

**HOST  
NATION**

Connecting refugees with host communities

# **HostNation Trustees' Report & Financial Statements**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021**

---

**Thanks to  
HostNation for  
the blessing of  
friendship.**

**TES,**  
asylum seeker

---

# HostNation Annual Report 2020-21

The trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 30 September 2021.

## Contents

PAGE

---

### Letter from the Director

3

---

### Letter from the Chair

4

---

### Strategic report

5

Vision and objectives

Outcomes and impact

Financial review

Future plans

Risk management

---

### Structure, governance & management

15

### Administrative details

---

### Statement of trustees' responsibilities

16

---

### Report of the independent examiner

17

---

### Financial statements

18

# Letter from the Director

HostNation was founded in 2017 with one simple idea: to offer friendship to asylum seekers and refugees. We wanted to give people who are trying to start a new life a way into our society – through the kindness of locals.

Last year was tough but by the end we were both stronger and more flexible. The pandemic has had many tragic aspects, but it has also emphasised the sheer importance of friendship and social connection. This led to a renewed interest in community volunteering.

We answered lockdown with our new approach of 'smart' befriending – a hybrid of online and face-to-face encounters – and we haven't looked back. We are already close to achieving next year's target of introducing 1,000 people to one another (500 friendship pairs) and we're now matching across Teesside as well as Greater London.

Our first-ever London match are such great friends that they are planning to spend their fourth Christmas together. And one of our latest friendships was firmly sealed at the very first face-to-face meeting, when refugee Jennifer gave birth with her new friend Emma by her side!

One of our ambitions is to make HostNation the place to go for refugee befriending. With referrals in Greater London more than doubling in the last year and a surge in volunteers, we feel we are making this a reality.

We now have a training programme for befrienders and this is paying off in terms of commitment and results. We work hard on monitoring our outcomes,

and you will read in these pages the heart-warming words we hear about improvements to people's quality of life and well-being.

We are delighted this year to report the highest percentage so far of positive outcomes from our matches – 84% – with nearly half reporting that a genuine and lasting friendship has been formed.

So where next? We have a digital platform with a proven track record across London. With an efficient solution to a social problem and a lean team with low overheads, we have a model we are confident can be replicated wherever the need is great. We have committed volunteers in the north of the UK who are as passionate as we are to prove that our communities can be truly welcoming, who are already working to start our programme in their cities.

With so many rewarding friendships formed despite the challenges of the pandemic, we're incredibly proud of our HostNation befrienders and all the warmth, understanding and joy they have shared with their refugee friends.



**ANNEKE ELWES**  
Founder & Director



**Sherry**

**Amira**

“It's been a brilliant experience. For me it means having a friend, because I've just moved here too. It's definitely very rewarding.”

**SHERRY USA**

“She's more than a friend, she's family, like a sister. Thank you so much!”

**AMIRA Pakistan**

# Letter from the Chair

Looking back over the last 12 months I can think of no equivalent period characterised by such change and uncertainty. I am particularly thinking about the impacts of the pandemic, and the increasingly harsh policy and media environment around issues of refugee and asylum rights, and migration more generally.

Our bespoke model of providing a personalised befriending offer to refugees is a perfect response to the hostile environment underpinning government policy and practice. It taps into the generosity of so many individuals and organisations in our country, looking to offer practical support and a friendly face to people seeking safety here.

I am a child of a refugee. My mother arrived here aged 12 in 1939, fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe. I know the difference that friendship can make and what refugees can offer this country. I am the result of this country's generosity at that time.

The collapse of the Afghan government in Kabul and the panic as people fled the country dramatically underlines that point. As I write, Camden alone is hosting 3,000 Afghan refugees, while the government decides on the components of a resettlement scheme.

The pandemic faced us with a strategic choice when our face-to-face befriending service was potentially undermined by lockdowns. Do we hibernate and re-emerge with more normal times or do we upgrade our digital befriending offer? We chose the latter and have come through with renewed energy.

We have begun this year to scale up our operation beyond London. We now have an established working partnership in Teesside, with positive contact taking place with partners in the north west and north east of the UK.

So, despite the external hostile environment, we continue to expand the range and quality of our work.

I would like to thank our staff – so ably led by Anneke and Rossana – for their creativity and commitment and my fellow trustees for their support and engagement.

I'd particularly like to welcome Olivia Petie who joined us as a trustee this year. Olivia is already making a significant impact on our business planning.

Most importantly, I want to thank all our befrienders and befriendees, who lie at the beating heart of our work.



**DANIEL SILVERSTONE**  
Chair



**Thanks for all the work HostNation does.  
I've heard nothing but praise from the clients I've referred to you.  
It reminds me that all the work we do is really worth it!**

**ORLA VAN'T HOFF**  
Housing & Advice Worker at the Refugee Council



# Strategic report

## Our vision

HostNation believes every refugee deserves a friend.

## Our mission

As a digital introductory platform, we tackle the loneliness experienced by asylum-seekers and refugees by making it easier for those of us at home in Britain to connect with those looking for a place they can call home.

We aim to transform social relations in our communities by using technology to help us bring local people and refugees together, through small acts of hospitality, inclusion and friendship.

We wish HostNation to become *the* way to befriend refugees in our cities – easy, sustainable and scalable.

## What we do

To achieve our charitable objectives (see right), we recruit volunteer befrienders online, then screen and train them before making matches with refugees referred to us by service providers and other agencies.

We aim to make meaningful face to face matches based on geography, gender, age and interests. We then facilitate the introduction and provide guidance and relationship support.

## Our objectives as defined in our constitution are:

**1. The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among those who are refugees, asylum seekers or migrants by providing:**

- A local 1:1 befriending service that offers friendship, social opportunities, community connection and support in order to address social isolation amongst asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.
- A service that facilitates intercultural relationships to help prevent the self-exclusion of migrant communities from the wider community.
- Increased opportunities for social integration and engagement in the local community to enable asylum seekers, refugees and migrants to positively participate in society.
- Increased opportunities to practice and improve the English skills of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in communities in the UK through friendship with native English speakers in order to promote greater social integration.
- Opportunities for positive action by citizens to change the circumstances that have led to social exclusion amongst asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

**2. The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit amongst those who are asylum seekers, refugees and migrants with a view to tackling discrimination, inequality and social disadvantage by providing:**

- Connection and relationships with UK citizens and residents who can treat them equally, identify opportunities for them and help build their sense of self-worth.
- Meaningful social interaction and inter-cultural relationships between British citizens and asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in order to encourage greater social cohesion and cultural diversity in communities in the UK.
- A means by which the public can engage with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants as individuals and people with needs, not simply statistics.



“Many refugee organisations seem better at securing funding than changing the situation for their end users. That’s why I think HostNation is such a great idea, its help is so direct and one-on-one that it seems like it can really effect change.”

JAMES has befriended 3 times

## Outcomes and impact

### 1 BEFRIENDER RECRUITMENT

We have had over 700 volunteers register to befriend through HostNation since 2017. In addition we are holding 300 people on our waiting list, and inviting them to register as and when suitable referrals are made. This gives us the largest online resource of refugee befrienders in the UK.

These are friendly locals who give their time freely to make isolated people feel more welcome and valued. The benefits are mutual, as so many tell us.

“It’s always fun to hang out with somebody new and learn about each other’s culture,” says George who has befriended three times. “And it’s great to show off the city you live in and love.”



### Training and support

Befrienders are provided with comprehensive resources to guide them in their journey. We send a monthly befriender newsletter, with links to events and opportunities for refugees. We provide signposting resources and alert our befrienders to refugee support agencies.

In addition to our written materials, this year we pioneered a new online training programme. Befrienders learn about the hardships that refugees face in the UK. They explore how traumatic events may impact someone’s ability to develop relationships, and learn how to create a safe and empowering environment to allow friendship to flourish.

We also discuss the potential challenges of befriending a refugee and consider safeguarding and boundaries in a befriending relationship.

*Befrienders George (2nd left) and Suzy enjoy a dinner cooked by Said (left). George and Said featured in The Observer, below.*

## Afghan crisis inspires surge in applicants

In August 2021, headlines were dominated by the mass exodus from Afghanistan. As evacuations from Kabul accelerated, we experienced a surge of people volunteering to befriend refugees.

In two hours we received five times the number of online applications we usually get in a month.

In the last few years, many Afghans have sought refuge here

and been referred to us. In due course we hope to help the new arrivals who have been offered legal resettlement, as well as those who will risk all to reach places of safety and are equally deserving of a warm welcome and friendship.

The August rise in public altruism also brought us media attention, including an article in the Observer and a national news segment on Channel 5.

Our social media increased in profile, with a spike in interest at the peak of the Afghan crisis.



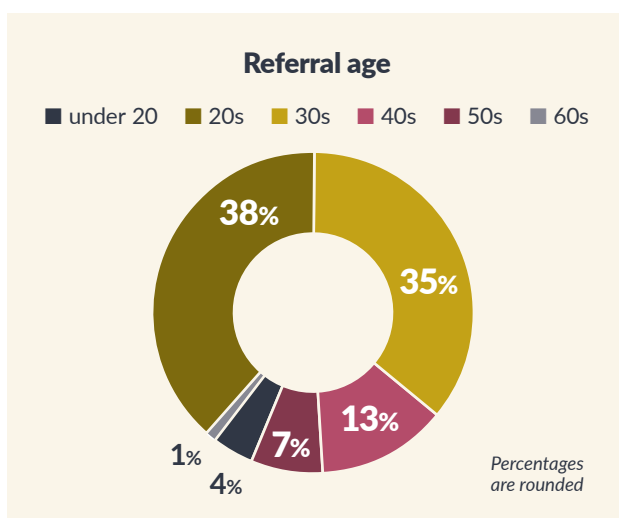
## 2 REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER REFERRALS

This year referrals to HostNation in London doubled, with 201 referrals of asylum seekers and refugees coming from across London and Teesside. We made 167 matches by this year end and will match the remainder (mostly from Teesside) in the first quarter of our next financial year.

Our refugee friends come from 45 countries with Iran as the lead origin country. We expect Afghans to move up this list next year as new arrivals following the Taliban takeover make their way through the system.



Most of those referred to us are aged in their 20s and 30s with gender being evenly balanced. This year only one third had refugee status; the majority were asylum seekers, reflecting the fact that most of those referred in the north-east are still seeking asylum.



### Referral partnerships

We have increased our reach and reputation within the wider refugee sector and the growing number of people referred to us reflects this.

Our network of referral partners now includes over 45 refugee service providers, NHS social prescribers, ESOL colleges and community organisations.

We received most referrals from IPC, Care4Calais, the Refugee Council, Breaking Barriers, the Helen Bamber Foundation and Groundwork.

#### Referral partners (2021 new partnerships in colour):

- Barnett Federated GPS
- Breaking Barriers
- British Red Cross
- Caras
- Care 4 Calais
- Citizens of The World Choir
- Claremont Clinic
- Community Recovery Team Newham
- Conversation Over Borders
- Dost Centre for Young Refugees and Migrants
- E7 Health First 4 Health Group
- Ealing IAPT
- Ealing Recovery Team West
- East Meets West Lancaster
- Emmanuel Church Northwood
- Freedom from Torture
- Groundwork
- Hestia
- Haringey Migrant Support Centre
- Helen Bamber Foundation
- Highview Dental Practice
- Hope for the Young
- Investing in People and Culture
- London Borough of Hillingdon
- MAP Middlesbrough
- Migrant Help
- Nelft Redbridge Refugee Service
- North East London NHS Foundation Trust
- Pan Intercultural Arts
- Quay Health Solutions
- Refugee Council
- Renaisi
- Room to Heal
- SHP
- Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers
- Single Homeless Project
- Syrian British Council
- Talking Therapies Barking and Dagenham
- The Other Perspective
- The Parent House
- Urgent Response Team – London Borough of Barnet
- Waltham Forest Talking Therapies
- West London College
- Woodfield Trauma Service
- Young Roots



**They all love having their own friend.  
When they are with us, they are one of many, but with  
their HostNation friends they are one of one.**

**LARA BISHOP** Care4Calais



We have received consistently positive feedback from our partners over the successful outcomes for their clients, and the ease of our referral process. Megan Karlshoej-Pedersen from charity project Groundwork Circle told us:

“HostNation has been absolutely incredible in regards to how well you’ve supported and matched

everyone I sent your way, but also more generally in regards to how you’ve communicated with my colleagues and me about your work, making it easy for us to engage.”

Referrers tell us that they know of no other scheme which gives their clients a chance to relax, have fun and be themselves.

## Referrer feedback



**We refer people to HostNation who are particularly interested in improving their English. They are at a point in their journey where improving their language skills is their main focus. So as much socialising as possible is vital.**

Many of our clients have extensive professional experience and just need to bridge the gap. So the way HostNation can provide a bespoke friendship match, often with someone from the same professional background, is very important. HostNation has just made a match for a client who is a clinical psychologist, with a person with shared experience.

HostNation is quite unique in offering support that is very broad, where the starting point is the friendship and all kinds of other benefits can lead from



*Pinar (on the right), a refugee from Turkey, was referred to us by Breaking Barriers. She and her befriender Rebecca, now very close friends, featured on the podcast “A friend indeed”, talking about all that their meeting has meant to them.*

there. Usually with our clients we are telling them to go to a specific place, usually an office, with a particular goal. Even the mentoring we offer is more limited in range, being focused on meeting certain aspirations.

Some of the friendships are still quite new, so it will be exciting to see how things turn out further down the line!!

**MIA BAINES**  
Breaking Barriers



### 3 FRIENDSHIP MATCH OUTCOMES

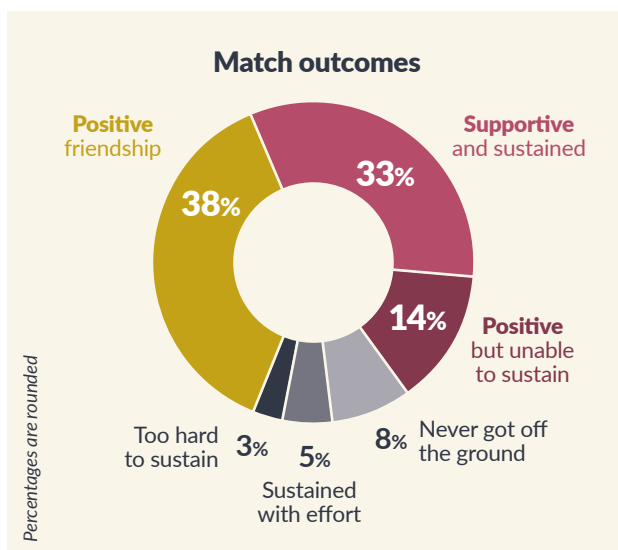
Our target for this year was to make 150 matches and we have made 167 – double the output of our previous year.

Overall, we have introduced nearly 900 people to one another since first opening for referrals four years ago (i.e. 450 friendship pairs). However, it is positive outcomes and meaningful relationships that remain our priority, rather than quantity.

The aim we gave ourselves was: “Improving the lived experience of refugees and asylum seekers in our cities”.

Our more specific outcomes were:

- reduced isolation and feelings of loneliness
- improved spoken/conversational English
- increased sense of inclusion and participation.

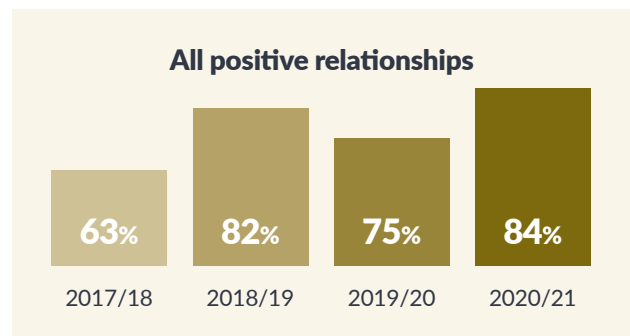


Positive outcomes as reported by our befrienders and befriendeds have increased year on year and we now have 84% falling into one of our three top categories.

Out of these positive outcomes, 45% say they have formed a genuine, long-lasting friendship, and a further 38% continue at a level they describe as rewarding and supportive. This is a real tribute to the warmth and commitment of both sides.

Comparing financial year on year, the number of relationships achieving a positive outcome has

increased by a quarter since we started matching in 2017. We believe this is a result of more attention being paid to training our volunteers, managing expectations better, talking directly to referrals prior to matching and communicating our referral criteria more effectively.



This year 14% of matches started positively but were unable to sustain the friendship. Most of these are directly linked to the Home Office’s policy of placing many asylum seekers and refugees in ‘temporary holding’ accommodation. They are then often moved out of London at short notice, making befriending hard to sustain.

#### Well-being: impact on our refugee friends

Our most important measurements are those that relate to our refugee friends’ health and well-being. Taking a walk in a park, going to a café, playing football – refugees have described such simple shared activities as boosting their confidence.



“He involves me in his life... and that makes me feel relevant,” says Saoud of his befriender Robert. Photo: Damn Fine Media

We have improved our ability to evaluate the impact of befriending on 'hard to reach' refugee friends with limited English by simplifying our questions.

After three months of befriending, 91% tell us that the experience was positive and 82% that it has helped them to feel better.

Four out of five of our refugee friends say they feel more included and know more about British culture as a result of having a befriender, while 71% say they feel less lonely.

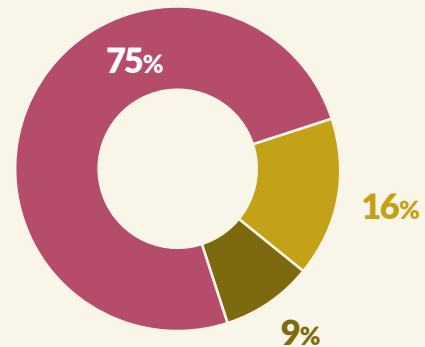
#### The positive impact of befriending

|                           | A LITTLE | A LOT | TOTAL |
|---------------------------|----------|-------|-------|
| <b>FEEL BETTER</b>        | 44%      | 38%   | 82%   |
| <b>FEEL LESS LONELY</b>   | 40%      | 31%   | 71%   |
| <b>FEEL MORE INCLUDED</b> | 46%      | 29%   | 75%   |

Language skills have scored very highly, with three in four of our refugee friends saying that having a befriender has helped to improve their spoken English – one of the most important benefits of befriending.

#### Has your English improved as a result of having a befriender?

English improved No difference Already good



#### Feeling rewarded: impact on our befrienders

This year an overwhelming 93% say they have found the experience rewarding (up from a healthy 88% last year). Almost all report that they find befriending to be a two-way street, and that they receive as much as they give. "It has opened my mind," says befriender Megan.

Befrienders report a sense of satisfaction that they have helped their friend to improve their English and to feel more confident in their new surroundings. They felt this has encouraged their friend to get involved in local life, with two thirds saying that they have introduced their refugee friend to new places.

Most of all, they tell us how much they have enjoyed getting to know someone from a different culture who they would otherwise never have met.



**We are beyond friends – it's much deeper. HostNation are like magicians and you conjured me and Helene out of the hat!**

**HÉLÈNE'S SYRIAN FRIEND**

**It's absolutely wonderful, we share so much. She's in my heart all the time. I'm not letting her go!**

**HÉLÈNE** Befriender

**Hélène**





**HostNation friends Megan and Nada featured in an ITN report celebrating the power of friendship to change lives.**

**“I can’t imagine if I wouldn’t have Meg,”** said Nada, who is from Somalia. **“She’s a very good person. She has helped me a lot.”**

Megan explains how she is benefiting too: **“It feels like we are genuinely friends. She has educated me and inspired me to make as much of a difference as I can.”**

## BEFRIENDING IN A TIME OF COVID-19

The pandemic has been challenging for a programme that connects people socially and encourages them to participate in the life of the city. But it was clear that friendship was more important than ever for people’s well-being during this isolated time, so we turned to technology for help.

From summer 2020 we introduced a hybrid model of ‘smart befriending’. Introductions took place online and friends then continued on video calls until both felt comfortable to meet in person. Some good friendships were forged purely online during the first 6 months of the year.

In collaboration with other organisations we gave practical support to get our refugee friends digitally connected, with data packages, refurbished smartphones, wifi boxes, mini tablets and laptops. To help them get out and about we also provided travel cards and referred some of our friends to get bikes and cycle training from the Bike Project.

## ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS

We have been part of the national conversation on refugee advocacy. We have supported efforts to amend the Nationality and Borders Bill, attending demonstrations at Westminster as well as webinars and other forums, along with social media awareness raising.

We are collaborating with Together with Refugees, the Connection Coalition and Solidarity with Refugees amongst others in promoting a welcoming environment for refugees and asylum seekers.

Our volunteers and their friends have stepped up to represent HostNation in the media, including the Observer, ITN’s Channel 5, BBC Radio, Yours Magazine and podcasts. “I love talking about HostNation,” said befriender Hanifah, “because you really mean a lot to me and I can’t stop telling people about the benefits they might get.”

Hanifah and two more refugee friends featured in a film made for the Council of Europe’s Intercultural Cities programme, talking movingly about what home means to them. We are proud of them for their wonderful contribution.

## EXPANSION: HOSTNATION IN THE NORTH EAST

The financial year began with the opening of our first HostNation hub outside London. In October 2020 we partnered with IPC (Investing in People and Culture), a major refugee service provider in the North East, to serve the refugee and asylum seeker communities in Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees. We agreed on an initial 12-month ‘pilot’ period.

Co-branding has helped HostNation NE acquire a strong identity, and the software, protocols and

materials developed by HostNation are being implemented by HostNation NE, with backup from the London team.

We have built awareness of the programme, with the result that the Mayor of Middlesbrough has signed up as a befriender, as has the ex-MP for Redcar. Mainstream media has responded positively, with BBC Radio Tees and Tyne Tees news (TV) featuring the project and an article in the Evening Gazette.

At first the pandemic had a significant impact on our launch, given that restrictions were at their height. After a slow start, the removal of restrictions coincided with positive media publicity leading to a momentum shift at the end of summer 2021. We are now on track to make 50 matches in the North East by the end of 2021, in line with our forecast. Further hubs we had planned in Newcastle and Greater Manchester were postponed due to the pandemic.

## The primary school head & the Eritrean Teessider

**Tes loves football, cooking and history. He has a contagious sense of humour. He also has three master's degrees.**

Tes is an asylum seeker from Eritrea, who arrived in Middlesbrough six months ago. "It has been such a long, demanding journey to get here," as he says.

Far from home and missing his new wife desperately, he needed a friend. Our partner on Teesside, IPC, referred Tes to us and we matched him with Judith, a retired head teacher with a deep interest in Africa. They clicked straightaway.

"They made me a perfect match!" says Tes. "We really chat open-heartedly about everything."

Judith, who has lived in Uganda and Ghana, knows what it's like to be an outsider. In her case, she was welcomed by local people and wanted to reciprocate by making someone feel at home here in the UK.

"I've really enjoyed it and I'm glad that it's been beneficial," she

explained in an interview with BBC Radio Tees. "I think it's a really lovely thing to do... I am proud of the way my town has assimilated refugees and asylum seekers so successfully."

For Tes the friendship is a lifeline. "Since the start of our friendship, my life has changed significantly – simply because I met someone who cares and supports and informs and open-heartedly chats with me about the daily hassles I struggle with as I adjust to life here. Judith has not only

been an indispensable friend but a trustworthy advisor."

Read the full story on our website at <https://bit.ly/TesStory>

“Since the start of our friendship, my life has changed significantly.”  
TES



## Financial review

### FUNDING PARTNERS

We are immensely grateful to the following funders in 2020-2021:

#### City Bridge Trust

Granted us 3 years of restricted, core funding in October 2020 for our London programme, to run until 2023. This year we received £31,000.

#### Trust for London

Granted us a further £50,000 of continuation funding to run for two years from November 2020. This year we received £25,000.

#### Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Granted us £13,950 towards our northern expansion plans. This has, in large part, been carried over to 2021-22 due to delay caused by covid-19.

#### Team London

We received £1,834 (20%) of our grant from the Mayor of London's office to support social prescriptions in 2020-21.

#### The National Lottery / DCMS Covid Response

Gave emergency funding support of £20,000 for the second half of 2020. Half was reported last year and half this year.

We are also extremely grateful to the Headley Trust and all of the individuals who generously donated. This provided a further £11,875 in unrestricted funding in 2020-21.

### RESERVES

The trustees continue to take a risk-based approach to reserves as in previous years. However, since we operate as a digital platform, fixed costs and forward financial commitments are minimal.

We have re-worked our estimate of the minimum required reserves as a multiple of at least three times all forward financial commitments; so for this financial year and the next, the reserves will be £15,000. This gives us a bridge should there be any discontinuities in funding and it is also an amount that we can reasonably expect to fund from unrestricted income.

### COSTS AND BUDGETING

As a charity we are governed by the Charity Commission's financial regulations. Our costs are predominantly staff time and freelance fees for project delivery.

We have three categories of costs:

#### 1. Start-up costs (one-off)

Staffing costs for building awareness, recruiting befrienders, outreach, networking and communications. These costs are one-off and incurred before the process of matching friends begins. Given our digital infrastructure, they are largely front-loaded and in 2020-21 had mostly transferred to project delivery.

#### 2. Indirect core costs (recurring)

Based on 'core' staff time required to remain a going concern, these include on-going tech; IT; web hosting and maintenance; insurance and accountancy. We have no major overheads due to remote working, no premises and no fixed contracts. Thus our forward financial commitments are low. Our indirect core costs for the London programme were 15% of total expenditure in 2020-21.

#### 3. Direct project costs

Project delivery accounted for 85% of our expenditure in 2020-21. These are 'volume-related' matching costs, ie. staff time spent sourcing referrals; recruiting; screening, checking and training befrienders; making matches; liaising with referrers; safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation; media and reporting.

We have a 5-year budget based on the costs of running the London programme at a similar level to this year (150-200 matches a year), while opening new hubs in Newcastle, Manchester and Glasgow.

Online matching, whilst enabling efficiency and scaling up, also requires careful policing, safeguarding, monitoring and a commitment to regular conversations with all parties concerned – befrienders, befriendees and their referrers.

Matching is a delicate process that takes time and each new match costs approximately £300 in labour and other volume-related costs.

We have also funded pre-paid travel cards (£30 + £5 deposit) and data packages (£20) to facilitate travel and communication for our refugee friends.

## Plans for the future

In summer 2021 we participated in the Cranfield Management 'Strive' programme funded by our donor City Bridge Trust.

The business strategy mentor provided by this programme gave expert consultation for our 2021-22 business plan. We are grateful for this assistance.

This business plan lays out the following goals for our next financial year:

- **500+ matches across London by Sept 2022, our 5-year anniversary.**  
Demand in London has increased but we anticipate 2021-22 will be similar to 2020-21.
- **Open two regional hubs in the north-west (Manchester) and north-east (Newcastle),** achieving 125 matches by Sept 2022. Increased demand for refugee services is anticipated in these areas.
- **Establish referral partnerships** in these hubs, with one major source of referrals.
- **Establish a strong resettlement programme referral pathway.**

As national asylum policy continues to favour resettled refugees over asylum seekers, we aim to build more referral pathways with the resettlement programme. This last year has seen many Syrians referred to HostNation and we anticipate similar referrals of Afghan families.

## Risk management

In 2019, our trustees devised a register of the risks we might face. A 3-stage traffic light system was adopted:

**RED** High risk (business critical)

**AMBER** Low risk (potentially constraining)

**GREEN** Negligible/low risk (no action)

In 2020 our risks were amended to include public policy and we set out four risks:

| Risk                                                                                                                                                                                          | Mitigation actions                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Insufficient resources</b><br>– human or financial – leading to an inability to achieve our objectives and outcomes.                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular review of budget, funding strategy, staffing levels and ability to meet demand for services.</li> <li>• Maintain close relations with existing funders.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Reputational damage</b><br>caused by being seen to act unprofessionally or in a manner inappropriate to a charity.                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular review of our procedures, financial and safeguarding policies.</li> <li>• Befriender training to raise levels of commitment to the project.</li> </ul>             |
| <b>Governance risks</b> – failure by the trustees to carry out their functions in accordance with best governance practice & charity law.                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have strengthened our Board with a new appointee and we plan to appoint a Treasurer Trustee to enhance financial oversight.</li> </ul>                                  |
| <b>Public policy and external environment risks</b> – changing context and Home Office policy towards asylum and resettlement leading to an inability to achieve our objectives and outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close monitoring of the changing environment in which we operate. Trustee Jo Winterbottom has been tasked with reporting to the board on this.</li> </ul>                  |

Insufficient resources was returned to **green** (from **amber**) at our board meeting in December 2020, as a result of an emergency grant from The National Lottery/DCMS and 3 years of funding confirmed by City Bridge Trust in October 2020. All risks are currently **green**.

# Structure, governance & management

## Organisational structure

HostNation incorporated as a charity (CIO) and registered with the Charity Commission in September 2018.

As of 30 September 2021 there were five trustees, three women and two men, who work on a voluntary basis. Two of our trustees, Dina Nayeri and Emiljan Gega, were once child refugees, from Iran and Albania respectively.

Our Chair, Daniel Silverstone, was CEO at both the Commission for Racial Equality and Interights.

In 2020 we appointed Olivia Petie as a trustee. As a social researcher and evaluator, Olivia has worked with other charities on scaling strategies and has previous experience of the refugee sector. She and two of our other trustees have befriended refugees through HostNation. The board meets quarterly.

We have a lean operational team, who work from home. All staff are paid an hourly rate above the London living wage. Three of the management team are on PAYE. During 2020-21 we employed three freelancers on a self-employed basis: an operation manager; a digital manager and a communications manager.

## Public benefit

The trustees are aware of the Charity Commission's guidelines on public benefit and consider these measures when carrying out the charitable objectives of this charity.

## Safeguarding

HostNation is committed to protecting all who come into contact with the organisation and its services from all forms of abuse.

Our full safeguarding policies are sent out to all befrienders when they are matched. Each befriender is given their own safeguarding lead from our team.

We implement sensible safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and volunteers. No female refugee or asylum seeker is ever matched with a male befriender. HostNation does not accept referral of people with serious mental health needs, in need of care, or aged under 18.

Our full safeguarding policy is available on application.

# Administrative details

**HostNation is a registered charity no. 1180004.**

### Founder-Director:

Anneke Elwes

### Director of London programme:

Rossana Horsley

### Trustees:

- Daniel Silverstone
- Dina Nayeri Viegutz
- Joanna Winterbottom
- Emiljan Gega
- Olivia Petie

### Independent Examiner:

S D Clarke FCA  
Haines Watts (City) LLP  
New Derwent House  
69-73 Theobolds Road  
London  
WC1X 8TA

### Registered Address:

23 Lawford Road  
London  
NW5 2LH

### Bank:

Metro Bank  
One Southampton Row  
London  
WC1B 5HA

# Statement of trustees' responsibilities

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period that give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statement of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:



---

**DANIEL SILVERSTONE**

Chair of trustees

*Date: 15th December 2021*

# Report of the independent examiner

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the period ended 30 September 2021, which are set out on pages 18-20.

## RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES AND EXAMINER

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## BASIS OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed by:



---

**SAMUEL DAVID CLARKE FCA**

Haines Watts (City) LLP

New Derwent House, 69-73 Theobolds Road,  
London, WC1X 8TA

*Date: 15th December 2021*

# Statement of financial activities

for the period ended 30 September 2021

|                              | Unrestricted<br>£ | Restricted<br>£ | 2021 Total<br>£ | 2020 Total<br>£ |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>INCOME</b>                |                   |                 |                 |                 |
| Donations received           | 11,876            | 82,937          | 94,813          | 62,485          |
| Other income (furlough)      | -                 | -               | -               | 1,858           |
| <b>Total income</b>          | <b>11,876</b>     | <b>82,937</b>   | <b>94,813</b>   | <b>64,343</b>   |
| <b>EXPENDITURE</b>           |                   |                 |                 |                 |
| Charitable activities        | 7,997             | 66,532          | 74,529          | 56,312          |
| <b>Total expenditure</b>     | <b>7,997</b>      | <b>66,532</b>   | <b>74,529</b>   | <b>56,312</b>   |
| <b>Net movement in funds</b> | <b>3,878</b>      | <b>16,405</b>   | <b>20,283</b>   | <b>8,031</b>    |

## Balance sheet

as at 30 September 2021

| CURRENT ASSETS     | 2021 Total<br>£ | 2020 Total<br>£ |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Cash at bank       | 41,630          | 21,347          |
| Net current assets | <b>41,630</b>   | <b>21,347</b>   |
| Unrestricted funds | 24,262          | 20,384          |
| Restricted funds   | 17,368          | 963             |
| Total funds        | <b>41,630</b>   | <b>21,347</b>   |

# Notes to the financial statement

forming part of the financial statements for the period ended 30 September 2021

## 1. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### (a) Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in preparing the financial statements the Charity follows best practice as laid down in the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (SORP 2015) issued in 2015.

### (b) Income

Donation income is accounted for in the period in which the Charity is entitled to receipt and the amount can be quantified.

### (c) Expenditure is included on an accruals basis

### (d) Funds structure

Restricted funds are granted in accordance with the desires of the donors. Unrestricted funds are disbursed at the discretion of the trustees.

### (e) Going concern

The accounts are prepared on the basis that the trustees have adequate resources to continue to operate.

The continued impact of Covid-19 is discussed in the Trustee report and the Charity has taken measures to mitigate this. Based on these assessments the trustees have concluded that they can continue to adapt on an ongoing concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

### (g) Financial instruments and critical accounting estimates and judgements

Basic financial instruments including basic financial liabilities – other payables – which are recognised at transaction price.

Cash at bank includes cash held with banks.

In the application of the accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and assumptions are based on experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual result may differ from these estimates, which are reviewed on an ongoing basis and recognised when appropriate.

## 2. RESTRICTED FUNDS

|                         | Covid/<br>DCMS | FfT<br>Hardship | Team<br>London | Paul Hamlyn<br>Expansion | Trust for<br>London | City Bridge<br>Trust |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Income                  | 10,000         | 1,153           | 1,834          | 13,950                   | 25,000              | 31,000               |
| Expenditure             | 10,000         | 1,153           | 1,834          | 3,174                    | 21,155              | 28,477               |
| Balance carried forward | 0              | 0               | 0              | 10,776                   | 4,069               | 2,523                |

## 3. INCLUDED IN CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE ARE SUPPORT COSTS OF:

|        | Staff costs | Freelance fees* | Travel and subsistence | Workshops /events/ training | Hardship fund | Digital and other direct costs | Total expenditure |
|--------|-------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2021 £ | 49,991      | 11,156          | 729                    | 70                          | 4,917         | 7,666                          | 74,529            |
| 2020 £ | 39,774      | 7,560           | 870                    | 843                         | –             | 7,265                          | 56,312            |

\*engaged on self employed basis

No trustees received remuneration or were reimbursed for expenses in the current period.  
In 2020-2021 HostNation had three employees on PAYE. No employees were paid over £60,000