send a representative to the meeting. Of course, it would be unwise to interpret this failure in an unduly sinister light: but left-wing regimes have had a long and bloody history of hostility to the Catholic Church, and the faithful in Colombia are naturally alert to any signs that may indicate that there is trouble to come.

The Missionaries of Charity - the community founded by St Teresa of Calcutta - were expelled from Nicaragua on 6th July 2022. The dissolution of the Missionaries of Charity and another 100 NGOs in Nicaragua had been approved without debate on 29th June 2022 by the Sandinista deputies in the National Assembly. Attorney Martha Patricia Molina Montenegro, a member of the Pro Transparency and Anticorruption Observatory, told ACI Prensa, that “the dictatorship has a frontal war against the Catholic Church of Nicaragua and its objective is to completely eliminate all those institutions related to the Church. The expulsion of the Sisters of Charity is one more illegality of this regime that is protected by laws that have been denounced by civil society and citizens as unconstitutional.”

Doctora Molia had compiled a report entitled *Nicaragua: A Persecuted Church* which documented 190 attacks and desecrations perpetrated against the Catholic Church in Nicaragua in the period 2018-2022. She maintained that the Nicaraguan regime had “initiated an indiscriminate persecution against bishops, priests, seminarians, religious, lay groups, and toward everything that has a direct or indirect relationship with the Catholic Church.”

If President Petro’s failure to join in the OAS’s condemnation of the Sandinista’s treatment of the Church in Nicaragua indicates that he has some sympathy for them, and intends to act along similar lines in Colombia, **Funvini**’s continued existence - and Fr Peter’s security and his freedom to remain working in Colombia - would be at risk. The Trustees will therefore continue to pay close attention to the new President’s attitude towards charities and the Church.

n) The long-term loan of £225,000 made to the charity will eventually have to be paid back. As has been explained above, this money has now been loaned to **Funvini**, and the Trustees have therefore had to consider the risk that the Colombian charity might fail to return it. However, the Trustees are satisfied that the terms of the

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mortgage on *Casa Bannatyne* by which the loan has been secured have reduced this risk to the minimum. If the worst came to the worst, and **Funvini** failed to meet - or were to be prevented from meeting - its obligations, the Trustees could reduce their annual grant to **Funvini** by £225,000, and the charity would therefore still be able to meet its own obligations to the benefactor.

o) In 2003 the Linked Charity established a notional benchmark for the salary of its Executive Director, with those of other Key Management Personnel being determined in reference to this. They did this by consulting the press to see what other charities were then offering for the posts that they were advertising.

For example, they noted that on 11th August 2003 The Children's Society advertised for a Youth Campaign Coordinator in London, with a maximum salary of £25,536. Applicants had to be under the ages of 25, and would therefore have had neither experience nor responsibilities commensurate with those of the Executive Director of **Let The Children Live!** At the other end of the spectrum, World Vision, a very much larger charity, advertised on 14th March 2003 for a Chief Executive with an annual salary of £70,000.

The Trustees therefore considered that a notional benchmark figure of £30,000 of basic salary would be appropriate, and they hoped to be able to sustain this at least in line with inflation. According to the CPI UK Inflation Calculator (www.officialdata.org), £30,000 in 2003 would be the equivalent of £52,729.50 in August 2022 - without any increments in recognition of increased experience and responsibility - but the Trustees regret that the financial circumstances of the Linked Charity did not permit the salaries of the Key Management Personnel who are now employed by the Reporting Charity to be increased to that extent.

According to the website of PayScale (payscale.com), in 2022 the average salary a United Kingdom Charity Chief Executive with 20 years' experience was £51,277. The Trustees therefore realise that if it ever became necessary to seek to replace the charity's Executive Director, it is probable that the present terms of remuneration would have to be improved, and that this would require painful adjustments to its budget.

p) The constant intensification of the competition for funds is placing increasingly heavy burdens of work and stress on the charity's employees. The Trustees realise that an excessive work-load poses a risk to the charity's efficiency, and limits the possibilities for its expansion. Some extra help was provided in 2018 by an Office Trainee, but she left the charity's employment at the of the year; and it is clear that a

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more experienced - and therefore more expensive - person will be required when funds permit a replacement to be appointed.

q) If Fr Peter were to be incapacitated for a prolonged period, the Trustees know that it would not be easy for them to find a suitable replacement. Indeed, in such an eventuality, it might well be necessary to wind up the charity. For that reason they continued to ensure that it did not incur any debts or contractual obligations which could not be met from its reserves.

r) The salaries of **Funvini's** team of psychologists, social-workers, teachers and other staff constitute by far the largest item in the Colombian charity's monthly budget. It can do little to control these because they are calculated in terms of multiples of the Colombian Statutory Minimum Wage, which is increased every year by government decree.

As has been mentioned above, at the end of 2020 and in early 2021 **Funvini** had to make several of its employees redundant because, under the present circumstances, there was no more work for them to do, and their salaries could no longer be justified. This was obviously a very painful step, and it resulted in a considerable loss of experience and talent to **Funvini**. However, by the end of 2021 the initial cost of £6,500 in redundancy payments had been outweighed by the concomitant reduction in **Funvini's** employment costs.

In 2022 **Funvini** has recruited several new employees. Although these - like most staff members who have entered **Funvini's** employment in recent years - are on annual contracts, in the past such contracts were illegal. Most of **Funvini's** longer-serving and higher-earning staff therefore have indefinite contracts that would be very expensive to terminate without just cause.

The previous Colombian government had enacted a reduction of the working-week by two hours to 38 hours, which will come in to force in 2023. The new Colombian government has announced its intention of decreeing that the extra night-time payments will have to be made to those who work after 6:00pm, rather than after 9:00pm, as has hitherto been the case. Furthermore, with inflation in Colombia likely to be running at more than 10% by the end of 2022, it is very likely that the annual increase in the National Minimum Wage that will be decreed for 2023 will be also in excess of 10%.

The new Colombian government has also announced that it intends to bring an end to the ability of employers to contract the services of self-employed professionals and

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technicians who normally provide a number of different clients with a specific service that they only require for a particular project, or on a limited number of occasions (such as one day or week per month), or at certain times of the year. Being self-employed, such people are free to undertake such work as they wish, when they wish: but they are responsible for the payment of their own social security and pension dues because they are treated as independent contractors rather than ordinary employees.

In **Funvini**'s case, this applies to such people as its computer-technician and its nutritionist, who provide the charity with vital services on an occasional basis. It is not yet clear how they will be able to continue to function, or in what way employers will be able to contract their services. The only thing that is certain is that it will be more expensive for employers.

According to a report in *El Colombiano* on 16th August 2022, the new Minister of Work, Gloria Inés Ramírez, had announced in an interview on *Blue Radio*, that “employers must guarantee stability of employment.” She maintained that instead of providing three or four people with unstable posts, employers must create a single “good” post. The danger of this, however, is that this policy will merely guarantee the permanent *unemployment* of the other three people, who - together with their dependant family members - will then also be deprived of most of their social-security benefits because people are only “affiliated” to the system while they or close family members are working.

The combination of all these new measures will result in a very sharp increase in **Funvini**'s labour costs. Jaime Alberto Cabal, the Director of FENALCO (the National Federation of Businessmen) has warned that the burden on employers could well rise by as much as 30%. He said that instead of improving working conditions, these increased costs “will result in fewer people having jobs because more resources are needed to create them.”

It is very likely that in 2023 these changes will result in severe cuts both in **Funvini**'s work-force and in the number of children whom they serve. Moreover, any reduction in the level of support from **Let The Children Live!** would also impact directly on **Funvini**'s children, in terms both of the range, frequency and quality of the services they receive, and of the number of the beneficiaries.

It therefore remains the Trustees' chief object to endeavour to raise the funds that **Funvini** so badly needs. However, they also intend to keep the charity's reserves at the highest level that is possible without harming **Funvini**'s operations.

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s) In 2022 the Dirección de Impuestos y Aduanas Nacionales (DIAN) - the Colombia equivalent of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs - implemented the introduction of the *factura electrónica*, a system of electronic invoices/receipts. If the amount of **Funvini**'s expenses that are still supported by ordinary paper receipts rather than the new electronic ones passes a certain limit, the total of such expenses that are in excess of this limit will then be subject to 19% VAT. The electronic receipts can only be issued over the internet, and copies of them will be sent not only to the purchaser or service-receiver, but also to the DIAN.

The object of this is to reduce the black economy, to increase VAT yields, and to make money-laundering more difficult. However, such a close degree of government supervision would obviously be open to abuse by an authoritarian regime. It will also greatly increase the tax and administrative burdens that companies - and charities - will have to bear at the very moment when many of them are struggling to survive the impact of rampant inflation.

In **Funvini**'s case, the combination of inflation and the introduction of the *factura electrónica* requirement seems likely to result in 2023 in an increase of at least 29% in some of its costs, for example those relating to the transport of its children and staff. Unless it receives an unexpected windfall, **Let The Children Live!** will be unable to cover these extra costs, and **Funvini** will be obliged to make compensating cuts in the services it provides, and the number of its children and staff.

t) As the competition for donations becomes ever-more intense, **Let The Children Live!** faces an increasing need to develop new ways of appealing for the public's sympathy. There are constant appeals in the media for the victims of disaster, and stories and images of children who are being enabled to go to school and to avoid catastrophe tend to have less emotional impact than those that feature children who have fallen victim to it.

The charity may well need professional help to surmount this public-relations hurdle. In the meanwhile, the Trustees believe that the best way to retain the confidence of the charity's supporters is to be completely transparent about this problem, and to explain both what is happening and why it is happening.

In particular, the Trustees think that it is very important to stress what a very small proportion of the United Kingdom's Overseas Aid Programme is devoted to helping children in Colombia, in marked contrast to the enormous sums that British drug-users squander each year on Colombian cocaine and heroin. The money they spend

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on their ‘recreational habit’ helps significantly to fuel the violence and corruption in Colombia to which so many children there continue to fall victim.

Supporting **Let The Children Live!** is one small but effective way by which people in Britain can help to undo some of this harm. Unfortunately, however, some people regard drug-consumers as innocent victims of their habit, and they therefore do not consider it politically correct for the charity to suggest that drug-users should accept some responsibility for the part they play in sustaining the drug-trade with Colombia.

u) As has been made clear above, the Trustees are very much aware of problems caused by the charity’s dependence on the income it receives from such unpredictable sources as Trusts and legacies. Attempts to reverse this trend are likely to require a significant increase in both the overall amount that the charity spends on fund-generation, and in the proportion of the charity’s expenditure that is used for this purpose.

v) The Trustees are also concerned about the impact on **Funvini** of the indefinite presence in Medellín of such large numbers of Venezuelan migrants. In terms of religion, culture, history and language, Colombia has much in common with Venezuela. It ought not, therefore, to be too difficult for Venezuelans to adapt to the Colombian life-style, or for them to be assimilated into Colombian society. Unfortunately, however, the extra competition for limited resources in the areas of healthcare, education, housing and employment has started to generate resentment in some sections of Colombian society.

The assimilation of the migrants is presenting Colombia with an enormous challenge that is not widely recognised and understood abroad, and for which she is not receiving anything like sufficient international aid. **Let The Children Live!** must do what such a small charity can to help with both of these aspects of the problem.

Funvini is monitoring the situation closely because the children it serves are drawn from the stratum of the population that has been most adversely affected by competition from the Venezuelan refugees. **Funvini** will continue to reach out to help as many of the Venezuelan children as it can. However, as the number of these children increases, **Funvini** is having to take care to show that it is not favouring the refugees over the local population.

So far, overt hostility towards the refugees has, fortunately, not become widespread: but additional strains caused by the Covid crisis are making the situation worse. According to a report published in the magazine *Semana* on 14th August 2020,

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57.9% of Colombians now disagree with the welcome being given to the Venezuelan refugees by the Colombian government, and only 39.2% agree with it. These figures were the converse of those of a similar survey of November 2018 which had found that 49.1% of Colombians then approved of their government's policy, and only 43.8% disapproved of it.

Inevitably, not all of the Venezuelans who have come to Colombia have done so for innocent motives. Some had - or have developed - links with organised crime; and some have committed acts of violence. According to a report in *El Tiempo* on 18th May 2022, between January 2017 and March 2022, a total of 2,558 Venezuelan citizens were murdered in Colombia.

However, the report also stated that in recent years the proportion of Venezuelan citizens amongst all those arrested for criminal offences in Colombia had risen from 0.3% in 2016 to 9.7% in the first months of 2022. The report therefore implied that these two sets of figures were related, and that a considerable number of the Venezuelans who had been murdered may themselves have been criminals. Nonetheless, the report emphasised that the figures indicated that fewer than 1% of the Venezuelans in Colombia were involved in criminal activity.

Reports such as this are likely to have some influence on the way in which the Venezuelan migrants are perceived by the Colombian public. In July 2022 the *Barómetro de Xenofobia* (Xenophobia Barometer) the Colombian Twitter analysis platform, reported that the incidence of remarks about Venezuelans on Twitter that it considered to be xenophobic had increased to 12% from 3% in 2021. Although this increase is certainly cause for some concern, the fact that - in spite of the vast influx of Venezuelans into Colombia - 88% of the remarks about them on Twitter were *not* xenophobic constitutes a remarkable tribute to the solidarity and tolerance that the great majority of Colombians were continuing to display towards their Venezuelan guests.

If the attitude of the Colombian public towards the Venezuelan migrants were to deteriorate, there would be a real danger that they could become the targets of violence. In that case, there might even be problems between the Colombian and Venezuelan children in **Funvini**'s programmes. There might also be a risk that charities like **Funvini** could become the targets of violence if they were perceived as being too sympathetic to the refugees.

The Trustees of **Let The Children Live!** fully support the measures being taken by **Funvini** in response to all these problems, and they will do their best to raise extra

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funds to help the Colombian charity to meet these grave and continuing challenges. However, it must be accepted that 2023 is likely to be an extremely difficult year in many ways.

Governance

Let The Children Live! is governed by a Board of Trustees/Directors, who usually meet twice a year. They are a small, well-integrated group of non-executive volunteers, who share the Christian principles upon which the charity was founded, and who are motivated by a commitment to the welfare of the children whom the charity exists to serve. The Trustees were delighted to welcome Mrs Gill Prosser to their ranks in 2022. She had been a faithful supporter of the charity ever since it was founded.

The day-to-day conduct of the charity's affairs are managed by Fr Peter Walters, as its Executive Director. None of the Trustees have any personal interests to declare, and all of them have signed the Trustees' Code of Conduct, which includes provisions to manage any potential conflicts of interest.

There must always be a minimum of *three* Trustees and there may be a maximum of *five*. The policy of the Trustees in relation to potential candidates for election to the Board is that in addition to being legally qualified to serve, the person concerned should be one:

- of whose integrity and other qualities at least either one of the existing Trustees or the Founder has considerable personal knowledge;
- who has an established history of support for and interest in the charity;
- who would be willing to subscribe to the charity's Mission and Vision Statements, and to the Trustees' Code of Conduct, which contains a conflict of interest policy;
- who is likely to inspire the confidence of the charity's supporters;
- who is likely to be able to devote to the charity the time necessary to be an effective Trustee; and
- who would be able to attend the Trustees' meetings without undue inconvenience or expense.

It is the Trustees' policy to try to keep the affairs of the charity as simple as possible, and to conduct them with the minimum of formality and bureaucratic procedures compatible with efficiency and compliance with the law; and that such professional expertise and advice as may be necessary should normally be obtained externally.

Because a new Trustee must already have some knowledge of the charity, and

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because the governance of its affairs has been designed to be so straightforward, the process of induction normally consists of a briefing by the Director and the other Trustees, and the reading of the Charity Commission's publication *The Essential Trustee*. The Trustees may subsequently undertake such further reading or training as they deem necessary.

However, as has been mentioned above, the Trustees continue to regard with grave concern the failure of the Government and of the Charity Commission to value and protect the essentially 'amateur' status of the Trustees of small charities. They suspect that part of the problem here may stem from the lack of a distinction in law between Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and charities.

Each of these types of not-for-profit body has a valuable role to play in contemporary society, but although they have elements in common, their regulatory needs and, indeed, their whole ethos tends to be very different. NGOs require detailed regulation and considerable formality in their structures and procedures, particularly if their funding depends on grants from - or contracts with - statutory bodies.

In the case of small charities, however, any excess of regulation or formality may prove stifling. They rely for their governance upon the good will and enthusiasm of part-time, non-specialist volunteers whose mentality reflects that of the private donors upon whose generosity their income chiefly depends.

The Trustees remain firmly of the opinion that the tendency towards over-regulation poses a real threat to the survival of small charities like **Let The Children Live!** because the greater the administrative burden, the harder it will be to attract new Trustees; and the more disproportionate the administrative costs, the more difficult it will become to inspire the generosity of donors who wish their money to be used for the benefit of children, not for the funding of bureaucracy. Every aspect of the regulation of charities ought always itself to be subject to strict and clear 'public benefit' criteria, including the regular evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of any public reporting burden that it imposes on smaller charities.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Charities Act 2011 requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of its income and expenditure for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required:

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- to comply with applicable accounting standards subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- to prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue its operations.

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which 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 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the charity's assets, and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Independent Examination

The Trustees share the view expressed in *The Government Response to the Consultation on Charity Audit and Independent Examination* (2015) that, except in special circumstances, "professional independent examination is a more proportionate form of scrutiny" than a full Audit for a charity with an annual income below the government's threshold of £1,000,000.

In preparing this Report, the Directors have taken advantage of the small companies exemption provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

A resolution to re-appoint Mazars LLP as Independent Examiners was passed by the Trustees at their meeting on 16th June 2022.

Approved by the Trustees, and signed on 8th September 2022 on their behalf by



Paulette Brown,
Chairman

Let The Children Live!
2, Roberts Road
Doncaster
DN4 0JW

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF LET THE CHILDREN LIVE!

I report on the financial statements of Let the Children Live! for the year ended 31 December 2021, which are set out on pages 69 to 81.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

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

This report, including my statement, has been prepared for and only for the charity's trustees as a body. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body for my examination work, for this report, or for the statements I have made.

Basis of independent examiner's report

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales which is one of the listed bodies.

In connection with my examination, which is complete, no matters have come to my attention which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect:

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE
TRUSTEES OF LET THE CHILDREN LIVE!**

- accounting records were not kept in respect of Let the Children Live! in accordance with section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the financial statements give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principals of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Signed: 
[David Hoose \(Sep 27, 2022 10:31 GMT+1\)](#)

David Hoose
Mazars LLP
Two Chamberlain Square
Birmingham
B3 3AX

Date: Sep 27, 2022

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
AGGREGATED ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2020 £
INCOME					
Voluntary Income					
General Donations		415,471	100	415,571	433,790
Shop Donations		2,134	0	2,134	1,106
Trust Donations		20,548	7,975	28,523	34,362
Legacies		83,686	0	83,686	209,573
Income Tax Recovered		122,069	0	122,069	43,345
		<u>643,908</u>	<u>8,075</u>	<u>651,983</u>	<u>722,176</u>
Trading Activities					
Sales - Mail Order		115	0	115	38
Sales - Walsingham Shop		<u>11,475</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11,475</u>	<u>5,082</u>
Investment Income					
Interest Receivable		0	0	0	72
Foreign Currency Valuation		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>295</u>
Other Income					
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme		1,705	0	1,705	5,611
Government Grants		<u>11,240</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11,240</u>	<u>11,334</u>
TOTAL INCOME		<u>668,443</u>	<u>8,075</u>	<u>676,518</u>	<u>744,608</u>
EXPENDITURE					
Raising Funds	3	26,280	0	26,280	25,691
Charitable Activities		<u>646,298</u>	<u>8,075</u>	<u>654,373</u>	<u>556,211</u>
TOTALEXPENDITURE	4	<u>672,578</u>	<u>8,075</u>	<u>680,653</u>	<u>581,902</u>
NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME		(4,135)	0	(4,135)	162,706
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		<u>368,705</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>368,705</u>	<u>205,999</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>364,570</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>364,570</u>	<u>368,705</u>

**AGGREGATED BALANCE SHEET
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

	Notes	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Assets	7	<u>2,327</u>	<u>3,104</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors (amounts falling due within one year)	8	6,626	5,768
Debtors (amounts falling due after more than one year)	9	225,000	225,000
Bank and Cash		<u>365,958</u>	<u>369,630</u>
		<u>597,584</u>	<u>600,398</u>
CREDITORS - AMOUNTS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	10	<u>(10,341)</u>	<u>(9,797)</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		587,243	590,601
CREDITORS - AMOUNTS DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR	11	<u>(225,000)</u>	<u>(225,000)</u>
NET ASSETS		<u><u>364,570</u></u>	<u><u>368,705</u></u>
 UNRESTRICTED FUNDS			
	13	364,570	368,705
RESTRICTED FUNDS			
	13	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u><u>364,570</u></u>	<u><u>368,705</u></u>

For the year ending 31st December 2021 the Company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The Directors have not required the Company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476, and they acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the 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).

Approved and authorised for issue by the Directors/Trustees,
and signed on 8th September 2022 on their behalf by



Paulette Brown,
Chairman

BALANCE SHEET
REPORTING CHARITY 1159113
31ST DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Assets	7	<u>2,327</u>	<u>3,104</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors (amounts falling due within one year)	8	8,564	6,597
Debtors (amounts falling due after more than one year)	9	225,000	225,000
Bank and Cash		<u>268,554</u>	<u>276,295</u>
		<u>502,118</u>	<u>507,892</u>
CREDITORS - AMOUNTS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR	10	<u>(12,856)</u>	<u>(7,037)</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		489,262	500,855
CREDITORS - AMOUNTS DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR	11	<u>(225,000)</u>	<u>(225,000)</u>
NET ASSETS		<u><u>266,589</u></u>	<u><u>278,959</u></u>
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	13	266,589	278,959
RESTRICTED FUNDS	13	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u><u>266,589</u></u>	<u><u>278,959</u></u>

BALANCE SHEET
LINKED CHARITY 1159113-1
31ST DECEMBER 2021

	Notes 11	2021 £	2020 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors (amounts falling due within one year)	6	4,681	371
Bank and Cash		97,404	93,335
		102,085	93,706
CREDITORS (AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR)	7	(4,104)	(3,960)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		97,981	89,746
NET ASSETS		97,981	89,746
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	9	97,981	89,746
RESTRICTED FUNDS	9	0	0
TOTAL FUNDS		97,981	89,746

**AGGREGATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

		2021 £	2020 £
	Note		
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	A	(3,672)	168,179
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities		0	72
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities		0	0
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		0	(1,499)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities		(3,672)	166,752
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		369,630	202,878
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	B	365,958	369,630
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**NOTE A Reconciliation of Net Expenditure to Cash Flow
from Operating Activities**

Net movement in funds	(4,135)	162,706
Less Interest Receivable	0	(72)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	(858)	3,046
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	544	1,465
Add back depreciation	777	1,034
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(3,672)	168,179
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

NOTE B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

Cash in hand	365,958	369,630
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total cash and cash equivalents	365,958	369,630
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

Basis of preparation

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

The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

After considering the future potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trustees consider that the Charity has sufficient reserves available to it to secure its immediate future for the next 12 to 18 months; and on that basis the Charity is a going concern.

Income

Income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the resources, it is probable that the resources will be received and their monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to pay the expenditure. All costs have been directly attributed to one of the functional categories of expenditure in the SOFA. The charity is not registered for VAT and accordingly expenditure is shown gross of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure on charitable activities

The expenditure on charitable activities includes payments to related undertakings, support costs and governance costs.

Restricted Funds

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Unrestricted Funds

The Designated Fund represents the proportion of the unrestricted funds which the Trustees consider is immediately available to them for the purpose of assisting children and young people in Colombia in accordance with the policy agreed by the Trustees. The remainder is held to protect the charity against fluctuations in income.

Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Items of a capital nature costing in excess of £200, or with an economic life of more than 4 years, are included in fixed assets. Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of fixed assets on a reducing balance basis over their estimated useful lives.

2 LEGAL STATUS OF THE CHARITY

The charity is a company registered in England Wales (No. 07140869). It is limited by guarantee, and has no share capital. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of its registered Office is: 2, Roberts Road, Doncaster DN4 0JW.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

	2021	2020
	£	£
3 AGGREGATED EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS		
Appeals	3,649	2,760
Shop	3,611	3,683
Staff costs	19,020	19,248
	<u>26,280</u>	<u>25,691</u>
4 AGGREGATED CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		
* Donations made to Funvini	<u>482,427</u>	<u>391,716</u>
Fieldwork costs:		
General	20,334	17,185
Staff costs	<u>57,824</u>	<u>59,266</u>
	<u>78,158</u>	<u>76,451</u>
Support Costs:		
General	58,592	51,791
Governance	3,888	4,290
** Staff costs	<u>31,308</u>	<u>31,963</u>
	<u>93,788</u>	<u>88,044</u>
Total Charitable Activities:	<u><u>680,653</u></u>	<u><u>581,902</u></u>

*** Funvini**

Let The Children Live! has the right to nominate a member of the Board of the Colombian charity Fundación ¡Vivan Los Niños! (Funvini). This representative has a voice but not a vote. In 2021 the representative nominated was Fr Peter Walters.

**** Support Costs — Staff**

No person was paid more than £60,000 in either year.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

		2021	2020
		£	£
5 AGGREGATED NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS			
The net movement in funds is after charging:			
Independent Examiner's fees		3,888	4,290
Employment costs	6	108,152	110,477
Depreciation of owned tangible assets	7	777	1,034
		=====	=====

6 STAFF COSTS

Salaries	88,639	87,825
National Insurance	1,752	4,907
Pension	17,761	17,745
	=====	=====
	108,152	110,477
	=====	=====

The Linked Charity had no employees of its own in either year. The average number of persons employed by the Reporting Charity during the year was as follows:

	Number	Number
Administration & Shop	3	3
Field-work, Development Education & Appeals	1	1
	=====	=====

The Charity considers that its key management personnel comprise the Trustees, the Executive Director and the Administrator. No Trustees received any remuneration or were repaid any expenses for either year. The total employment benefits - including employer National Insurance and pension contributions - of the key management personnel were £85,448 (2020: £88,349). No employees had salaries in excess of £60,000 in either year.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

7 FIXED ASSETS *

	Plant and Equipment £
COST	
At 1 January 2021	7,044
Additions	0
	<hr/>
At 31st December 2021	7,044
	<hr/> <hr/>
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 January 2021	3,940
Charge for year	777
	<hr/>
At 31st December 2021	4,717
	<hr/> <hr/>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31st December 2021	2,327
	<hr/> <hr/>
At 31 December 2020	3,104
	<hr/> <hr/>
Depreciation Rate	25% RB

* All the Fixed Assets belonged to the Reporting Charity.
The Linked Charity did not own any Fixed Assets in
either year.

	2021 £	2020 £
8 AGGREGATED DEBTORS - AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Gift Aid receivable	6,626	5,768
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

	2021 £	2020 £
8 REPORTING CHARITY DEBTORS		
- AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Gift Aid receivable	6,512	5,397
Due from related undertaking	2,052	1,200
	<u>8,564</u>	<u>6,597</u>
8 LINKED CHARITY DEBTORS		
- AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Gift Aid receivable	114	371
Due from related undertaking	4,567	-
	<u>4,681</u>	<u>371</u>
9 DEBTORS - AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR *		
Loan to Funvini	225,000	225,000
The Reporting Charity's loan is secured against a property owned by Funvini, is interest-free, and is repayable in 2029.	<u></u>	<u></u>
* The Linked Charity did not - in either year - have any Debtors with amounts falling due after more than one year.		
10 AGGREGATED CREDITORS - AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Trade Creditors	3,585	1,599
Other Creditors	2,735	3,065
Accruals	4,021	5,133
	<u>10,341</u>	<u>9,797</u>
10 REPORTING CHARITY CREDITORS		
- AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Trade Creditors	3,585	1,599
Other Creditors	2,735	3,065
Due to related undertaking	4,567	-
Accruals	1,969	2,373
	<u>12,856</u>	<u>7,037</u>
10 LINKED CHARITY CREDITORS		
- AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Accruals	2,052	2,760
Due to related undertaking	2,052	1,200
	<u>4,104</u>	<u>3,960</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

2021
£

2020
£

**11 REPORTING CHARITY CREDITORS
- AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR ***

Loan from Benefactor	225,000	225,000
The loan is interest free and repayable in 2029.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

* The Linked Charity did not - in either year - have any Creditors with amounts falling due after more than one year.

12 REPORTING CHARITY PENSION COMMITMENTS *

The Reporting Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the Company to the fund, and amounted to £17,761 (2020: £17,745). Contributions totalling £NIL were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date (2020: £1,250).

* The Linked Charity did not have any Pension Commitments in either year.

13 AGGREGATED ANALYSIS OF FUNDS

2021

	Unrestricted General fund £	Designated fund £	Restricted Funvini fund £	Total £
Income	668,443	0	8,075	676,518
Expenditure	672,578	0	8,075	680,653
Net inflow/(outflow) of funds	(4,135)	0	0	(4,135)
Transfer between funds	4,135	(4,135)	0	0
Balances at beginning of year	50,000	318,705	0	368,705
Balances at end of year	50,000	314,570	0	364,570

The Trustees designate funds held at the year end in excess of their reserve policy for the benefit of **Funvini** because of fluctuations in the rate of exchange between the pound and the Colombian peso.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

**13 REPORTING CHARITY -
ANALYSIS OF FUNDS**

2021

	Unrestricted General fund £	Designated fund £	Restricted Funvini fund £	Total £
Income	658,263	0	8,075	666,338
Expenditure	670,633	0	8,075	678,708
Net inflow/(outflow) of funds	(12,370)	0	0	(12,370)
Transfer between funds	12,370	(12,370)	0	0
Balances at beginning of year	50,000	228,959	0	278,959
Balances at end of year	50,000	216,589	0	266,589

**13 LINKED CHARITY -
ANALYSIS OF FUNDS**

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
Income	10,180	0	10,180
Expenditure	1,945	0	1,945
Net inflow/(outflow) of funds	8,235	0	8,235
Balances at beginning of year	89,746	0	89,746
Balances at end of year	97,981	0	97,981

14 CORPORATION TAX

The charity is exempt from tax on income to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

15 RELATED PARTIES

Included within creditors - amounts falling due after one year (Note 11) is an interest free loan of £225,000. This was made by a related party to the reporting charity and is repayable in 2029.

16 LINKING OF ACCOUNTS

On 26th July 2021 the Charity Commission confirmed that the Reporting Charity should be linked to the charity Let the Children Live! (charity registered with the Charity Commission No. 1159113-1, originally 1013634) for the purposes of Part 4 (registration) and Part 8 (accounting) of the Charities Act 2011.

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
AGGREGATED ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021**

16 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2020 £
INCOME				
Voluntary Income				
General Donations		433,790	0	433,790
Shop Donations		1,106	0	1,106
Trust Donations		26,247	8,115	34,362
Legacies		209,573	0	209,573
Income Tax Recovered		43,345	0	43,345
		<u>714,061</u>	<u>8,115</u>	<u>722,176</u>
Trading Activities				
Sales - Mail Order		38	0	38
Sales - Walsingham Shop		<u>5,082</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,082</u>
Investment Income				
Interest Receivable		72	0	72
Foreign Currency Valuation		<u>295</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>295</u>
Other Income				
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme		5,611	0	5,611
Government Grants		<u>11,334</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11,334</u>
TOTAL INCOME		<u>736,493</u>	<u>8,115</u>	<u>744,608</u>
EXPENDITURE				
Raising Funds		25,691	0	25,691
Charitable Activities		<u>510,103</u>	<u>46,108</u>	<u>510,103</u>
TOTALEXPENDITURE		<u>535,794</u>	<u>46,108</u>	<u>581,902</u>
NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME		200,699	(37,993)	162,706
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS: TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		<u>168,006</u>	<u>37,993</u>	<u>205,999</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>368,705</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>368,705</u>