



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary

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wolverhampton.cityofsanctuary.org

c/o WVCA,
Paycare House
George Street
Wolverhampton
WV24DX

Names of trustees who manage the charity

Gillian Kelly	Served for entire period
Erik Pearce	Served until November 2023
Chris O'Brien	Served from October 2023
Khady Noufe	Served for entire period
George Reiss	Served for entire period
Jojobana Mengue Owona	Served for entire period
Geoff Gooding	Served until September 2023
Merylen Pearce	Served for the entire period
Umayman Fenna	Served for the entire period
Linda Gilson	Served for the entire period

The Board of Trustees are responsible for appointing additional trustees

Officers

Chair	Gillian Kelly
Vice-Chair	George Reiss
Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Erik Pearce until October 2023 Chris O'Brien from October 2023

A Minutes Secretary, Laura Onions, was appointed in November 2023

Type of Governing Document

Constitution dated 29th.June 2022

The Charity is constituted as a CIO

Registered Charity No. 1176101

During this year we benefitted from the input of Chris O'Brien, our new Treasurer, working in collaboration with Devi Bansal, acting as supporting Book-keeper. They have built on the work of Erik Pearce to rationalise our financial arrangements as the work of City of Sanctuary increases.

Summary of main activities 2023

The Wednesday Drop-In grew in popularity during 2023.

The growing and committed group of volunteers, coordinated with huge enthusiasm and creativity by Amanda Bevan, continued to provide a wide range of activities to complement the simple pleasures of a shared cup of coffee and a chat, reliably provided by Paul Rayner. These activities were:

- The sewing group, which has become a regular fixture, valued by volunteers and visitors alike.
- George Reiss's team of volunteers delivered 2 language sessions every week, except during the summer. These sessions were often so heavily subscribed that they overflowed into the main hall.
- We began to offer children's activities during school holidays, facilitated by another team of volunteers lead by Chris Collings.
- The cooking group, despite having limited facilities provided fortnightly meals, often catering to 90+ visitors, many of whom welcomed the tasty change of diet from the meals provided in asylum hotels.

The group of local volunteers grew and we also recruited more volunteers from the asylum-seeking and refugee community. A need was identified to provide more training for our volunteers to develop knowledge, build a sense of team work and deliver the range of activities more efficiently. Training sessions were provided and we identified specific teams (Welcome, Sewing and Crafting, Refreshments and cooking, ESOL Teaching, and Children's Activities).

During the year more longstanding members of our community obtained their Leave to Remain. Many have become active volunteers, supporting others on similar journeys; their experience is invaluable. With the confidence that comes from their increased stability, they have rediscovered their skills and are beginning to shape the services that we can offer.

The WhatsApp group continued to be cornerstone of our communication with each other and numbers in the region of 200 members. It is used to publicise events, advertise available donated items and simply for keeping in touch and supporting each other.

Practical and financial support has been provided by way of:

- Data cards for phones to help people maintain their support networks
- Donations which are now managed via the WhatsApp group. These are coordinated by a very efficient volunteer, Annette, who accesses an amazing array of household items
- At Christmas, toys were provided to the parents of people in hotels and Asylum Seekers to give to their children.

We have again been able to organise a range of *social activities for adults, children and families*, notably:

- Trip to Newcastle on Clun, hosted by Clun Valley Quakers, providing a lovely day in rural surroundings for about 70 members of our community
- Day trip to Telford, hosted by Telford Quakers
- Family activity days at the Wildside Activity Centre and the Kingswood Centre
- Day visits to the Cambrian Wildwood near Machynlleth
- 3 residential trips to the Gelliwig Residential Centre, Porthmadog organised in collaboration with Wolverhampton Quakers

In 2023 the Drop-in seemed to be a victim of its own success with ever higher numbers. To cater to this growing need, 2024 sees us in our new venue, St. Chad's and St. Mark's Church. We look forward to developing new relationships with the Church, which has welcomed us into its really exciting space.



THE JOYS of 2023



Kenny's Fund continued to support asylum seekers facing destitution and others experiencing extreme economic hardship. The Terms of Reference of the committee have been revised this year in light of experience and the evolving nature of the problems being experienced by asylum seekers and refugees. We were especially concerned to assist those who are trying to find accommodation and set up their first home after being given their Leave to Remain.

During 2023, 13 individuals were referred to the committee. Of these, 2 are currently receiving ongoing financial assistance, including gym subscriptions and subsistence payments whilst their prolonged asylum applications are being processed. *Kenny's Fund* has also agreed to contribute to the funding of specialist reports. These individuals are being supported by members of *Kenny's Fund* Committee and their situations are reviewed at each committee meeting.

At least 1 other person has moved out of the area but keeps in touch with Committee members for continuing emotional/moral support.

The remaining 10 people have been introduced to *Kenny's Fund* via volunteers or Committee Members and, after an assessment, we have been able to either give one-off payments to assist people in setting up their first home and/or to bridge a gap until such time as individuals are receiving money from elsewhere. We have also been able to access practical support through our partner groups (e.g. RMC, Elias Mattu Foundation, Hope into Action Black Country Area, Hope Projects, Good Shepherd and Wolverhampton Quakers).

During the year KF issued grants totalling £4773.34

Schools of Sanctuary

There are now a total of 11 such schools in Wolverhampton. Many more schools are interested. We work with Claire Sumner of the Citizenship, Language and Learning Team at City of Wolverhampton Council in assessing and supporting these schools.

We have continued to build *productive partnerships* with several organisations, including:

- The Church of St. Chad and St. Mark
- Quaker meetings in Wolverhampton, Clun Valley and Telford
- Wildside Activity Centre
- Cambrian Wildwood

We have promoted the cause of asylum seekers and refugees through individual letters to local MPs and submissions from the organisation regarding immigration legislation. A group of us also attended a demonstration relating to the use of hotels in Cannock in support of the local refugee support group.

Finances

Our unrestricted reserves at the year end (£8260.30) compared to the previous year end (£13,975) at the previous year end. A further deficit budget has been set for 2023.

Policy on Reserves

In September 2023, the Trustees approved the following reserves policy:

The Trustees' Policy is to maintain unrestricted reserves amounting to between 3-6 months' total unrestricted expenditure in the previous financial year

Gill Kelly
Chair

Date
13th September 2024

Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary
Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended
31st December 2023

2023			2022 Total
Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	

Receipts

Donations	6,832	5,541	12,373	7,569
Gift Aid	847	606	1,453	1,107
Just Giving				1,329
Fund Raising	140		140	
Grants		7,200	7,200	
Other Income		80	80	2,185
Total Receipts	7,819	13,427	21,246	12,190

Payments

Charitable Activities

IT & Internet				3,514
Destitution Support (Kenny's Fund)		4,773	4,773	3,348
Gift Vouchers / Christmas Gifts	-372	566	194	3,323
Travel Costs		794	794	1,249
Drop-in Costs	5,373	1,420	6,793	1,567
Furniture Donations				1,052
Adult Opportunity	177		177	
Cooking Expenses	1,961	446	2,407	
Events M&M etc	362		362	
Flexible Response	371		371	
Public Awareness	500		500	
Social Needs	575		575	
Summer Trips/Visits Expenses	1,082		1,082	
Volunteers Expenses	182		182	
Young people's IT and Education	1,286		1,286	

Administration and Governance

Financial & General Admin Costs	1,820		1,820	
Governance/Insurance (Note 1)	244		244	3,860
	13,559	7,999	21,559	17,913

Surplus (Deficit)	-5,741	5,428	-313	-5,723
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Cash Funds Last Year End (Note 2)	14,001	6,162	20,163	25,861
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Cash Funds This Year End	8,260	11,590	19,850	20,138
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Represented by:

Co-operative Bank	£18,456
Petty Cash	-£40
Temp Xmas Fund (Note 3)	£1,434
Total	£19,850

Note 1: The figure for 2022 covers other items as some miscellaneous costs were included here.

Note 2: The discrepancy in the total figure for the end of year results from the inclusion of petty cash in this year's figures.

Note 3: Funds set aside for purchase of Xmas gifts, the majority of which returned to the main account in 2024.