



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 01/01/2021 **To** 31/12/2021

Charity name: V22 Communities

Charity registration number: 1180229

Objectives and Background

"It's open to everyone. A true community." – Library User

Since mid-2016, a number of local organisations and residents have come together in Lewisham to transform their former public libraries into community libraries, complemented by work and event space. Partners include neighbouring landlords, local traders' associations, local entrepreneurs, residents' associations, Lewisham Library Services, and over 100 volunteers. Together we have also incorporated this CIO - V22 Communities - to form an ongoing umbrella organisation and guardian for our work into the future.

The object of V22 Communities is to keep these libraries open as a free public resource. Our formal objects are:

- 1. The provision of public library services in the London Borough of Lewisham and in other locations where the trustees decide to operate.*
- 2. To promote for the benefit of the residents of the London Borough of Lewisham, and in other locations where the trustees decide to operate, and in the surrounding areas and communities, the provision of a public library for recreation and or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of the said residents.*

In furtherance of these objects but not otherwise, the trustees shall have power:

To establish or secure the establishment of a community centre and to maintain or manage or co-operate with any statutory authority in the maintenance and management of such a centre for activities promoted by the charity in furtherance of the above objects.

Nothing in this constitution shall authorise an application of the property of the CIO for the purposes which are not charitable in accordance with [section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005] and [section 2 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008]

Activities

Forest Hill Library has been running under the community model since 2016. Manor House has been running since 2017, and Sydenham Community Library since late 2019.

All three buildings service a massive need in the community: as well as being able to continue to borrow books due to the involvement of, and partnership with, Lewisham Library Services, people come here for a variety of reasons. Senior citizens come to sit and read in a warm public space, young people come here en masse to study before exams, mothers come with their children for rhyme time and extra lessons on offer in one of our community studios, people come for courses,

workshops, events and even weddings, but they also come just to be in a public space without feeling obligated to spend money or be constrained by time.

While many community activities were thwarted by Covid, especially in the first half of the year, we did enjoy the return of some workshops and groups in the later half, notably some architecture themed workshops for children, a lanterns workshop near Halloween, a book launch, the return of reading groups and some of our regular charity bookings such as NCT and Lee Fair Share. We formed part of the recovery strategy for the council, including shaping the digital literacy issue that had become exasperated by lockdowns.

With the struggle to attract new volunteers we took on three young people as part of the Kickstarter scheme for long term unemployed people, and by the end of 2021 had one working at Forest Hill and two based at Sydenham.

Another new addition to our service in 2021 was the introduction of Advocacy in Libraries. This came about after approaches from Community Connections Lewisham and LBL itself to host an advocate in the area. We gained a £10,000 fund from The National Lottery and the advocacy service was born, providing vital help for people on a number of fronts from housing and benefits matters to letter writing, court cases, form filling and job searches to budgeting and debt management work.

Our Christmas appeal helped raise funds and food items to feed local families in need in partnership with Lochaber Hall Community Association and South East London Basket Brigade.

In addition to services for the community, formerly unused spaces in the buildings are let out to artists, not-for-profit organisations, entrepreneurs and creative businesses as affordable studio, workspace, desk and event space. This income helps to keep the buildings open, lit, heated and serviced.

Despite a very difficult and challenging year, the Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit, and believe they adhere to these guidelines in staying open to everyone, as much as the national lockdowns have allowed.

Achievements and Performance

2021 was a very difficult year for our libraries, with covid and its related restrictions and enforced closures causing the service to be provided in fits and starts and in ways that could not previously be foreseen.

By the end of 2021 all opening hours had returned to pre-pandemic levels, indeed Sydenham Library extended opening hours by a full day, operating a five day service for the first time in over a decade, but the year began in totally different circumstances, with enforced closures only allowing us to offer limited services and 'click and collect' services only on occasions. The main library service in Lewisham and the surrounding boroughs was even more limited and we mopped up much of the provision that would usually be available through them. The Hub service in Lewisham only ever got as far as opening limited hours on five days at three venues in 2021, leaving Forest Hill as the only option on a Sunday across the borough, and for most of the year we provided services on Saturdays and Mondays while the main service remained closed. The result was a relative increase in use and some services, such as the Summer Reading Challenge, being more popular at our libraries than at the council run equivalents for the first time.

It was not just the council that came back slowly, and the slow return of NHS services meant we were used increasingly by them to provide space for community midwives, something we did at a reduced charge and at the expense of room hire to weddings and business workshops, a traditionally high source of income for which demand almost entirely dried up.

While closed to the public, as far as possible, we continued to offer co-ordinated online services for users in co-operation with the local council and providers such as Booktrust, The Reading Agency and RBDigital to promote online resources and positive thinking.

"I was delighted when the library stayed open during lockdown. It was a lifeline for the community and especially the innovative way you organised your borrowing books - lucky dips etc. The idea was not only great but successful and an emotional boost in a time of isolation." – Library User

Issue Figures

Issue figures are still highest at Forest Hill Library with 55,942 books borrowed in 2021. At Manor House and Sydenham they were 44,739 and 11,459 respectively. This equates to 112,140 books borrowed in 2021 or an average of more than 300 per day.

Visitor Numbers

In a normal year, Forest Hill library averages around 11,000 users per month, with Manor House generally getting more than 20,000 visits across the library and function spaces, making it the most visited library in the borough. The proximity to the park and the variety of community activities in a building, that is also a destination for visitors from miles around, help boost the numbers and mean that V22 libraries total over 400,000 visits in a regular year.

User Survey

At the end of 2021 we held a user survey across the three libraries.

Interesting findings include:

75.3% of our visitors are there to borrow or read books, 31.9% to work or study, 23.3% for printing or photocopying, 21% for free activities, 19.6% to use our free computers.

34.78% of our users gave us a score of ten out of ten for service, while 77.5% rated us at least 8/10 and 98% rated us 5/10 or above.

Our age demographic is very diverse, with the highest user groups being 40-44 and 65+ - each with 16.7%.

72.5% of our users identify their gender as female, 23.9% male, 0.7% non-binary, and 2.9% preferred not to say.

13% of our users identified as disabled.

We were pleased that ethnicity ratios reflected the diversity of the communities in which our libraries operate:

Ethnicity	Number of Responses	Response Percentage
White	89	64.5%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	23	16.7%
Other ethnic group	7	5.1%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	6	4.3%
Asian or Asian British	4	2.9%
Prefer not to say	9	6.5%

"Friendly, helpful staff who do a great job with limited resources. Good selection of good quality books for preschool and primary age children. Pleasant, inviting environment. The summer reading challenge and picture treasure hunt were great."

Volunteering

Over 200 regular volunteering positions were filled in the year, plus further opportunities for work experience through school and college programmes and Duke of Edinburgh schemes. Further volunteers came to us from organisations specialising in mental health support, often providing adults with their first experiences of being useful in a working environment. Our regular volunteer base is made up of people from across the community: a survey in 2021 found 22.1% of our volunteers to be in the 16-24 age bracket and 17.6% to be aged over 65, 23.5% identified as LGBTQ+, and 20.6% identified as having a disability.

Future Challenges

We will continue to try and deliver all the services we possibly can and add to those where needed.

Our bank of dedicated volunteers continues to amaze, and this support has not waned as we have returned, although we see a few different faces at the counters.

Our biggest challenge is a financial one as the cost of utilities continues to sky-rocket. We are very concerned about the future.

Financial Review

Covid19 Impact

The effects of the pandemic have been far reaching. V22 has three libraries to run, in old buildings, with three lots of overheads attached. Income from services such as photocopying and printing entirely dried up, while the leases on those machines have continued, and while the overheads within the buildings diminished slightly in terms of lighting and heating the library spaces themselves, these have continued throughout the year. Cleaning costs have increased and additional costs such as hand sanitiser and pumps have had to be met. We have also had additional work involved with risk assessments and staff protocol documents that have had to be drafted and re-drafted with every change in guideline and tier level. We have also been unable to operate the 6 community studios and hire spaces across the libraries.

All of these income shortages combined, add up to a very large dent in regular income which helps to fund the management of the libraries.

Covid funding came in the form of various Government schemes, and these have certainly helped.

V22 Foundation – who manage the buildings - were successful in gaining Arts Council England Funding, in particular to pay the rent of those studio holders struggling through Covid. This meant that key income for keeping the buildings running was still available.

Disappointingly, we have been unsuccessful in applications for many other funds for which we have applied during the year.

General

The Friends of Forest Hill Library scheme donated a total of £1,723 and we received a donation of £2,000. The Forest Hill Society ran a children's book sale and managed to raise £400 for the libraries.

Administrative support costs of £11,522 reflect amounts paid by V22 London Ltd, on behalf of the CIO to our Forest Hill Library Manager, and have been offset against the amount owing by V22 London Ltd.

Reserves Policy

At 31 December 2021, we held cash at bank of £58,761, non-cash assets of £16,686, and liabilities to pay of £11,181 leaving reserves of £64,266. This equates to at least 5 months' unrestricted payments, to cover emergency situations which may arise.

Principle Risks

The increase in utilities costs we are witnessing are unsustainable, and we have to look very seriously at how these can be mitigated and managed over the next year.

Other risks to the charity at this stage include the withdrawal of support from other V22 companies before the CIO is self-sufficient. V22 has committed to support the CIO in its start-up phase but its lack of success in raising funds to support itself long term is a cause for concern in the future.

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is constituted as a CIO with a Constitution as a governing document. The Trustees meet quarterly unless more regular meetings are required.

Eligibility for trusteeship includes that:

(a) Every charity trustee must be a natural person.

(b) No individual may be appointed as a charity trustee of the CIO:

- if he or she is under the age of 16 years; or
- if he or she would automatically cease to hold office under the provisions of clause 12(1)(e).

(c) No one is entitled to act as a charity trustee whether on appointment or on any re-appointment until he or she has expressly acknowledged, in whatever way the charity trustees decide, his or her acceptance of the office of charity trustee.

(d) At least one of the trustees of the CIO must be 18 years of age or over. If there is no trustee aged at least 18 years, the remaining trustees may only act to call a meeting of the charity trustees, or appoint a new charity trustee.

Number of charity trustees

There must be at least three charity trustees. If the number falls below this minimum, the remaining trustee or trustees may act only to call a meeting of the charity trustees or appoint a new charity trustee.

There is no maximum number of charity trustees that may be appointed to the CIO.

Appointment of charity trustees

We were pleased to appoint 3 new trustees in 2021.

Related Parties

V22 Communities is related to other V22 companies through its name; being reliant on financial support from these companies within its start-up phase; and through Kathleen Tara Cranswick who is both a Trustee and the Director and Founder of the V22 Group.

Potential conflicts of interest or loyalty are dealt with as follows:

A charity trustee must:

(a) declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which he or she has in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the CIO or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by the CIO which has not previously been declared; and

(b) absent himself or herself from any discussions of the charity trustees in which it is possible that a conflict of interest will arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the CIO and any personal interest (including but not limited to any financial interest).

Any charity trustee absenting himself or herself from any discussions in accordance with this clause must not vote or be counted as part of the quorum in any decision of the charity trustees on the matter.

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	V22 Communities
Other name the charity uses	V22
Registered charity number	1180229
Charity's principal address	Manor House Library Manor House Old Road LONDON SE13 5SY

Charity Trustees


The charity trustees are as follows:

Des Reid
Eloise England
Kathleen Tara Cranswick
Michael Jonathan Abrahams
Ralph Derek White
Taz Khan

Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	
Full name(s)	Kathleen Tara Cranswick
Position	Trustee
Date	28 October 2022



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
V22 COMMUNITIES

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 DECEMBER 2021

**Charity no
(if any)** **1180229**

Set out on pages

9 to 10

(Remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2021.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date: **28/10/2021**

Name:

Mark Fryza

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

Address:

**Suite 6, Chequers Barn, Chequers Hill,
Bough Beech,
Kent. TN8 7PD**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

V22 Communities

1180229

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/01/2021

To

31/12/2021

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					
Voluntary Donations:	-	-	-	-	-
Friends of Forest Hill Library	1,723	-	-	1,723	1,441
Donations for use of facilities	-	-	-	-	1,058
Other donations	2,000	-	-	2,000	-
Local authority and National Lottery grants	73,177	10,000	-	83,177	110,000
Book sales	400	-	-	400	450
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	77,300	10,000	-	87,300	112,949
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	77,300	10,000	-	87,300	112,949
A3 Payments					
Library management and maintenance services	67,416	-	-	67,416	50,254
Administrative support costs	-	-	-	-	7,029
Property rates	-	-	-	-	5,388
Bank charges	62	-	-	62	72
Accountancy	2,160	-	-	2,160	720
IT support	2,130	-	-	2,130	-
Equipment repair and maintenance	585	-	-	585	-
Advocacy service	-	5,328	-	5,328	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	72,353	5,328	-	77,681	63,463
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
Loan repaid to external funder	-	-	-	-	500
Sub total	-	-	-	-	500
Total payments	72,353	5,328	-	77,681	63,963
Net of receipts/(payments)	4,947	4,672	-	9,619	48,986
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	49,142	-	-	49,142	156
Cash funds this year end	54,089	4,672	-	58,761	49,142

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	Bank account	54,089	4,672	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	54,089	4,672	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Monies due from related parties	16,636	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Loan received from related parties	Unrestricted	11,181	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	<i>Kathleen Cranwick</i>	Kathleen Cranwick	28/10/22