

Retreat House Chester Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021

registered charity number 1163330
(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

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Charity Information

registered charity name

Retreat House Chester

registered address

Retreat House Chester

9 Abbey Square

Chester

CH1 2HU

contact information

email: admin@retreathousechester.co.uk

website : www.retreathousechester.co.uk

registered charity number

1163330

trustees (as of 31 March 2021)

Rev Preb Paul Towner

Mrs Carol Bayliss

Mrs Consilia Black

Dr Claire Egan

Rev Prof Peter Gubi

Retreat House Chester Trustees' Annual Report for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021



registered charity number 1163330 (Charitable Incorporated Organisation)
registered address Retreat House Chester, 9 Abbey Square, Chester CH1 2HU

Retreat House Chester offers ways to peace in the city. Rooted gently and deeply in Christian spiritual tradition, we offer a wide range of ways to retreat for all people as a part of living – in the midst of the city and the midst of everyday life. *This year has seen some changes...*



Introduction

Making retreat widely available and accessible because it's good for people and fundamental to how we live is a founding principle of Retreat House Chester. 2020-21 has seen this purpose and its context develop in remarkable unexpected ways: making retreat available and accessible by moving online; a global encounter with Big Questions and with our humanity in all its greatness and vulnerability; and an awakening of 'spirituality'. Something has been shifting this year.

That shift makes Retreat House Chester all the more necessary. People need Peace; they need 'easy' ways to engage with big questions and spirituality. In setting up six years ago, global pandemic was not a context we envisaged. But, here in Spring 2021, it feels like we were ahead of the curve, and the time for Retreat House Chester has certainly come. This Report will show how the facts bear this out.

"I think that what happens in this hour and a half is rather extraordinary." This comment sent in after one of our events echoes much of what we are told by those who come along to activities with Retreat House Chester – that what we are doing is special and also that it is hard to find elsewhere. We are glad that we have been able to find ways to continue to offer our 'ways to retreat for all people as a part of living', throughout a year which may be described as 'extraordinary' in itself.

In the first lockdown of March 2020, like many charities, we found ourselves working out how we might survive such a change to our work and such uncertainty ahead. From swiftly adapting to online resources and then to online events as the crisis lengthened, and with the essential support of grant funding, Retreat House Chester has both negotiated a way through the year and also discovered and developed ways which will be worth carrying with us into the future.

"Thank you for the wonderful opportunity you are giving us." Time and again, folk have sent in their thanks. We, in turn, thank all those who have been a part of Retreat House Chester this year. This Report describes our work, explores its impact, celebrates endeavour, and plans for the changed and changing times ahead.



Who we are: Structure, Governance & Management

Retreat House Chester is a not-for-profit community venture inspired and driven by local people and working to offer retreat as an essential part of living for everyone.

Trustees

Retreat House Chester is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), governed by Constitution. Trustees are appointed by serving trustees, in accord with the Constitution and good practice set out by the Charity Commission.

Trustees:

Paul Towner (Chair)	appointed February 2018; reappointed February 2020 (to Feb 2022)
Carol Bayliss	appointed May 2019 (to May 2022)
Consilia Black	appointed May 2019 (to May 2022)
Claire Egan	appointed October 2020 (to Oct 2023)
Peter Gubi	appointed October 2020 (to Oct 2023)

Trustees whose term of office ended during the year

<i>Peter Howell-Jones</i>	<i>founding trustee, appointed August 2015; reappointed August 2018 (to Aug 2020)</i>
<i>John (Terry) Green (Chair)</i>	<i>appointed November 2016; reappointed November 2018 (to Nov 2020)</i>

Treasurer (not a trustee):

Don Dickson	appointed March 2017
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Co-ordinator (not a trustee):

Clare Black	appointed for 12 months part-time, March 2018; reappointed for same, Mar2019, Mar2020, Mar2021
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New trustees, by Constitution, are appointed by the Trustee Body, and we actively seek to address the needs of the Body and the Charity in terms of diversity, ethos and skills in making new appointments. We are very glad to have appointed two new trustees in October 2020 with, between them, relevant experience of education, ministry, retreat work and pastoral care, as well as organisational practice. We recognise the importance of good governance. We hold a strategic plan, a risk register and comprehensive policies. Our attention to regulatory requirements and good practice is thorough.

Staff & Volunteers

The work of Retreat House Chester is carried out on a day-to-day basis by our Co-ordinator, who oversees a diverse and successful programme as well as undertaking the administrative work of the charity. This year, because of the pandemic, that work has been carried out at home.

Retreat House Chester is supported in its work by a team of 15 volunteers from across the community involved with our programme, administration, fundraising, and marketing. Their involvement and enthusiasm strengthens our community character, and their skills and experience reinforce our belief that a grassroots venture such as ours draws on talent and enthusiasm and can be very successful. In

addition to this team, we have a volunteer team of 11 retreat guides who are experienced in offering one-to-one spiritual accompaniment.

The activities of this team have had to change this year due to the effects of the pandemic, with the first national lockdown starting just days before our Year 2020-21 began. That said, the success and indeed survival of RHC this year has been a collaborative effort with people supporting our work as trustees, staff, volunteers (as facilitators, resource contributors, and IT help), and guest retreat leaders, as well as donors and indeed by attending our events. Through the involvement and support of many, RHC has negotiated the challenges of the year and is emerging strengthened.

if we volunteer

from *Wellbeing Factors that Matter*

<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/>

While celebrating the work of our team, for some time we have recognised the need for an Assistant Co-ordinator to support the charity as it continues to expand. The funding and recruitment of an Assistant Co-ordinator was put on hold during the uncertain times of the pandemic, but will be a key focus for us this coming year.



What we do and why: Objectives and Activities

The object of the CIO is to advance the Christian religion for the benefit of the public mainly, but not exclusively, through the provision of facilities, education, training and personal support to enable the exploration and experience of spirituality.

(from our Constitution)

Retreat House Chester offers 'retreat in the city – as a part of living', to make the many benefits of retreat available to as wide a range of people as possible and to make it as accessible as possible. Our initiative for an independent charitable non-residential facility is an imaginative response to contemporary needs. Retreat House Chester understands both interior life and the value of community, especially in a city context, and we seek to improve engagement with spirituality, for the benefits it brings both personally and socially. We believe that spiritual thirst is a contemporary form of poverty, and that responding to this is a matter of human dignity and social justice. Pandemic circumstances make this more urgent and necessary than ever. In addition, the fact that we do not have a residential character, and we promote retreat in everyday living, means that much of our programme could be adapted to online events with confidence and success, and our way of 'everyday' retreat became more familiar to people.

Our Vision and Values centre on 'peace' and the wholeness it brings. We seek to build peace and fullness of life for individuals, within communities, and across the city. In doing this, we value: hope; human worth; relationship; the strength of gentleness; roots & responsibility; and being small in a big picture. Our full Vision & Values document is available on our website.

We are careful to make clear that our roots are in Christian spiritual tradition and our ecumenical character in line with that of Churches Together in Britain & Ireland.

Peace

To this house;

To those who enter;

To those who dwell here;

To those who depart,

Peace

our well-loved Retreat House blessing

We are a member organisation of the Retreat Association and of Cheshire West Voluntary Action.

Benefits

Retreat is not just personal. There are social benefits to providing non-residential retreat in a city context. From research and feedback, we are able to demonstrate both personal and social benefits to our activities. Such benefits include amongst others: improved wellbeing; improved relationships; reduced isolation (a well-recognised feature of urban life); enhanced spiritual experience/depth experience; improved community health; improved workplaces; increased knowledge of Christian spirituality; and the opportunity for dialogue between Christianity and the public realm. In Spring 2020 we undertook in-depth research into our impact, through one-to-one conversations with people who know Retreat House Chester well and who represent a range of backgrounds. The results of this are detailed in our Report for 2019 – 20, and outline how we are responding to need and delivering key benefits of wellbeing, resilience, spiritual experience and relationship. Feedback received this year follows in 'Our Success'.

Need in changed times

Results from our feedback exercise in Spring 2020 revealed to us just how much people felt they needed what RHC offers. The sudden changes this year to how we work and live could have meant that we were no longer able to provide for need, or that people found that they needed us less than they had thought. Quite the opposite has been the case, with the success of RHC clear in the ongoing long-term participation of so many, others coming along for a second or third time, and the number of first-timers. One need worth specific mention is the value of 'local' at a time when people can and do access online events anywhere in the world. We have been told repeatedly that people join us online because we are local, giving a sense of local connection and relationship at a time when we have all needed such things. Here are just some examples of the need people tell us about, from Spring 2020 onwards:

our spiritual life,
or belief system

from *Wellbeing Factors that Matter*
<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/>

our sense of belonging to
our neighbourhood

from *Wellbeing Factors that Matter*
<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/>



important to be able to speak to people at depth... there are very few places you can do this... I can be with people where spiritual experience is not taboo... there's a danger for me of not having a communal setting for spirituality sometimes... I have no other way of accessing all I have learned here... without RHC, I would not have the energy to do the other things I do... RHC has a fantastic neutrality about it, a faith environment that is non-threatening, relaxed and comfortable... I find peace and hope in RHC just existing – it's a positive contribution to the diversity of Chester... RHC in many many ways helps me in this wilderness... thank you so much for this invitation, particularly at this time and for us who are mainly alone.... many thanks to you for all the work you have done this year to keep us all connected. It has meant a great deal to me... a lifeline...

People recognise that RHC offers something distinctive: a neutral faith environment where spirituality, or depth to life, is not taboo and which offers encounter with others. It's the kind of thing this self-professed 'faithless' journalist, in the national press, is saying we need now in these changed and changing times:

how satisfied we are with our lives
how worthwhile we feel our lives are
how we rate our mental wellbeing

from *Wellbeing Factors that Matter*
<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/>

... the chance of any shared reflection on the last year's events still seems slim. Secularised societies do not really work like that. And Britain is a perfect example, as proved by a prospect that somehow feels both exciting and absurd: a return to shops, pub gardens and "normality", and people being encouraged to make merry as if nothing has happened.

In the first phase of the pandemic, there were clear signs that a lot of us needed much more. Across 95 countries, Googling the word "prayer" increased by 50%...

For many of us, life without God has turned out to be life without fellowship and shared meaning – and in the midst of the most disorientating, debilitating crisis most of us have ever known, that social tragedy now cries out for action.

from *How do faithless people like me make sense of this past year of Covid?*

John Harris www.theguardian.com March 28 2021

Our Activities: find, experience, explore, connect – in changed times

The four-fold invitation of our programme - to **find, experience, explore and connect** - derives from the monastic way of silence, prayer, study, labour and community - a way which has inspired retreat across centuries and across cultures, and a way which is written into the history of Chester with its monastic heritage. It inspires a diverse programme, with a range of ways to be involved.

This year, all of our programme activities have been online. We responded quickly to lockdown by developing 'Living Differently': three months of resources available on our website, week by week, resulting in 21 lasting resources reflecting our character and 'normal' activities, for people to use at home. These gave a means of not just resourcing people but also of introducing many to what we do, in an easy-to-use way. As Zoom became a more familiar way of being in touch, and as it became clear that there would be no imminent 'return to normal', we began to offer live online programme activities, and we appreciate here the volunteer assistance and commitment we had in the development of this. By the end of March 2021, we had hosted 38 programme Zoom events across seven months.



delivering our programme online in a pandemic

A key event (and our biggest) was in October when we welcomed international speaker Laurence Freeman, Director of the World Community for Christian Meditation, for a day which had been long-planned as an in-person event but instead saw him joining us from France on Zoom. An important initiative has been the successful introduction of a study course (in Christian contemplative spirituality) and a training course (in hosting conversation). For more on these activities see 'Our Success'.

if we are engaged in
formal or informal
learning

from *Wellbeing Factors that Matter*

<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/>

Our ability to offer these resources and activities in such uncertain and swiftly changing times is with thanks to the support of funding from the Steve Morgan Foundation, Cheshire West and Chester Council, the Westminster Foundation (with CWaC), the Jesuit Fund for Social Justice, and the World Community for Christian Meditation. This has been a hugely challenging year for charities – including RHC – and the support of funders who recognise that fact has been crucial to charitable activity and indeed the survival of organisations. More on this follows in the 'Finance' section of this Report.

Our Beneficiaries

We believe that Retreat House Chester addresses a fundamental human need, which is inadequately resourced. Research shows that spiritual experiences relate to a fundamental dimension of human existence and are frequently reported across all cultures, and that any individual regardless of their particular religion or lack thereof may have spiritual experience. Indeed, retreat itself is common across cultures and through history; we like to say it is 'as old as the hills'.

This year there has been widespread attention to the presence and manner of 'religion' as a question in the 10-year National Census, prompting this editorial in the national press:

The majority of us do not belong to any religion. But for most, atheism is not an option either... The largest bloc [in Prof Linda Woodhead's research] was made up of "maybes, doubters, and don't knows", plus a group who did believe in God, a higher power or in "something there". The younger the cohort, the smaller the proportion of atheists.

...Perhaps the atheist Philip Larkin got to the nub of it 70 years ago, when communal Christian worship still flourished. In his poem *Church Going*, Larkin wrote that such places have an aura because they satisfy in us "A hunger ... to be more serious". Congregations may have since thinned out, but spiritual hunger is part of the human condition. It will find other outlets and means of expression in the years to come.

from *The Guardian view on 'post-Christian' Britain: a spiritual enigma* Editorial March 28 2021

We recognise that an absence of 'religious practice' does not mean an absence of spirituality or a lack of desire to engage with this human characteristic. Pandemic times are giving this greater prominence, and there must be ready ways to respond to this personal and social need. In setting up in 2015, RHC has been, it now seems, ahead of the curve.

We make the invitation to 'come as you are'. It has always been a founding priority to make retreat as available and accessible as possible. To this end we have defined four ways in which to reach beneficiaries: our retreat programme; one-to-one; the general public through Reflective Chester

activities, especially pop-up and online; and social groups through groups bookings and Reflective Chester sessions with marginal and vulnerable groups.

Our programme activities have made a successful transition to online this year. It has been less easy to work in the four ways outlined above to reach our full range of beneficiaries. Early on, while we were still offering only the Living Differently resources, and without the ready online infrastructure ourselves, we decided to refer anyone seeking one-to-one to another organisation (St Beuno's / Jesuits) who were already offering this online. Lockdown meant we had to cancel the group bookings we had for Spring 2020. Nonetheless, we have developed an online Reflective Chester session and delivered this successfully to Cheshire & Warrington Carers in January 2021; in March 2021 we ran a training course in offering Reflective Chester sessions and our volunteers will start rolling this out in Spring – Summer 2021, with a particular focus on marginal groups. We have also explored with our volunteers and our network new ways of reaching existing groups as we emerge from and continue to live with the pandemic.

Covid-19 is a collective trauma that has changed all of our lives. But while we are all in it together, we're not all experiencing it the same way. And there is clear and compelling evidence that people experiencing the biggest disadvantages and injustices before the pandemic are being affected more severely by both the virus and its effects on our mental health.

Andy Bell, Deputy Chief Executive -
Centre for Mental Health

We continue to offer a varied programme and at different times of day and week. While, regrettably, pop-up in-person activities have been impossible, meaning we had to cancel planned community activities and affecting our work with the wide public, we have designed our programme and Living Differently resources with breadth of access and appeal firmly in mind. A Reflective Chester page was introduced to our website, and Reflective Chester has been our main social media focus.

As in other years, those who come to us include people who live alone, are bereaved, retired, elderly, new to Chester, or caring for a family member. This year we know that isolation and mental health have been major areas of need. For feedback from our participants, see 'Our Success'.



changed ways of reaching beneficiaries in a pandemic

Our provision is non-denominational, and our operations reflect this. This has developed to be a key characteristic and gives a firm basis for work with the interfaith and non-religious communities.



Our success: Achievements and Performance

Key Achievements

Negotiating a way through uncertain times is undoubtedly the key achievement of the year. In further detail, we celebrate the following key achievements:

❖ programme

exceeded **target increase** in bookings, if taken at a monthly average
adapted swiftly to pandemic circumstances by creating **online resources**
devised a successful programme of **online events**
ran first longer-term **study course** – increased places to meet demand
ran first **training course** – to deliver Reflective Chester (focus on **marginal groups**)

❖ operations

further developed **collaborative working** on programme delivery
initiated confident **online delivery**
established **contingency arrangements** for operations
appointed two **new trustees**

❖ marketing & fundraising

set up **online giving** with Charities Aid Foundation and Stewardship
individual giving increased
successful **funding bids** significantly increased income

Delivery & Output

Always, our primary achievement is the delivery of our charitable objective – ways to explore and experience spirituality. The ways in which RHC has grown in this remarkable year give encouragement and ground for confidence. (Figures in brackets below give the comparison from 2019-20.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ❖ 38 events across seven months (82 across ten months, inc pop-up, drop-in and group bookings) | ❖ 41% visited at least twice (37%) |
| ❖ 21 resources across three months (0) | ❖ 29% visited at least three times (25%) |
| ❖ 393 bookings in seven months (410 bookings in ten months) | ❖ 43% bookings were new visitors (53%) |
| ❖ 82 individuals booking across seven months (82 individuals booking across ten months) | ❖ 10.5 average number attendees / programme event (5) |
| | ❖ 14 individuals with group booking (60 no pop-up or drop-in events (125 individuals last year) |

In summary – although we offered fewer events, our bookings did not suffer; rather, in terms of averages, they improved by 100% with more than 10 people per event – meaning our ‘capacity’, when measured by the space we have in Abbey Square, exceeded 100% (last year, 84% for events in person). This will inform our thinking next year as we consider our location and use of venues and online activities. There is an increased rate of repeat bookings. In addition to events, our online Living Differently resources were viewed almost 1500 times in the year.

We regret, though, the impossibility of hosting the group bookings, pop-ups and drop-ins of normal times, all of which were set to expand in 2020-21 and which had to be cancelled in the pandemic. These will be key activities in the year ahead, as circumstances allow and probably in new ways.

We are confident in the quality of what we offer, and that this has not suffered in the move online, as in the example feedback here and throughout this Report.



material which is so well produced and helpful... wonderful resources just a fingertip away... I am enormously impressed with the material. So another thank you for initiating it... you have made RHC website very easy for us to use... congratulations on putting together such a good programme, it looks very exciting... thoughtful questions and gentle facilitation were excellent... ever-gracious facilitation... the sessions I have joined so far have been wonderful... the session was informative, participative and most of all enjoyable... Thank you for this morning, it was wonderful... I want to thank you so much for the Advent Retreat... Thank you for the last weeks, it's been wonderfully helpful... Thank you for another very enjoyable and very useful session. They just get better and better and I am going to miss them when they finish... Thanks so much for a wonderful course. It's been brilliant... The series and today have been extraordinarily rich, overflowing with possibilities at every point - such a profound experience.... We remain so grateful for what RHC has provided this year under very difficult circumstances.... Just to say thank you so much for this retreat. It was a really fruitful time... thought-full, thought inspiring, sensitively crafted. Also, in a practical way I thought the format totally worked... When will you be having another session?... Thank you for such a beautifully led retreat this morning... a very thoughtful, inspiring and challenging day... Thank you for making this day happen... Thank you so much for organising the event. I cannot explain how much I enjoyed it and I think/hope received so much... Let's have more of these please...

Feedback & Outcomes

Good things happen on retreat, and there are positive outcomes. In Spring 2020 our in-depth feedback exercise was with people who knew Retreat House Chester well through a full range of our activities over a significant length of time. What emerged was a detailed reinforcement of feedback we had gathered in a variety of ways in past years, and some surprising positive revelations. Reinforcement included: impact on wellbeing, with a bias towards nourishment and resilience; spiritual experience; and relationships. New emerging themes were: the benefit to physical health; the value of silence; the enabling of personal growth and development; the joy of ecumenical relationships; and the unique contribution Retreat House Chester makes in the experience of faith.

Feedback this year has been more informal, sent in by email along the way (approx. 50% of participants), but the comments received still serve to reinforce the pattern of positive impact that we find over the years. Here are just some examples:



wellbeing,
nourishment
& resilience

I am finding the resources on the Living Differently pages so useful and stimulating and enriching... comforting and calming... I enjoyed looking at the well-being pages... Thank you for a lovely relaxing morning yesterday... I really enjoyed it at the time and have benefitted from it deeply since... calming and productive... I'm receiving so much from these sessions... so helpful, challenging and embracing... wonderfully helpful... I feel nurtured and encouraged... After several months alone in self isolation as a vulnerable person, it meant a great deal... it is a way of supporting people



the slideshow is a contemplative experience in itself... a sanctuary... I feel that RHC has become 'church' for me in the last few months, with all that implies... a chance to share faith and deepen it, which I have never done before on Zoom and feel encouraged by... people are enabled to share what is in their hearts, and I have never experienced anything quite like it, not in many, many years of participating in small groups in a faith setting... I felt we were like desert fathers and mothers today, gone out to the Zoom desert to talk about "what it is to be in relationship with God"... I really valued the personal reflecting time: it was enriching... the graceful space that is Retreat House Chester... It's nice to set aside time and make space for God to push through the soil... Thank you for such a beautifully led retreat this morning. I have taken a lot from it and it will carry me through the rest of Lent and beyond.



relaxing and chatting with people was lovely... enjoyed meeting some new people... authentic listening and connection... what a great idea to have Companions Contacts... It's lovely to see friends again as our screens expand at the start of Zoom!... It was so lovely to see, and hear, people again... The breakout rooms I have been in have been very good, as close to 'being there' as I have experienced on Zoom, through people's willingness to listen to each other... I think I can hardly believe that a group can develop such a trust using Zoom. Clearly I have a lot to learn... many thanks to you for all the work you have done this year to keep us all connected...

We are glad and proud that RHC has been able to make the good things of retreat available through this year.

Targets

In pandemic circumstances we are very pleased to have achieved most of our targets for 20 – 21. Those we missed were related to material circumstances (launching our lending library; improving our premises) or funding (employing an Assistant Co-ordinator; finding significant funding for longer-term operation). In the light of this, and our three-year plan, we have the following targets for 2021 - 22:

❖ programme

- increase engagement & attendance as per 3-year plan adapted to pandemic situation, re-establishing groups and one-to-one, and expanding courses
- launch lending library resource
- increase our use of other locations
- improve our own premises

❖ operations, marketing & fundraising

- continue to create collaboration opportunities
- expand Friends scheme
- develop opportunities to provide consultancy
- fund and employ Assistant Co-ordinator, and appoint new treasurer
- find significant funding for longer term operation

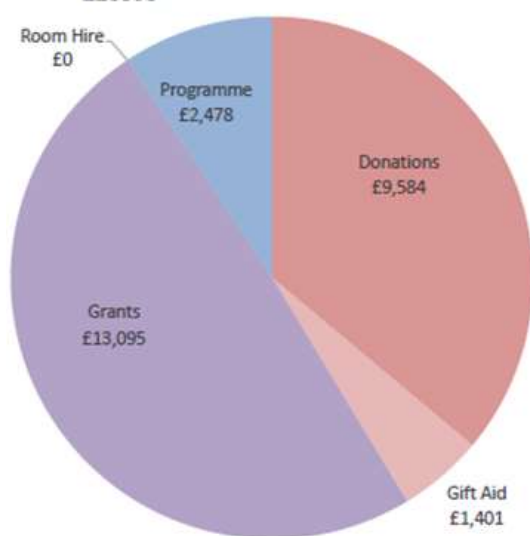


Financial review

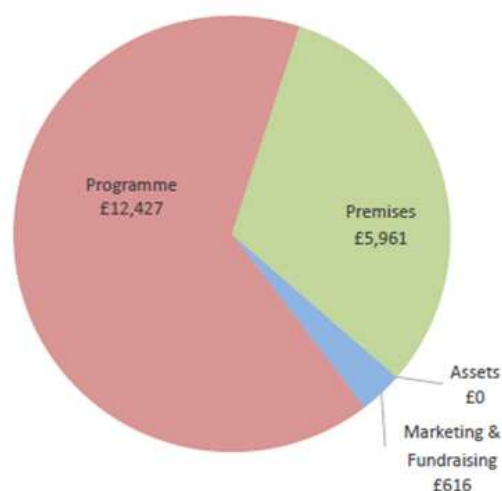
In 2019-20, income was at 44% of expenditure. This year, income has been 140% of expenditure, thanks to a significant increase in donations and grants. In Spring 2020, we knew that our sustainability would depend on fundraising; the support we received through donations and grants – in no small way as a result of the pandemic – has meant we can close the year with some confidence. Nonetheless, it remains the case that it is donations and grant funding that will ensure our continued work, and a larger grant or donation would provide necessary ongoing security for our work and enable us to focus our energies on expansion and delivery.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Income	£31,899	£26,720	£6,537	£9,026	£26,558
Founding Benefactors	£20,000	£15,000	0	0	0
Donations +Gift Aid	£ 8,037	£ 7,501	£3,192	£4,365	£10,985
Grants	0	£ 400	£ 250	£1,500	£13,095
Programme	£ 3,862	£ 3,819	£3,095	£3,096	£2,478
Room hire	0	0	£ 34	£ 65	0

Income 2020-2021
£26558



Expenditure 2020-2021
£19004



	2016-17	2017-18	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Expenditure: Charitable Activities	£7,696	£10,391	£28,340	£20,737	£19,004
Premises	£3,177	£ 4,920	£ 5,723	£ 6,594	£ 5,961
Marketing+Fundraising	£1,860	£ 1,639	£ 1,454	£ 804	£ 616
Programme	£1,501	£ 2,945	£12,828	£13,133	£12,427
Assets inc refurb	£1,158	£ 887	£ 8,335	£ 206	0

Income

The reduction in our programme income can be attributed to two facts: we ran events for seven months rather than ten, and an increased number of those events were free of charge / donations invited. Conversely, the donations received through such events account for part of the increase in donations this year, along with a general increase in giving from our supporters in the pandemic and in a growing Friends Scheme. Grants received this year were essential to us and are as follows:

Steve Morgan Foundation	£1500	emergency funding restricted to support running costs for the production of 'Living Differently' resources for April – June 2020, our work in those months of lockdown
Cheshire West and Chester	£900	emergency funding restricted to support the running costs for the production of 'Living Differently' resources for April – June 2020, our work in those months of lockdown
Jesuit Fund for Social Justice	£1845	emergency funding for retreat in the city, unrestricted to support running costs
Jesuit Fund for Social Justice	£3850	for Reflective Chester, restricted to running costs of activities of this outreach project
Cheshire West and Chester	£5000	discretionary covid funding, unrestricted to support the charity in the pandemic

Restricted funds were spent accordingly and the closing balance at 31 March 2021 of £1,705 represents the amount still to be spent from the Jesuit Fund for Social Justice grant.

We are very thankful for the support of all donors, and are glad of the recognition of the importance of our work.

Expenditure

Expenditure is largely comparable with last year, with some slight reduction due to reduced operations. We spend responsibly and essentially. We know that meeting our costs depends on successful fundraising, and priorities ahead will be expansion of our services, the employment of an Assistant Co-ordinator, additional and improved premises, and the continued ability to offer activities at low or no charge.



Conclusion

As we enter our sixth full year, after a year of great challenge, we celebrate the many successes in the further development of this innovative venture to offer retreat in the city as a part of living, and we look ahead to the future with confidence in our resilience and adaptability, while recognising that we need support in our work so that people can continue to benefit from this deeply worthwhile offer to find, experience, explore and connect. It is certainly true that there has been noticeable public attention during this crisis to the human need and capacity for the things that we call 'retreat' and we believe Retreat House Chester will have much to offer in what emerges from these times, both immediately and into the future.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.
Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

signature
signed copy in office
full name Paul Towner
date

signature
signed copy in office
full name Consilia Black
date



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Retreat House Chester

1163330

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2020

To

31/03/2021

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Voluntary donations	9,584	-	-	9,584	3,861
Gift Aid claimed on donations	1,401	-	-	1,401	504
Founding benefactors	-	-	-	-	-
Programme income	2,478	-	-	2,478	3,096
Grant funding	6,845	6,250	-	13,095	1,500
Room Hire	-	-	-	-	65
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	20,308	6,250	-	26,558	9,026
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	20,308	6,250	-	26,558	9,026
A3 Payments					
Marketing + Fundraising	117	19	-	136	319
Licences & Subscriptions	78	12	-	90	130
information Technology	337	53	-	390	355
Accommodation (premises)	3,840	1,396	-	5,236	5,720
Insurance	496	181	-	677	823
Office costs	35	13	-	48	51
Programme costs	476	173	-	649	1,148
Programme delivery: staff	8,638	3,140	-	11,778	11,985
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	14,017	4,987	-	19,004	20,531
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
For programme and refurb	-	-	-	-	206
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	206
Total payments	14,017	4,987	-	19,004	20,737
Net of receipts/(payments)	6,291	1,263	-	7,554	- 11,711
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	11,052	442	-	11,494	23,205
Cash funds this year end	17,343	1,705	-	19,048	11,494

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Co-op adjusted bank balance	9,226	1,705	-
	Cash float	49	-	-
	HSBC adjusted bank balance	8,068	-	-
	Total cash funds	17,343	1,705	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
				-
				-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

RETREAT HOUSE CHESTER

On accounts for the year
ended

31 MARCH 2021

Charity no
(if any)

1163330

Set out on pages

17-18

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below~~*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect,:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Neville Kite

Date:

21/07/2021

Name:

NEVILLE KITE

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

F.C.M.A (FELLOW OF CHARTERED INSTITUTE
OF MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANTS)

Address:

CHELTON

ROWTON LANE

CHESTER CH3 6AT

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

signed copy in office