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ANNUAL REPORT 1st APRIL 2023 – 31st MARCH 2024

This has been another busy and successful year for WCA. Continued funding challenges have certainly been an area which Trustees have discussed at length and I thank them for their continued involvement and support, and appreciation of the difficulties that a small infrastructure organisation faces.

Topics discussed by the trustees covered a broad range of topics including: membership, succession planning, business plans, fundraising strategy, funding, possible redundancy, corporate and business sponsorship and the future of The Angel Centre. Unfortunately, due to lack of continuation funding, the Good Neighbour project finished in August 2023 and Jackie Murrall, the project worker, was made redundant. Trustees were very grateful for the work undertaken and were disappointed by the project finishing.

Jackie Phillips, Ian Jones and Gemma Taylor-Roberston each resigned as trustees during the year, with the Chair thanking them all for their involvement and support for WCA.

Funding has taken much time for both the trustees and the Chief Officer. Over a dozen funding applications were submitted with only a few successful outcomes. However, we will continue to work as a team to continue submitting applications. In addition, as we are the only local infrastructure organisation in the county that doesn't receive any funding from it's District Council; we held a meeting with Cllr Jabba Riaz, Chair of the Communities committee and we hope to meet with the Council Managing Director in 2024. However, we thank those city and county councillors who donated funds from their divisional allocation to WCA – we are very grateful for their continued support.

Our two main areas of work have continued, through our Infrastructure support to the sector and volunteer marketing and recruitment. Over the year we have provided a range of services including funding support, policy development, DBS and banking support, trustee and volunteer recruitment, training opportunities and best practice governance.

Groups supported include: Open Door Café, Mason Foundation, Next Steps, Tudor House, Shopmobility and St Richards Hospice. Our DBS service continues to be an important service for the sector, whilst bringing in much needed core funding. We underwent a DBS compliance check and were found satisfactory. We organised a training session about Insurance whilst our Chief Officer undertook a cyber security training session.

Our other core service is promoting and marketing volunteering, along with recruiting volunteers and offering a brokerage service to the sector. Our weekly 'Lend a Hand' column in Worcester Berrow's Journal continues to be a very positive vehicle for recruitment, as well as helping to show the variety of opportunities available in the city. Out thanks to the Editor for his continued support. 'Lend a Hand' is also circulated to the University Students' Union; Worcester 6th Form College; Heart of Worcestershire College; the NHS, as well as being placed on our website and social media. Many

local organisations ask us to promote their opportunities including: Sight Concern; Age UK; Behind the Smile; YSS; Worcester Wheels and Young Carers – evidence of the need for this service.

We have continued to organise VOW (Voluntary Organisations of Worcester) network meetings, which continue to be well supported. These meetings have led to the development of partnerships and collaborative working which benefits both services and the community. Meetings continue to be held in different settings, which has been useful for getting a 'taster' for the work of members. We also continue to work with other local infrastructure organisations throughout the county through WeCan, as well as continuing our relationship with Here2Help and other volunteer leaders across the voluntary and statutory sector.

Our Annual Volunteer Expo was again held, with 45 organisations being represented at the Guildhall. Due to its popularity we decided to utilise both floors which enabled more organisations to attend. Over 300 people attended and the final evaluation was very positive - clearly an encouragement for 2025!

We also attended a Worcestershire County Council Wellbeing event at County Hall, promoting volunteering to staff and visitors.

Throughout the year, our Chief Officer maintained involvement with a number of local initiatives. These included the County Loneliness group; the Worcestershire VCSE Alliance; the Worcester City Town's Deal Board; the Worcester District Collaborative. Being involved in these helps to ensure that the voice and concerns of the voluntary and community sector continue to be heard, and we are in a better position to report back to VOW members about decisions which might impact the sector and the community. In addition, we have continued to provide the secretariat to the Warndon and Tolladine Form, ensuring our connection within two socially deprived areas of the city.

As a member of NAVCA, we have attended several workshops, meeting others working in the sector across the country. Quarterly network meetings and information about initiatives such as 'Vision for Volunteering', have helped us to be aware of how other organisations work, as well as enabling us to share issues and concerns.

Future Plans

a) Continue to develop our infrastructure support services to the sector including organisational development, as well as continuing with our DBS umbrella service.

b) Continue with our volunteer marketing, promotion, recruitment and brokerage service. Develop our social media presence

c) Develop a strategic plan for WCA aligned with a membership scheme, a fundraising strategy and an updated business plan

d) Continue to submit funding applications particularly to cover our core services to ensure our long-term sustainability.

e) Work with the City Council to plan and deliver the Annual Volunteer Expo

f) Ensure our VOW network continues to offer organisations the opportunity to share information, concerns and issues as well as to develop partnerships and collaborative working.

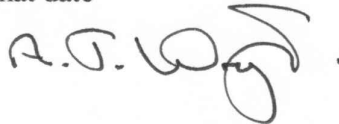
Finally, I would like to express the sincere thanks of all trustees to our Chief Officer, Sally Ellison, who has continued to maintain her excellent commitment to WCA. We also want to show our appreciation for the support of our volunteers, Jan and Annette. Both of them have contributed to WCA's continued success.

Worcester Community Action – Charity 1172121

Balance Sheet at 31st March

		2024	2023
ASSETS			
Cash at Bank		25,356	23,261
Debtor		<u>-</u>	<u>50</u>
		25,356	23,311
Less Creditor	228		
Held for Open Door Café	8,553		
Held for WCWA	-		
Received in advance	<u> </u>	8,781	5808
		<u>16,575</u>	<u>17,503</u>
Reflected in:			
Restricted Funds			
Good Neighbourhood Network	-		1,398
Unrestricted Funds			
Balance at 1 st April 2023	16,105		
Excess of Income for year	<u>470</u>		
		16,575	16,105
		<u>16,575</u>	<u>16,105</u>

I have examined the accounts of Worcester Community Action shown on the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st March 2024 and checked them against the books and records produced to me, together with explanations given and I am satisfied they show a true and fair view of the position of the charity at 31st March 2024 and of its results for the year ended on that date



A J Wright FCA

27th September 2024