

Trustee Annual Report

Cirencester Signpost

‘Embracing Hope, Creating Community’

**Creating opportunities for lives to be transformed,
empowered and uplifted**

01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

Registered Charity Number 1175014

Introduction

The trustees of Cirencester Signpost present their annual report for the period from 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

Having navigated the effects of the Covid pandemic, the onset of the cost-of-living crisis provided financial challenges for us operationally but also opportunities to outreach beyond our 'drop ins' stretching out into the local community meeting hurting people directly at their point of need.

This report reflects our efforts creating opportunities for lives to be uplifted, empowered and transformed.

Objectives and Activities

In accordance with Christian principles, the relief of poverty for those in need with a particular focus on those who are homeless in Cirencester and the immediate surrounding area in particular, but not exclusively by:

- The provision of 'drop in' sessions offering advocacy, a befriending service and information on other local agencies
- Providing free meals to help relieve poverty
- The provision of clothing, footwear and toiletries together with assistance to find housing

With a view to integrating such people into society.

Review of Activities and Achievements

Our weekly Well-being Café continued to provide a safe, inclusive space for people to connect offering a range of free hot meals and drinks as through eating together meaningful relationships are formed. This provides an effective starting point to build trust, progressing to establishing support networks to get lives back on track whilst simultaneously promoting positive mental health and well-being.

During the year, it became apparent that many were struggling due to the cost-of-living crisis. We sought to play our part in helping to mitigate at least some of their difficulties and in November 2022, we launched our weekly Good Neighbour Hub.



Initially trialled for the winter months, this warm space provides a hot two-course meal and additionally to the homeless, the provision of clothing such as thermal vests, socks, gloves and hats along with sturdy footwear.

As numbers increased week on week, it was obvious that the hub was proving to be a success in meeting the needs of people, physically, emotionally and mentally and we took the decision to integrate our hub into our ongoing activities and make it all year round.



With assisting those finding themselves homeless remaining at the core of our charitable objectives, we provided 68 home-starter packs of key kitchen, bedding, bathroom and cleaning essentials to those previously homeless moving from emergency accommodation into a new home of their own including mums and their young children fleeing domestic violence and the war in Ukraine.



On 30 occasions, we helped people who found themselves in a significant crisis. This included those finding themselves having to sleep rough. Often fleeing a mentally and emotionally traumatising experiences such as domestic violence. Due to the generosity of one benefactor, we have been able to add to our offering referrals to Cotswold Counselling for those needing additional mental health support.

We continued to work with other agencies and professionals striving to add value and never simply replicating what others are doing.

The trustees have fully considered and taken into account the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in determining the activities undertaken by the charity.

Awards and Royal Recognition

During the year, we were awarded the BBC Radio Gloucestershire Community Group of the Year and we went on to feature on BBC Points West.

This was followed up with a visit from Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh who spent a considerable time listening to the experiences of the homeless and vulnerable people we serve.

Her private assistant wrote to us describing her time with us as 'emotional and special' and concluded it was a 'dream visit'.



Financial Review

For the period from 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, our expenditure increased by 44% totalling £44,599. The main area of expense was outreach support direct to those in need within our local community which increased by 38% totalling £28,719.

Cirencester Signpost has no paid employees, we are all volunteers whose remuneration is not a salary but seeing lives changed and for us that is priceless.



Against the backdrop of challenging economic circumstances impacting negatively on sourcing and sustaining an income stream, our income reduced and we too felt the pressure as costs escalated.

However, we continuously strove to keep to our overheads to an absolute minimum. Our administration costs were just under 6% of expenditure leaving 94% for charitable activities. As we don't have our own premises we have to pay hire charges to run our weekly sessions accounting for 11% leaving 83% funding of direct benefit to those we were set up to support.

As trustees we are committed to being an ongoing and sustainable organisation benefiting all of those in need who come to us. In order to do this, we will aim hold at least one years operating costs to create a “sustainability surplus”.

The amount of our designated reserves will be a minimum of £40,000 based on our full financial year’s expenses and at 30 June 2023. This will be regularly reviewed at trustee meetings as we vow to ensure our offering remains resilient to changing circumstances.

Structure, Governance and Management

Cirencester Signpost is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with a constitution as its governing document, its members being the trustees. Our registered charity number is 1175014.

Currently, trustees are recruited from those who are volunteers. Charity means more than having worthy aims. A charity must be a living example of charitable conduct. It must, therefore, be good as well as do good. Our trustee group recognises that legal and regulatory compliance are the central pillars of governance ensuring that we fulfil our obligations incorporating key areas such as charity law, health and safety, financial, data protection and insurance.

As we deal with the most vulnerable in our community safeguarding is at the core of our governance. We are committed to providing a safe and trusted environment, establishing an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding, having adequate policies, procedures and measures to protect people and ensure they are regularly reviewed and handling incidents as they arise and reporting them to the relevant authorities.

To facilitate this governance, any potential trustee must be fully conversant with our framework of policies and procedures, which includes: -

- a safer recruitment process
- safeguarding policy and procedures
- code of conduct and good practice
- roles and duties of a trustee
- data protection policy; and
- health and safety policy

together with signing a trustee certificate of eligibility confirming they are a fit and proper person to hold the position of trustee, declare any conflicts of interest and confirm they have read and understood the Charity Commission’s document ‘the essential trustee’.

The trustees are responsible for ensuring our safer recruitment process is adhered to and where appropriate volunteers must provide satisfactory references and be made aware of and sign up to our core policies and codes.

Beyond our policies and procedures, we recognise the need for practical application and for this reason any potential trustee must undertake an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check and pass a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) accredited safeguarding course as agreed by the trustee group.

Looking Forward

It is vital as a charity that we consistently focus on the delivery of our charitable objectives, being true to our core vision of ‘embracing hope, creating community’. We recognise the need to remain agile and flexible to the needs of those we serve and for that reason the promotion of mental health and well-being remains a constant, underpinning many of our activities.

The immediate future appears to be one where we will continue to experience the impact of reductions in Government expenditure, corporate and personal giving due to economic pressures leading directly to a reduction in our income at the very time when there is an increased need for our services.

We remain focused on responding to those challenges, committed to meeting people directly at their point of need, being fully inclusive and in it for the long-term.

We confirm that this report complies with the requirements of the Charities Act 1993, as amended by the Charities Act 2006 and the Charities SORP 2005.

Reference and Administration Details

Charity name: Cirencester Signpost

Registered Charity Number: 1175014

Charity’s contact and principal postal address:

Mrs Juliette Harris
Office 4 Betec Business Park
Love Lane
Cirencester
GL7 1YG

Trustee Name	Date where not acted for whole year
Graham Harris	
Jayne Taylor	
Juliette Harris	
Charlotte Gorman	
Steve Morton	15 February 2023

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. P. H. S.', written in a cursive style.

Position: Chair

Date: 01 September 2023



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Cirencester Signpost

1175014

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date

01-Jul-22

To

Period end date

30-Jun-23

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					
Donations	20,431	1,007	-	21,438	20,899
Grants	-	1,500	-	1,500	10,000
Gift Aid	1,627	-	-	1,627	3,012
Investment Income	277	-	-	277	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	22,335	2,507	-	24,842	33,911
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	22,335	2,507	-	24,842	33,911
A3 Payments					
Provision of community meals	7,555	1,200	-	8,555	4,059
Outreach support	28,219	300	-	28,719	20,746
Hire/rental costs	4,456	-	-	4,456	3,352
Insurance	274	-	-	274	274
Admin & marketing	2,595	-	-	2,595	1,374
Sub total	43,099	1,500	-	44,599	29,805
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	43,099	1,500	-	44,599	29,805
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 20,764	1,007	-	- 19,757	4,106
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	65,302	-	-	65,302	65,302
Cash funds this year end	44,538	1,007	-	45,545	

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	Santander account	45,545	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	45,545	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	CCLA A/cs 348580001C and 34858001T	Deposit Fund	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Catering equipment	-	-	-
	Lockable storage cabinets	-	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Lease of office in Love Lane to 28/2/24	-	-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			Juliette Harris	17/08/2023