

THE GAMBIA WELFARE SOCIETY LEEDS
OAK HOUSE
BALM WALK
HOLBECK
LEEDS
LS11 9PG
CHARITY NO: 1182433

ANNUAL TRUSTEE REPORT

The Gambia Welfare Society hereby present its annual report for March 2021 to year ended February 2022, which conforms to the stipulations of the Charities Act 2011, the trust deed and the Charities SORP (FRS 102)

OUR VISION

The Gambia Welfare Society aspires to the achievement of a vibrant and sustainable community, through a shared- vision perspective, modelled around effective community engagement, involvement, and collaboration. The organization strives to operate in an equal opportunity environment, welcomes individuals from diverse backgrounds, treats everyone equally irrespective of religion, race, ethnicity, sex, disability, creed, or colour, in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). The protection of the environment in which we operate and live, is of paramount importance to us. we adhere to sound sustainable practices aimed at reducing our carbon footprint and promote credible environmental awareness within our areas of operation.

The organization is committed to the safeguarding of children, the vulnerable, and operates an environment that is safe, and free from harm, whilst ensuring maximum compliance to legislative guidelines.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organization is a Charitable Incorporated Organization with voting members other than the charity trustees and govern by a written constitution. The general affairs are overseen by the trustees, who meet as and when required. Implementation and execution of organizational policy is conducted by the executive Committee, composed of both sexes, appointment by the chairman, upon recommendation from members.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The executive committee is solely responsible for the day-to-day operation of the organization, under the leadership of the Chairman, in conjunction with the Treasury, the Secretariat, Centre Management, Educational and Religious Affairs, and Social and Communities department.

CHARITY TRUSTEES

The charity trustees of The Gambia Welfare Society are dully elected through voting, by members of the society at annual general meetings. Trustees are expected to possess character, expertise, and commitment in the execution operational affairs. Trustees are orientated on the modalities of the trust deed, policies and procedures, and familiarized on the charity commission guidelines upon appointment. Both trustees and executive committee membership is on a voluntary basis, services offered free of charge.

The current charity trustees of the Society are:

Bampha Jaiteh
Yankuba Balajo
Foday Sanneh
Amadou Touray
Seedy Sanneh

OUR CORE OBJECTIVES

- Promote social inclusion for the benefit of migrants who are socially excluded on grounds of ethnic origin, religion, belief, creed or their social and economic position, helping them with their basic needs, and assistance in integrating into society.
- Help young people through educational, recreational and sporting activities, to develop their capabilities, enabling them to contribute productively and positively towards societal development.
- Promote religion by raising awareness and understanding of the Muslim faith through community engagement, and collaboration with partner agencies. We will also provide our center as a praying ground for the benefit of the local community where communal prayers will be held during the Muslim feast of Eid and Friday congregational prayers.
- The Society will provide support to the community in areas of funeral arrangements, especially those less fortunate members of the community of Leeds.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Covid-19 pandemic has proven to be challenging and has had a negative impact on the organization and the community, in areas of service and program delivery, finances, morale and social interactions. The social and economic costs of the pandemic are multi-dimensional, and has widened levels of inequalities.

That said, TGWS adopted an adaptive practical approach at the very onset of the pandemic, by initially undertaking a massive communication campaign geared towards spreading awareness and debunking negative myths associated with the virus, especially within ethnic minority communities. The community was sensitized around Public Health England guidelines, such as effective hand hygiene, social distancing, mask wearing, and testing, should one develop symptoms.

The resilience and fortitude exhibited during this period, emanated from the resolve and capability of the executive arm in implementing practical steps to address the unprecedented situation. Measures were implemented in reaction to the trend, prompting the move to virtual ways of operating, whilst concentrating on core services like social, and health and well-being issues.

On the flip side, the pandemic has ushered in a groundbreaking spirit of togetherness at the neighborhood, community and national level, the shared experience of misfortune has created a vivid sense of unity, belonging and a feeling of being part of something unique and special. This has acted as a natural “Social Remedy” in preventing acute loneliness, depression and associated health and well-being complications. Though the period under consideration has been difficult to navigate, the organization was able to deliver in the following areas:

COMMUNITY

• The pandemic era has enabled the organization to marshal by far its biggest social support campaign in its entire history. This was made possible by the creation of a Covid-19 task force, and the launching of the Covid-19 Relief Appeal, tasked with the colossal responsibility of soliciting funds and distribution of support to the vulnerable. This venture facilitated meaningful partnerships with Morrison Supermarkets and the Leeds African Network, which gave access to food relief supplies for community distribution. As a result of this scheme, and the courage of our amazing team of volunteers, the organization was able to deliver hundreds of food parcels to the vulnerable within the community, irrespective of nationality, religion or ethnicity. Monetary assistance was also provided to individuals struggling with rent payments, courtesy of proceeds from donations as well as contribution from TGWS.

The Covid-19 relief campaign has thus far been the most successful humanitarian operation the organization has ever embarked upon.

- Active and visible participation in naming ceremonies, marriages, community outreach activities, and dispute resolutions, all of which fosters community spirit and unification.
- Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the organization has continued to provide bereavement support, and has expanded its scope to include other communities within Leeds. This is done in various formats, spanning from burial arrangements, financial support towards burial costs, as well as moral and emotional guidance. These support mechanisms help promote inter-community cooperation, tolerance, and cohesion

EDUCATION AND RELIGION

The organization has resorted to conducting all educational lessons virtually, although this comes with its own challenges, due to the absence of face-to-face interaction between teachers and pupils. Despite this, the team still manages to deliver effective learning outcomes. This not only benefits children educationally, it also equips them with vital life skills. The in-house moral lessons create an impact on children's lives, and prepares them for adulthood, societal interaction and responsibility. As a result of the restrictions, the organization has had to offer virtual Eid sermons (Khutbah) as oppose to in person congregational prayers, as well as continuing to foster religious tolerance, acceptance of individual beliefs and the promotion of inter-faith cooperation.

FINANCE

Monthly subscriptions and donations to the organization has plummeted, but the state of our finances remains manageable, due to sound and robust fiscal discipline. Finance surgeries continues to be offered to the community, though virtually or over the telephone as and when required by appointment basis, through the Treasury department

This free advice covers areas of personal finance, tax, investments, pensions, and access to financial help. This service provides vital guidance to members of the community, enabling and empowering individuals to manage their financial affairs, especially in the unpredictable pandemic era

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The pandemic has definitely affected lives, from loneliness, anxiety, frustration, uncertainty, and concerns about the economic ramifications of the pandemic, has been prevalent within the community. In an attempt to help alleviate and mitigate these negative issues, the organization in collaboration with Sky Power Radio and Television Services organized virtual community awareness programs to engage the community in a positive manner, in order to provide reassurance. The organization conducted the following sensitization programs:

- Kids Empowerment Program: This requested kids to write about their lockdown experiences. The aim was to facilitate engagement, as well as improving their writing and presentation skills, with the overall winner being rewarded with a prize
- How to maintain a healthy and sustainable family relationship during lockdown
- Managing health and wellbeing issues during the pandemic era.

These combination of programs offered guidance on how individuals can help look after their health and wellbeing, with extra focus on maintaining sound mental health, which has emerged as a key focal point during the pandemic. Emphasis was made on how to help and support each other as a community, communicate about individual concerns, and how to access help if required

FUTURE STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Covid-19 situation poses crucial challenges both in the medium to long-term. Though there has been the lifting of restrictions for various aspects of life, but the emergence of new variants, is casting a shadow on the gains made, thus propagating additional uncertainty and making it difficult to strategize for the long-term. Nonetheless, the organization will aspire to work on the following areas were the conditionalities of the situation becomes permissible to do so:

- Work on current capacity and preparedness for the Covid-19 situation, to enable rapid reaction ability should the situation deem it necessary
- Exert maximum focus on the property search, though the search has commenced, it is still ongoing due to the lack of finding a suitable property that is fit for purpose.
- Expand and consolidate multi-agency partnership and cooperation
- Encourage regular utilization of Gambia House for social engagement and interaction sessions, within the acceptable guidance of Public Health England
- Engage the Fundraising task force, regarding future Fundraising activities
- Liaise with parents on ways to further improve and enhance children's learning, personal development and continuous improvement

End of report

INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM	£
Subscriptions and Donations	13,517.00
Other Income	21,997.23
Total Income	35,514.23
Expenditure on Raising funds	
Charitable Activities	(19,301.39)
Total Expenses	(19,301.39)
Net Income(Expenditure)	16,212.84
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS	
Total Funds Brought Forward	22,762.31
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	38,975.15



**THE GAMBIA
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Oak House
Holbeck
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Tel: 01132443239

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