



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary

enquiries@wolvescofs.com

wolverhampton.cityofsanctuary.org

C/O Beckminster Methodist Church
Birches Barn Road
WOLVERHAMPTON
WV3 7BQ

Names of trustees who manage the charity

Gillian Kelly	Served for entire period
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
Laura Onions	Served from October 2024
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	Laura Onions
Treasurer	Chris O'Brien

Type of Governing Document

Constitution dated 29th.June 2022

The Charity is constituted as a CIO

Registered Charity No. 1176101

In January 2024 we moved to a new venue – St. Chad's and St. Mark's Church. The move was unexpected but we had outgrown our previous home and now found ourselves with much more space and the possibility of working in partnership with the Church

Summary of main activities 2024

The Wednesday Drop-In continued to grow in popularity during 2024 even though we had to move the venue to St. Chad's and St. Mark's Church, which is situated outside the city centre and is not as central as our previous homes.

The growing and committed group of volunteers, coordinated with huge enthusiasm and creativity by AB, 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 PR. These activities were:

- The sewing group, which has become a regular fixture, valued by volunteers and visitors alike.
- GR's team of volunteers continue to deliver 2 language sessions every week, except during the school holidays.
- We offer children's activities during school holidays, facilitated by another team of volunteers led by CC.
- The cooking group has really benefitted from the new catering standard kitchen and works much more as a team to cook for our 90+ visitors, many of whom welcome the tasty change of diet from the meals provided in asylum hotels.

The WhatsApp group continues 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. These cards are donated by a charity
- Donations which are now managed via the WhatsApp group. These are coordinated by a very efficient volunteer, AS, 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, plus an overnight camp there
- 3 residential trips to the Gelliwig Residential Centre, Porthmadog organised in collaboration with Wolverhampton Quakers

Our volunteer community has continued to grow and to begin to shape the services we offer. Steps are being taken to involve more people with lived experience in decision-making

Development of our community

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 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 on a roughly quarterly basis.

To operate more efficiently we identified specific teams (Welcome, Sewing and Crafting, Refreshments and cooking, ESOL Teaching, and Children's Activities). The trustees also undertook a review of roles and responsibilities of both Trustees and Volunteers, with a view to establishing an Operational Committee which would be authorised to take more routine decisions regarding the provision of services at the Dropin

THE JOYS OF 2024



In a challenging economic climate we have experienced an increasing demand from the Asylum-seeking and Refugee community for advice and practical support to help them settle in Wolverhampton

Supporting members of our community in need

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 2024, 9 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 6 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 Kenny's Fund issued grants totalling £4773.34.

We have also set up a *Special Needs Fund* to assist people in immediate need but who do not fit the Kenny's Fund criteria.

Partnerships

Schools of Sanctuary

There are now a total of 11 such schools in Wolverhampton. Many more schools are interested. We work with Lead Advisory Teacher in 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.

Finances

Having deliberately set a budget deficit, our unrestricted reserves at the year end stood at £8260.30, compared to £13,975 at the previous year end.

Policy on Reserves

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 30th. September 2025

Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary
Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended
31st December 2024

2024			2023 Total
Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	

Receipts

Donations	7177	5656	12833	12,373
Gift Aid	575	260	835	1,453
Fund Raising	390		390	140
Grants		1000	1000	7,200
Other Income	106	61	167	80
Total Receipts	8,248	6,977	15,225	21,246

Payments

Charitable Activities

Destitution Support (Kenny's Fund)		6637	6637	4,773
Gift Vouchers / Christmas Gifts		1473	1473	194
Travel Costs	434	2416	2850	794
Drop-in Costs	799	2936	3735	6,793
Adult Opportunity	183		183	177
Cooking Expenses	301	1461	1762	2,407
Events M&M etc	212		212	362
Flexible Response	226		226	371
Public Awareness	142		142	500
Raising Funds	94		94	
Social Needs	2648		2648	575
Summer Trips/Visits Expenses	903		903	1,082
Training	524	100	624	
Volunteers Expenses	70		70	182
Young people's IT and Education	125		125	1,286

Administration and Governance

Financial & General Admin Costs	886		886	1,820
Governance/Insurance	271		271	244
Total Expenditure	7,818	15,022	22,840	21,559

Surplus (Deficit)	431	-8,046	-7,615	-313
-------------------	-----	--------	--------	------

Cash Funds Last Year End	8,260	11,590	19,850	20,163
--------------------------	-------	--------	--------	--------

Cash Funds This Year End	8,691	3,544	12,235	19,850
--------------------------	--------------	--------------	---------------	---------------

Represented by:

Co-operative Bank	12078
Petty Cash	157
Total	12,235