

Community Advice Support and Education

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2021

Professor John Drury
15 Furze Hill Court
Hove
BN3 1PG

To whom it may concern,

CASE: Charity registration no. 1161466

I have been asked to examine the accounts of Community Advice Support and Education (charity reg. 1161466) for the year ending 31st March 2021, and write a brief report. I have examined the accounts, and to the best of my knowledge, there is nothing:

1. which causes me to believe that any material aspect of the requirements to keep accounting records in accordance with Part 8 s. 133 of the Charities Act 2011 and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act have not been met, or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Professor John Drury

2nd October 2021

Date

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended March 31st 2021

The trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2021. In accordance with Section 4 (6) of the Charities Act 2006 and the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 the trustees have given due regard to the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission when exercising their powers and duties during the period.

Reference and administration details

Charity name: Community Advice Support and Education

Charity Registration Number: 1161466

Address: 4 Crestway Parade,
Brighton, BN1 7BL

Bank details: Unity Trust Bank, Account 20353054, Sort Code 608301 (current account);
East Sussex Credit Union, Member Account 8095 (reserve account).

Trustees

Michael Hill (Treasurer), Felton Shortall (Chair/Secretary), Adrian Rumney, Natalie Coomber, Pip Tindall, Ernesto Granese, Stella McHugh, Sanjeedah Choudhury and Adi Archer.

Structure, governance & management

Community Advice Support and Education was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 29 April 2015. Trustees are elected from the membership in accordance with the charity's constitution.

Independent Examiner

Professor John Drury, 15 Furze Hill Court, Hove, BN3 1PG.

Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of controls, financial and otherwise. They are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the appropriate regulations. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Aims and Objectives

The objects of the Community Advice Support and Education are:

The prevention and relief of poverty and the relief of need amongst individuals and families on low incomes (whether due to low wages, irregular employment, unemployment, sickness or disabilities) in the City of Brighton and Hove and surrounding areas, regardless of race, gender, age, nationality or sexual orientation, in particular but not exclusively through:

- The provision of advice, representation and support to those on low incomes concerning welfare and employment rights and entitlements.
- The provision of small emergency grants, food, clothes and other everyday necessities.
- The provision of information regarding access to other services which may complement our advice and support.
- The organisation of educational, cultural and recreational events for those in need in order to build capacity to overcome the social and cultural barriers that cause or exacerbate poverty through:
 - The facilitation of mutual skills sharing.
 - The organisation of free educational, cultural or recreational outings, activities and events for families and individuals on low income.
 - The administration of both vocational and non-vocational educational classes, including courses of English for Speakers of Other Languages for individuals on low income.
 - The promotion of an understanding of European matters and culture amongst European migrant workers, and potential migrants workers, who are on low incomes; by providing information on the laws and constitution of the European Union and its member states, and by facilitating the mutual exchange of experiences of living and working across the European Union.



Financial Review

The financial year 2020/21 was dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which meant that we had to alter the way we delivered our services to ensure they were Covid secure and, at the same time, as meeting an increase in demand for both the provision of food to those in need and from those requiring advice due loss of work.

In response to the Covid restrictions and government guidance that came into force at the beginning of the first lockdown in March 2020, we introduced the following measures to ensure the safety of our volunteers and our clients:

1. We restricted admittance to our premises to only our volunteers. (The distribution of food and basic necessities to those coming to us in urgent need being done at our front door).
2. In order to maintain 2m social distancing inside our premises, we also restricted the numbers of volunteers working in the building at any one time to a maximum of six.
3. We ensured that the building was well ventilated by keeping doors and windows open (despite making our centre quite cold at times).
4. Our Welfare Rights team suspended all face to face advice sessions, and instead carried out consultations over the phone or via e-mail.
5. Four Welfare Rights Caseworkers worked from home, with the Team Leader coming in when necessary to coordinate the work.

Over the year we were able to secure a total of £13,547 Covid emergency funds to help us respond to the consequences of the pandemic. This included grants from Brighton & Hove City Council. This funding, together with increased supplies from Fareshare and Harvester, enabled us to substantially increase our provision of free food and basic necessities to those in urgent need. During the year we supplied from our premises up sixty people a week, and made up to fifteen deliveries a week to those housebound due to having to self-isolate or were shielding. Some grants also helped us cover the additional costs, such as phone and internet connection charges, incurred by our Welfare Rights advisors due to their home working.

These funds, however, were restricted to funding the additional cost caused by Covid. The uncertainty over Covid meant that there was a fall in both unrestricted funding and grants and donations towards our free events for families on low income.

Covid restrictions, together with limited funding, meant that we had to curtail both our Summer and Christmas events. In the Summer we were only able to have one trip, instead of the usual three. This was to Fishers Farm Adventure Park. At Christmas, with all pantomimes cancelled, and our usual Children's Christmas Party being too risky, we only had a more Covid secure event: *A Visit to Santa*. Thus, although our funding for events fell steeply, this was partly offset by a fall in our expenditure on these events.

An entirely new initiative which addressed new needs created by the Covid crisis was a series of guitar sessions aimed at combating stress, isolation and racial divisions, which increased with the lockdowns. The initiative was called Healing With Music and was initially held in the open air and under strict safety measures - later we could hire a large hall for it. The initiative was sponsored by Sussex Police through the Police Property Act Fund and later by the Community Development Fund.

We also received £3,600 from TUUT to cover our annual subscription to Fareshare and the costs incurred by our Welfare Rights Advice Team, which we still proudly consider an acknowledgment for the professionalism of our advice work and its social impact from the Trade Unions.

Like many small charities, an important part of our fundraising efforts is to meet core costs, particularly the £7,000 we need to cover the rent on our premises. In previous years we could secure £3,500 to cover six months' rent from the Brighton & Hove City Council's *Community Resilience Fund* but this source funding was suspended due to the Covid-19 emergency. However, we were able to fill this funding gap by securing a grant from the Postcode Lottery's Covid Resilience Fund.

Refurbishment: As we stated in a the previous year's Financial Statement, we are committed to an ongoing programme of refurbishment of our rather dilapidated premises in order to improve the Health & Safety standards for both our clients and volunteers, as well as to improve disability access. Last year we designated £10,000 towards the next stage of this programme which was to include: essential rewiring and improved lighting to our Front of House, new electric shutters to our windows, new doors for our welfare rights interview rooms and wheelchair ramps. Unfortunately with the Covid restrictions we had to suspend this work. Covid also highlighted the need for improved ventilation of our small and windowless offices. We have therefore increased the amount designated for the next stage of refurbishment to £11,500. The work will hopefully restart in the year 2021-22.

Summary

As the accounts show, over the financial year 2020-21 our total income was £35,998.28, while our total expenditure was £33,128.40. We therefore ended up with small surplus of £2,869.88.

The total balance on April 1st 2021 stood at £35,032.86. Of this £5,000 is restricted and £11,500 is designated to funding the next stage of refurbishment programme. This leaves £18,532.86 of unrestricted and undesignated reserves.

Our reserve policy is to keep the equivalent six months of total expenditure as undesignated and unrestricted reserves. We therefore exceed our reserve target by £1,968.





Acknowledgments

We would like to thank: Ceza DaLuz from the *Hollingdean Community Development Trust*, Trevor James FCA DChA, our local MP Caroline Lucas, Lynne Gash-Quantrell, East Sussex Branch Organiser for the PCS, and T/DS Sapna Patel and Positive Actions Officer Sasha Ahmad from Sussex Police, for their support for CASE and its activities. We also thank our local community for donating clothes books and toys, all our donors, including in particular *Sussex Community Foundation*, *Kleinwort Charitable Trust*, *T.U.U.T.* and *Bothwell Charitable Trust*, without whose generous help we would not be able to offer our services, and, last but not least, our volunteers, whose commitment and enthusiasm has been essential in sustaining CASE and its work over this very difficult year.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed:

Felton Shortall. 5th October 2021

Name: Felton Shortall

Position: Trustee (Chair/Secretary)

Signed on behalf of the Trustees on

