INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATION OF SUNDERLAND

England & Wales · Charity number 1186618

Details

Other names	ICOS
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2019-11-27
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	14 Foyle Street Sunderland SR1 1LE
Phone	07596538482
Email	office@icos.org.uk
Website	icos.org.uk

Activities

Objects: 1 THE PROMOTION OF RACIAL HARMONY FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT BYA PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN DIFFERENT RACIAL GROUPSB ADVANCING EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT DIFFERENT RACIAL GROUPS TO PROMOTE GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN PERSONS OF DIFFERENT RACIAL GROUPSC WORKING TOWARDS THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF RACE2 TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC, IN PARTICULAR THOSE FROM ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS LIVING IN THE CITY OF SUNDERLAND AND THE SURROUNDING ARE THROUGH THE PROVISION OF LANGUAGE CLASSES AND TRAINING3 TO PROVIDE OR ASSIST IN THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES IN THE INTERESTS OF SOCIAL WELFARE FOR RECREATION OR OTHER LEISURE TIME OCCUPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NEED OF SUCH FACILITIES BY REASON OF THEIR YOUTH, AGE, INFIRMITY OR DISABILITY, FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OR SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THEIR CONDITIONS OF LIFE

Activities: We work with migrant people in the North East of England, especially Sunderland. We focus on those with limited access to information and support network, including migrants and refugee and the Eastern European community. We came to being in 2009 and have now converted to a CIO. More information including projects- icos.org.uk

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Disability, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity

Geography

- Durham
- Gateshead
- Hartlepool
- Middlesbrough
- Newcastle Upon Tyne City
- North Tyneside
- Northumberland
- Redcar And Cleveland
- South Tyneside
- Sunderland

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£325,993	£373,281	-	-
2024-03-31	£435,279	£352,630	-	-
2023-03-31	£351,122	£350,979	-	-
2022-03-31	£347,375	£277,808	-	-
2021-03-31	£293,979	£248,426	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rafal Kazimierz Marzec	Chair	2019-11-27
Agnieszka Serafin		2020-12-12
Anna Heyman		2020-01-31
Iga Justyna Borsut		2019-11-27
Joy Adekola		2025-11-26
NYASHADZASHE T AFAUNE		2023-03-24

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INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATION OF SUNDERLAND

England & Wales - Charity number 1186618

Accounts

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Financial Statements
For the Period
1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

Charity No: 1186618

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

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International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st March 2025

Name: International Community Organisation of Sunderland

Address: 14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

Charity No: 1186618

Trustees (who served during the year)

Rafal Marzec	(Chair)
Iga Borsut	(Treasurer)
Anna Heyman	
Agnieszka Serafin	
Nyashadzashe Tafaune	

Independent Examiner

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

ICOS Annual Report 2024 – 2025

Introduction:

As chairperson of ICOS, I would like to first and foremost thank our funders for supporting us throughout what was a challenging, yet fruitful year for the organization. I would also like to thank our funders, donors and sponsors- without your generous funding even the worthiest cause and the most effective organization could not survive. We exist to help our clients to integrate, access services and thrive, and we are grateful to them also, as they have given back so much, especially our volunteers and those clients who have provided advice to us on how we can become even more effective and involving.

Rafal Marzec

Chai of ICOS

ABOUT ICOS:

We

- Connect people to opportunities
- Defend people's rights
- Bring people from different cultural backgrounds together

In order to fulfil our mission, we provide the following activities:

- Information, Advice, Guidance and Advocacy work (individual casework) in a wide range of diverse areas, from employability to welfare rights
- Volunteering opportunities
- Cultural activities

Our values are:

- Justice
- Equality
- Involvement
- Connectedness
- Commitment
- Antiracism
- Inclusion

Commitment to partnership working:

We see partnership work as key to our past and future success. We work closely with a variety of partners, including the Sunderland Black and Minority Ethnic Network, local councils (notably, Sunderland City Council), health authorities, emergency services, community organisations and local businesses.

Our motto is: "Advocating for rights, creating opportunities".

Executive summary:

Over the past year, the International Community Organisation of Sunderland (ICOS) has continued to stand alongside migrant and minority communities, offering practical support, friendship, and opportunities to thrive. Despite financial pressures, the cost-of-living crisis, and the painful impact of the 2024 racist riots, our community has shown strength, solidarity, and resilience.

Our Impact

In total, ICOS supported 781 people, including 558 who received one-to-one advice on housing, welfare, employability, and immigration. Many lives have been positively changed: over half of those we worked with reported improved wellbeing, 40% saw their financial situation improve, and 39 people moved into paid work. Others progressed into education or training, secured housing, or felt safer and more confident in their daily lives.

Beyond advice, we provided material support such as food vouchers, SIM cards, clothing, and energy grants to more than 200 people. Our wellbeing and cultural activities brought people together across backgrounds—310 people met new friends from different cultures, while 60 activities like coastal walks, sports, and family trips helped reduce loneliness and build community spirit.

Volunteering remained at the heart of our work, with 125 people giving their time, energy, and skills. Environmental activities also grew, with over 300 people taking part in clean-ups and awareness events, and 70% of participants going on to take further environmental action.

Projects That Make a Difference

Our multi-year projects have been especially powerful. Back in Control 2 supported survivors of modern slavery and exploitation, helping them find safety, stability, and independence. Shared Sunderland, run with SBIC and New Horizon, empowered 366 people through advice, leadership training, and community campaigns—16 participants even stepped into formal leadership roles.

Strength in People and Partnerships

What makes ICOS unique is our people. Our dedicated staff and growing volunteer team go the extra mile every day. Together with partners—from local councils to schools and community groups—we are breaking down barriers and amplifying the voices of those too often unheard.

Looking Forward

As we celebrated ICOS's 15th anniversary, we also looked ahead. Our new 2025–2030 strategy will focus on building sustainable income (including a community café), strengthening

client involvement, and expanding popular projects such as ICOS Women, sports, wellbeing, and environmental work.

At its heart, ICOS is about people—supporting one another, creating opportunities, and building a fairer, more connected Sunderland.

Highlights:

Total number of people supported: 781 (many one-off event attendees were not registered)

Total number of advice clients within this number: 558

Improved wellbeing: 108 out of 207 (52.17%)

Reduced social isolation: 61 out of 203 (30.05%)

Improved confidence: 47 out of 109 (41.28%)

Improved housing situation: 30 out of 84 (35.71%)

Improved financial situation: 66 out of 164 (40.24%)

Feeling safer: 19 out of 57 (30.33%)

39 people have progressed into paid employment (the projects directly supporting employability work at ICOS were only worth £25 000 in total during that period

60 people have achieved at qualification or progressed into education or training

24 people have received support with their immigration status. Many more have been referred to external organisations due to requiring support at a higher level than our regulation enables us to.

60 people have reported receiving a benefit award/entitlement (we believe this to be undercounted, e.g., due to some clients not recognizing a council tax discount as an award). These included Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment

310 people who have attended wellbeing activities have reported meeting new people from a different culture.

125 people across different projects have volunteered, including 50 regular volunteers, not counting environmental volunteers.

Over 300 people, including children have taken part in environmental activities such as clean ups and awareness raising activities.

12 people have received grants made towards energy costs. Awards have ranged from £98 to £900, and the awards have been made by a range of funders, including the National Energy Action, Unity in Community, the Household Support Fund

We have provided an estimated 200 clients with material support, including sim cards, food vouchers, food back referrals, clothing and toy items, or refunded travel costs.

We have delivered at total of 60 wellbeing activities, including a Coastal Walk, Tennis, Bowling, Seal Sands Walk, White Lea- Farm walk, Bowling, Souter Lighthouse, Sports, Santa

Day, Snowboarding, Ceramics, Go Karting, Coastal Walk, Creating Bird Feeders, Kayaking, Water Sports, Spilmans Farm Trip, Rowing, Diggerland, Coastering and many more.

Environmental: We have delivered a total of 70 environmental activity days through the East Rangers project alone, engaging a total of total of total of 300 people. 70% of those we were able to ask asked took environmental action as a result of the project.

Major project spanning over several years:

Back in Control 2 (August 2022 – November 2025)

The project has provided vital and valuable support to migrant people affected by Modern Day Slavery and Workplace Exploitation in Sunderland and the surrounding area.

This has especially focused on several aspects of their lives:

- Benefits
- Housing
- Support with immigration issues
- Material support
- Removing barriers in a flexible way
- General support and life and the UK, civic duties
- Employability
- Supporting asylum seekers
- Involvement and inclusion

At the time of writing, draft results were available, which indicated the following:

Overall number of clients: **Agreed: 100** **Achieved: 92** **Some data for: 67**			
Outcome	**Outcome indicator**	**Intervention (s)**	**Achieved:**
Improved wellbeing	68%	-Counselling and other health and wellbeing interventions -Effect of general support and advice, including support with entitlements -The work delivered by our partner- Impact North East CIC will be crucial to achieving this outcome.	59.7%
Improved financial situation	55%	-Holistic advice and advocacy on accessing benefits and entitlements	52.31%
Improved stability for individuals and family units	62%	-Holistic advice and advocacy on accessing benefits and entitlements -Immigration advice (partners such as North East Law Centre and Children's Society will have a crucial role) -Health and wellbeing interventions	86.97%
Prevention, discovery and rescue	20%	-ICOS will discover potential cases of exploitation and prevent, or stop it from happening. We will utilise community contacts and community intelligence and refer clients to GLAA/the police if appropriate.	53.26%
Involvement through volunteering	20% (20 clients)	-ICOS will identify and support volunteers, who will support several aspects of project delivery, including the PSG, peer-to-peer support and awareness raising.	20.41%

Additionally:

71.43% have reported that their issues had been resolved
53% said that their involvement in the programme had prevented further exploitation
50% reported feeling more independent
46.77% have reported an improved housing situation
43.75% have reported feeling safer
43% have reported improved English language skills

40.3% reported feeling more optimistic about their future

*these figures are based on of those who have responded / who we have been able to exit

We were not able to get full data for of 29.35% of the clients- due a number of issues, including moving abroad, changing contact details, or, most often, not being available to take part in an exit discussion at the time when they were contacted. We attempted at least three contacts on at different times on different days.

Shared Sunderland:

Project Updates

The Shared Sunderland Project (2022–2025), which was led International Community Organisation of Sunderland (ICOS), Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre (SBIC), and New Horizon (NH), was designed to empower migrant communities in Sunderland. Through various initiatives, it provided direct support, influenced public policy, and fostered leadership within these communities.

1. One-to-One Advice and Advocacy

    - Provided guidance on housing, benefits, immigration (Level 1 regulated), and access to services to 366 individuals.
    - Indirectly benefited many others, including household members.
    - The project focused on marginalized groups, such as asylum seekers, refugees, and survivors of domestic abuse.
    - 78 were in need of immigration advice and support, including passport applications. 60 needed support with housing (including registrations with housing associations, presenting to the council as homeless and general advice on housing, such as disrepair. 100 needed support with benefits, including applying for benefits and understanding decisions, as well as reviews and appeals 17 needed support with accessing the health service, e.g., GP registrations. 54 needed support with managing their universal credit account due to language barriers and / or lack of access to devices or low IT skills. 56 were facing other problems, such as domestic abuse, school registration.
    - This service, while resource-intensive, made a significant difference in people's lives:

-64% (228 individuals) have reported improved wellbeing

-50% (182 individuals) have reported improved housing situation

-54% (197 individuals) have reported improved financial situation

-6% (19) have reported that their immigration issue has been resolved.

1. Engagement with Public and Non-Profit Organisations

    - Worked to make institutions more inclusive and migrant-friendly.
    - Addressed issues like housing access, cost of living, and antiracism in schools.
    - Partnered with Tyne and Wear Citizens (TWIC) and Citizens UK for national and local campaigns.
    - Richard Avenue Primary School and Thornhill School were engaged in adopting the National Education Union's Antiracism Charter.
    - Delivered awareness sessions on Asian, Black African, and Eastern European migrant communities, influencing VCSE and public sector organisations.

1. Building Sustainable Change & Community Representation

    - Formed a Project Steering Group (PSG) with 8 migrant leaders from diverse backgrounds.
    - Established a Sunderland Hub of TWIC, allowing migrant voices to reach public sector bodies.
    - Contributed to the mayoral pledge to increase affordable and social housing.
    - Successfully influenced regional education policies, including the Racial Justice in Education Campaign, which became a priority campaign for TWIC.

1. Leadership and Community Engagement

    - Engaged 64 individuals in leadership activities such as enterprise training, voter registration, environmental activism, and local governance.
    - Encouraged community members to pursue roles as school governors, councillors, and election candidates.
    - Helped increase confidence and participation in formal and informal leadership roles.
    - A total of 64 clients have taken part in leadership activities (many but not all of them have also benefited from advice) Out of this number 39 people have

reported accomplishing goals and achievements in leadership. A total of 16 individuals who took part in the leadership progressed into formal leadership positions as direct result of participation.

- Additionally, 45 people of them have indicated that they felt more confident pursuing their leadership interests following taking part in the programme.

1. Microgrants for Local Initiatives

    - Provided five projects (three organisations) with funding to enhance community leadership and service delivery.

    - The grant-making process was developed with PSG members, further fostering leadership skills.

1. Expansion of Immigration Advice Services

    - ICOS became OISC/IAA-registered in April 2023, enabling Level 1 immigration advice.

    - As of January 2025, one staff member and one volunteer are providing immigration support, with two additional staff members training for certification by late summer 2025.

    - SBIC and NH are working towards OISC/IAA registration, with NH staff aiming for certification in spring 2025.

    - Partnered with organisations like Migrant Help and the North East Law Centre to meet the demand for immigration support, particularly for EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) applications and E-visas.

1. Strengthening Partnerships

    - Collaborated with TWIC, North East Law Centre, Migrant Help, Together for Children, Sunderland City Council, The Phoenix Way, and the North East Antiracism Coalition (formed after the 2024 racist riots).

The Shared Sunderland project has been instrumental in supporting migrant communities by providing advice, advocacy, leadership development, and policy influence. Despite challenges, it has built sustainable structures that continue beyond its funding period, creating a lasting impact on inclusion, local policy, and migrant empowerment in Sunderland.

We are grateful to our funder- Paul Hamlyn Foundation for their support.

Case studies:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZNL6-ZB70A **(several case studies on leadership)**

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Shared-Sunderland-Leadership-Case-study-Chompa.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Shared-Sunderland-case-study-Amez.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Alina-Shared-Sunderland-Case-Study.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Shared-Sunderland-case-study-Semira.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Maciej-Case-Study-Shared-Sunderland.pdf

Strengths, achievements and opportunities:

We have a very motivated, focused, and skilled workforce. Our staff are also committed to our organization's mission, and often willing to go an extra mile for the clients they support, and for the sake of the projects they deliver. Our staff members are also interested in upskilling themselves, and in their continuous professional development.

We have also got an increasing number of volunteers supporting our delivery, including many dedicated regular volunteers. Many of them are current students or recent graduates, but some come from other walks of life, including unemployed or economically inactive people, as well as the over 50s. This increasing volunteer base has enabled us to increase our capacity, notably in areas such as running events and some communications functions, such as social media and the newsletter. This is a vital resource to ICOS, and it helps us to deliver more services, and better services for the people. The main areas our volunteers have been involved in include wellbeing activities, environmental activities, women's activities, and sports, as well as office volunteering (e.g., administration and communication).

ICOS has been able to develop new partnerships with several organisations from the VCSE sector, as well as the private companies. These partnerships are enabling us to tap into more potential and increase our capacity to deliver our projects, including through accessing extra funds, accessing corporate volunteers, and applying for funding together. Organisations we have recently started working closely with include Newcastle Building Society, Durham Wildlife Trust, or British Gas.

Wellbeing and environmental activities featured proximately in our work, as we took care of the local area (focusing on Backhouse Park in St Michael's Ward), where we deliver regular

actinides at least twice a week, and we have just started creating a composting heap. Regular sports and wellbeing session have brought joy to nay, and enabled people to get together.

In July 2024, ICOS celebrated its 15th birthday- the process culminated in our official celebration in October 2024. We utilized this opportunity to engage with stakeholders, especially our clients, through focus group discussions and a random survey. As a result, we have created, and are now implementing our 2025-2030 strategy, which includes plans to generate unrestricted income through creating a community café, enabling even more clients to shape our services through creating an organization-wide Project Steering Group, and recruiting trustees with the experience of the asylum system, amongst other development areas.

ICOS's has been able to amplify the voices of our clients and communities to influence processes affecting them. For example, we have effectively worked with the Tyne and Wear Citizens (TWIC) to influence structures and systems affecting our clients, such as housing, immigration law or antiracist education. We have created and contributed to research, including through co – production and involvement approaches, which has been published:

https://www.sunderland.ac.uk/more/news/university-news/2025/language-barriers-university-sunderland-research/

https://bristoluniversitypressdigital.com/view/journals/jgbv/aop/article-10.1332-23986808Y2024D000000060/article-10.1332-23986808Y2024D000000060.xml

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Together-Through-Crisis-Report-Final-edit-compressed.pdf

The ICOS Women project is growing in size and impact, and the women benefit not just from one to one support and social meet ups, but also co-produce the project through the Project Steering Group, which decides the direction of the work. It has recently grown from 8 to 12. The group now also influences external bodies through research, including research projects focusing on the impact of poverty on Eastern European families.

Women have also been able to find a space within this group to develop their own projects and initiatives, including the Mum's Club (which was originally developed by a volunteer who had young children). This project has now been expanded to Newcastle upon Tyne / North Tyneside through our cooperation with the Polish Saturday School.

We are pleased that the Back in Control 2 project's Project Steering Group has continued to contribute to effective delivery of the project through enabling co-production with the clients. The group currently involves 6 members, or all who have the experience of either modern day slavery, workplace exploitation, and in some cases- both. Through working with the PSG, we are implementing changes to the project in areas such as more effective wellbeing support, and or employability support.

Staff morale and wellbeing remain high, as shown in our wellbeing surveys, as illustrated by anonymous comments about being confident and happy. This has been consistent during the year, starting from early spring / late winter period. We hope to maintain high levels of morale, as well as wellbeing.

Challenges and issues:

Our clients encounter complex, overlapping challenges when trying to access entitlements, benefits, housing, essential services, and secure immigration status. Migrants are among the most affected by the housing and cost of living crises, often lacking the safety nets or family

networks that others rely on. Restrictive, inflexible, and at times hostile immigration policies create further obstacles. Added financial pressures, such as the NHS surcharge, make their situations even more precarious.

Our charity is also under growing financial strain. The loss of EU funding, combined with the smaller and more restrictive UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), has reduced the resources available to us. Many funders have paused grant-giving, tightened their criteria, or shifted to invitation-only funding. This is particularly difficult for ICOS, as we serve migrants broadly rather than focusing on specific subgroups. Inflation has further diminished the value of grants—funding that once covered a staff role now barely makes a dent. The recently announced rise in employer national insurance contributions will also push our overheads higher. Since staffing is our largest expense, and many funders are unwilling to cover it, the pressure is mounting.

As a result, ICOS has very limited capacity in essential areas such as communications, data management, and administration, with finance also under strain. Short-term and restrictive funding prevents us from building sustainable capacity, while staff are often unable to increase hours due to caring responsibilities, studies, or immigration restrictions. Staff turnover—linked to personal circumstances, immigration issues, and the impact of the racist riots—has further disrupted our capacity. These pressures have forced us to extend project delivery timescales, both internally and with subcontractors.

Client engagement also poses challenges: around 10–15% of clients disengage from projects. This is unsurprising given the transient nature of the communities we support—refugees often move after securing status, seeking family connections, work opportunities, or safety from discrimination. While natural, this mobility requires significant time and resources to safeguard their wellbeing during their engagement with us. Although we use a strong data management system, these movements also affect data consistency.

The cost of living crisis has left many clients worse off than when they first registered with us. Even so, client feedback consistently shows that our support makes a vital difference—without it, their situations would be far more severe.

The racist riots of 2024 have had a particularly damaging impact on community cohesion in Sunderland, one of the worst-affected northern cities. Although the immediate violence has subsided, the aftereffects remain. Many of our clients, staff, and volunteers live in the affected areas and still fear renewed attacks. Our office had to close early several times for safety reasons, and we paid for taxis to ensure staff and volunteers could get home safely. Sadly, some volunteers have since stepped back, and one staff member relocated to a more diverse city where they felt safer. The riots have left our community shaken, and we are deeply concerned about the long-term impact—whether they will embolden racist attitudes or fuel further violence.

Another area in need of improvement is external communication. Feedback from clients, staff, volunteers, and partner organisations highlights this as a gap. Limited resources have held back progress, but we recognise strengthening communication as a priority. Encouragingly, we have seen growth in engagement on LinkedIn.

Finally, it is a feature of our work that the issues faced by staff often mirror those of our clients. Limited immigration status can restrict staff members' ability to work, hampering recruitment, retention, and progression.

Client needs and support:

We supporting 15-30 people each week, 2-4 of them new. We continue to provide advice with benefits, housing and access to basic services such as healthcare and schools. Many clients have come searching for support with finding work. It appears that the labour market downturn has been having an effect on the local area and less jobs are available- which means that our support is even more needed. The employability work covers not only support with jobsearching or creating and updating CVs, but also identifying and accessing training– this is often tricky due to issues such as funding rules and language barriers. The housing situation in the local area is difficult, and this greatly affects our clients' ability to find a home for themselves and their family. This is especially the case for those who have to move suddenly, e.g., people who have recently been granted asylum in the UK, or those affected by domestic abuse or family beakdown. Providing material support, including food vouchers (for eligible clients on certain projects), sim cards and referrals for clothing and sometimes- is also something we often (all too often) do to support our clients. Digital support has become more prominent within ICOS's wider advice work, as we have recently finished the digital project due to the fact that more and more services are becoming online by default. This is something many of our clients struggle with, as they face extra barriers to accessing digital services, such as lack of familiarity with UK systems (digital or not), language barrier, limited access to connectivity (devices, internet connection), as well as frequently changing contact details (e.g., due to asylum seekers getting new sim cards in order to get more data). Case studies illustrating recent support have been included.

Client voice and the annual survey:

The survey annual survey is instrumental in setting out the future priorities of our work, and delivering on our commitment to client involvement and co – production, as set out in our 2025- 2030 strategic plan, and it includes input on client feedback and their experiences of our support, issues our clients are facing, their aspirations, and future priorities. We asked our clients the following questions:

- What issues has ICOS helped you with in the past?
- Could you rate the support you have received from ICOS on a rising 1 – 10 scale? (1 is "poor")
- If anything, what could we have done better?
- What current issues do you need help with?
- How can ICOS best help you with these issues?
- What additional services would you like ICOS to provide?
- Is there anything ICOS should do more of? (including services, events and activities)

- Is there anything you think ICOS should stop doing or do differently?
- What is the most valuable/impactful type of support you have received from ICOS?

- What are your hopes and goals for the next 12 months?
- What are your fears and worries about the next 12 months?
- Is there anything ICOS can do to support you with those?
- Have you got any further suggestions?
- Would you be prepared to take part in a case study?

While staff members had more time to deliver this work over the summer than if we run it at a different time of the year, many clients were not available to talk. Some (few) declined. We were therefore able to contact a total of 33 clients, less than the planned sample of 60. The learning from this might indicate that we need to implement a good plan B when we

do the survey next year- e.g., we make sure that if one person is not available, we go to the next person on the list.

Preliminary findings from the survey indicate:

- The **top areas of concern** are **employment/training** and **housing/homelessness**, each raised by multiple respondents.
- **Financial and legal/documentation issues** were mentioned but less frequently.
- A few respondents noted **health or wellbeing-related support needs**.
- Some responses suggest **ongoing uncertainty**

The survey results suggest that:

- **Housing and employment** remain the most pressing challenges for participants.
- **Financial struggles and legal/documentation barriers** are also notable but secondary concerns.
- There is was also a demand for **integration, language, and community activities** that help with social connection.

 The strongest theme: **people are very satisfied overall** — many simply want ICOS to keep doing what it already does. About 30% would like us to change nothing. Additionally, 79% of those taking part rated us at 10 out of 10 on a rising Likert scale, where 10 was "excellent".

 Practical help (supplies, letters, translation, vouchers, problem-solving) was core area to maintain.

 Community and social activities (events, trips, volunteering) are also important — many want *more* of them, and activities for children, as well as family activities- mentions suggest some demand for children's activities. There was also some demand for cultural trips.

• **Employability activities-** there was a considerable demand for employment support, including training and job applications, perhaps indicating a growing trend.

None of the clients felt that there was anything specific ICOS should stop doing completely.

Practical support (housing, food, documents, translation) is the most frequently cited area.

Community activities and emotional support are almost equally valued, highlighting the role ICOS plays in reducing isolation and improving wellbeing.

Several participants mentioned "everything" or general positive support, which suggests strong overall satisfaction.

When asked about the most valuable support they had received from ICOS, the clients highlighted the following:

Practical / Material Support

- Baby supplies
- Food vouchers
- Housing application, accommodation help

- Debt repayment help
- Travel/passport documents
- Translation / interpreting / GP support

Employment, Training & Skills

- Employment support
- CSCS training access
- Information about courses & training
- Support with access to training & new skills

Emotional / Social Support

- Avoiding loneliness & isolation
- Being listened to
- Support with complaints / trauma
- Dedication, advice, encouragement
- Feeling of safety

Community / Social Activities

- Wellbeing walks
- Trips (e.g., Beamish)
- Meetings for families from different backgrounds
- Sports, activities, workshops
- Events participation
- Opportunity & time together

General / Holistic Support

- "Many things" / "Everything" / "All kinds of support"
- "No" / "Nothing"

2. Frequency of Themes

Theme	Count
Practical / Material Support	8
Employment, Training & Skills	4
Emotional / Social Support	5
Community / Social Activities	7
General / Holistic	6

We have also asked about the hopes and fears our clients had. Perhaps indicating the general lack of stability affecting our clients, we have had less responses to these questions than to the other questions. While we are less certain with regards to these responses, that to the other responses, however, it is important that people's hopes and often fears both centred on employment and income issues.

To summarize, it can be said that ICOS and its work are highly valued, and the main areas to focus on appear to be advice and advocacy, employability, and wellbeing activities, especially family and children – focused.

Related to this is the work we have done to progress the objectives set out in the review itself, including co – production and involvement. The staff worked on engaging with clients to ask them to become members of the ICOS – wide Project Steering Group (PSG)and shape our work, with its initial meeting, which occurred September 2025. This initial meeting enabled us to set up ground rules for involvement and plan next steps, but we have already gained valuable knowledge with regards to clients' priorities, with clients mentioning the importance of our environmental work to their wellbeing, the importance of combatting social isolation, and making sure more people were aware of our work. The minutes from this meeting are not yet available. While the PSG meetings will eventually happen on a quarterly basis, they will be scheduled more often at the beginning in order to ensure enough momentum and prevent disengagement, and the next meeting will take place on 15/10/2025.

Future plans:

-Following up on the strategic review of our work.

-Further advance plans for income generation in order to secure the core of our work in the light of the financial challenges described above. These plans include establishing a coffee shop to generate extra income, and being commissioned by local / regional commissioners.

-Utilizing greater financial resources to create spare capacity within the organization to meet current and future challenges, and ensure good outcomes for our clients, and the wider community, as well as good staff wellbeing and morale.

-Improving our external communications.

-Building on our recent success, including the popular and well performing projects, such as ICOS Women, ICOS Sport / Wellbeing and our environmental work, as well as research and influencing work.

Thank you to our funders:

Funders' Logos

















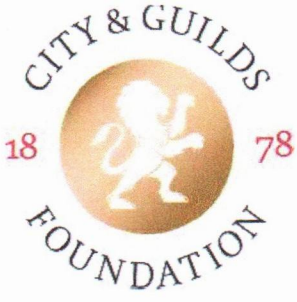




















Funders' Logos



























Appendix 1: case studies:

Employability:

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Case-Study1218.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Case-study-716.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Case-study-732.pdf

Advice and advocacy:

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ICOS-women-case-studies-.pdf
(women)

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/K-case-study-Links-for-Life-.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/H-case-study-Links-for-Life.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Links-for-Life-Case-Study-MS.pdf

Empowerment and community development:

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Shared-Sunderland-Leadership-Case-study-Chompa.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Quetes_Shared_Sunderland.pdf
(quotes)

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Health-Champion-Case-Studies-.pdf

Volunteering including environment:

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Greener-Activities-Programme-Olusegun-Case-Study.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Volunteer-Case-Study-Folashade.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/70.100-Case-study-Kelly.pdf

Appendix 2: photos:

Other Pictures





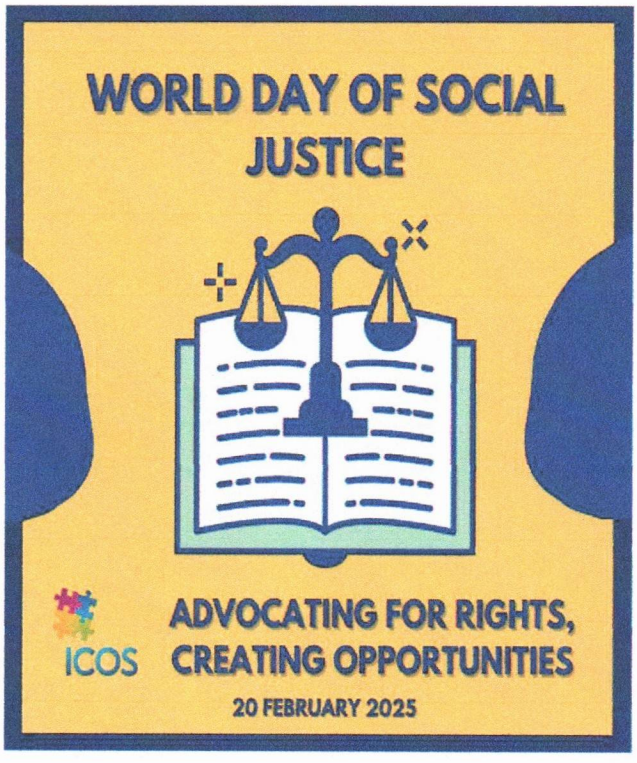


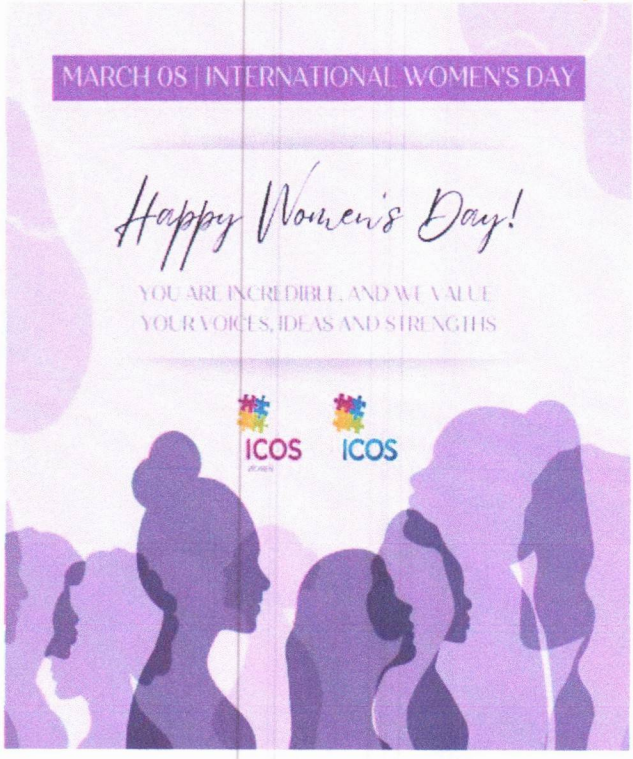


Other Pictures

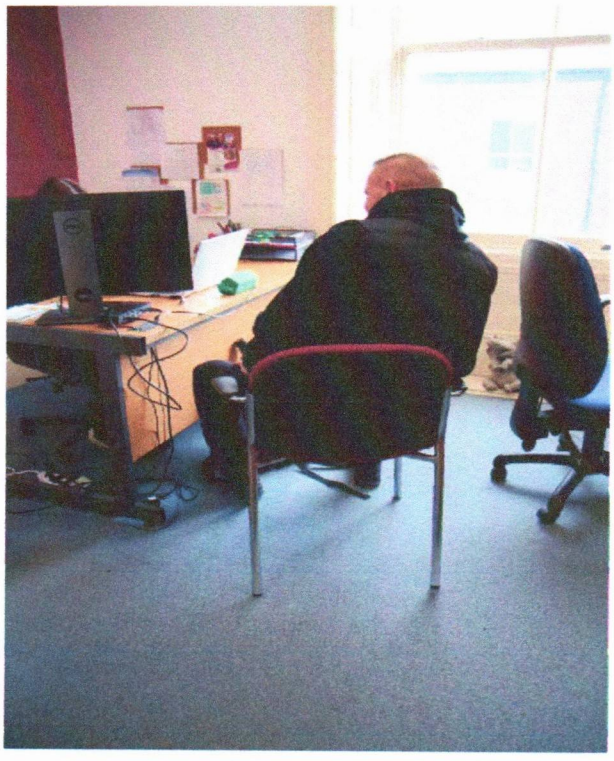


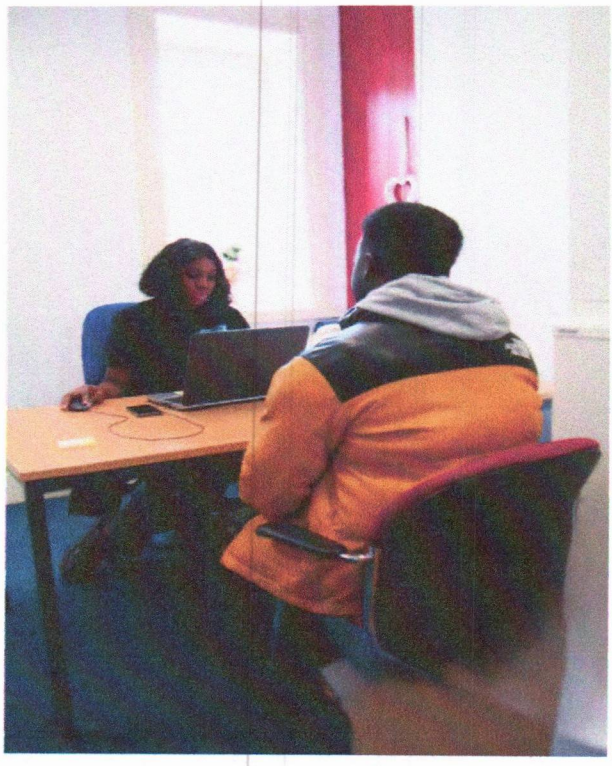






Other Pictures







Independent examiners report to the trustees of
International Community Association of Sunderland (ICOS)
For the period ended 31st March 2025

I report on the accounts of the charity for the period ended 31st Match 2025, which are set on pages 3 to 5

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner
The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Ac, and
- 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 held 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 explanation from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be provided 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 connect with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 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

- to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached

MICHAEL HENDY ACMA
Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE
Independent Examiner
30th July 2025

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Statement of Financial Activities for the Period ended 31st March 2025

Income	Notes	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Receipts					
Grants	2	305,810	2,500	308,310	418,412
Donations/Gift Aid/Fundraising		0	7,889	7,889	7,733
Trading Activities		0	4,119	4,119	4,311
Refund		0	2,348	2,348	3,484
Transfer		0	0	0	0
Donations from external bodies to clients		0	2,250	2,250	480
Interest received (savings account)		0	1,076	1,076	860
Subtotal		**305,810**	**20,183**	**325,993**	**435,279**
Asset & Investment Sales, etc.		0	0	0	0
Total Receipts		**305,810**	**20,183**	**325,993**	**435,279**
Payments					
Rent		13,080	0	13,080	11,990
Insurance		1,273	0	1,273	1,043
Salaries/NIN/HMRC		213,076	0	213,076	199,422
Payroll/Independent Examination		817	0	817	858
Pension (True Potential)		8,205	0	8,205	8,382
Events costs		8,128	1,452	9,580	7,290
Workshops		5,987	237	6,224	6,777
Sessional work		8,734	75	8,809	7,613
Consultancy		11,889	0	11,889	6,600
Translation		0	0	0	150
Evaluation		5,341	0	5,341	2,443
CIB Contracting		30,474	0	30,474	24,621
Training		53	0	53	2,685
Office costs: Admin, stationery, IT, cleaning		3,315	0	3,315	2,953
Other		0	0	0	0
Capital grant		4,568	0	4,568	5,357
Posters/ advertising		2,167	0	2,167	2,466
Participant expenses		23,610	1,783	25,393	22,534
Staff expenses		8,644	6	8,650	5,288
Volunteer expenses		6,460	66	6,526	4,094
Venue/Room hire		4,833	0	4,833	5,937
Bank fees		94	0	94	79
Refund		2,757	102	2,859	3,537
Transfer to savings account		4,434	1,620	6,054	20,511
Subtotal		**367,940**	**5,341**	**373,281**	**352,630**
Asset & Investment Purchases, etc.		**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total Payments		**367,940**	**5,341**	**373,281**	**352,630**
Surplus		**-62,130**	**14,842**	**-47,288**	**82,650**
Transfer Between Funds		6,054	0	6,054	20,717
Funds Brought Forward		239,245	64,999	304,245	200,878
Funds Carried Forward		**183,170**	**79,841**	**263,011**	**304,245**

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

	2025 £ Unrestricted	2025 £ Restricted	2025 £	2024 £
Current Assets				
Cash at bank and in Hand	79,841	183,170	263,011	304,245
Debtors and Prepayments				0
Less Current Liabilities				
Creditors and Accruals			0	0
Net Current Assets	79,841	183,170	263,011	304,245
Funded By				
Unrestricted Funds			19,086	11,375
Restricted Funds			183,170	239,245
Savings			60,755	53,624
Total Funds			263,011	304,245

Approved by Iga Borsut **Trustee**

International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Notes to the Accounts for the Period ended 31st March 2025

1) **Accounts Policies**

a) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and follow the recommendations in Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by Charities (SORP).

b) Grants received are accounted for on a receivable basis and credited to income during any accounting periods.

c) Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when received.

d) General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the management committee in furtherance of the general objectives of the organisation.

e) Unrestricted funds are donations and income received from the objects of the charity and are available as general funds.

f) **Taxation**
The Company is not registered for VAT. As a registered charity, it is exempt from taxation on income and gains under Section 505 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 and Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, provided that such income and gains are applied solely towards the achievement of its charitable objectives.

g) **Fund Accounting**
01. Restricted funds refer to funds received that are subject to specific conditions imposed by the donor, limiting their use to designated purposes or particular projects.

02. Unrestricted funds are those not subject to external constraints and may be used at the discretion of the charity to support general operations or allocated to reserves for internally designated initiatives.

h) **Previous periods figures**
Comparative figures from the previous period are presented, where available, for reference and comparison purposes only.

i) **Compensation, allowances, and reimbursements to trustees**
No remuneration was paid to trustees during the period covered by these accounts.

j)

Staff Costs	**2025**	**2025**
Salaries and Wages	221,282	207,805

No Employees received emoluments over £ 60,000

2) **Grants**

Funders		**Restricted funds**	**Unresticted funds**	**Total funds**
Health Championship Development Fund	Vonne	9,394.42		**9,394**
Know Your Neighbourhood 2	Creative Lives/The National Lottery Community Fund	3,000.00		**3,000**
Hospital Of God At Greatham 2024	Greatham Hosp Tt	1,000.00		**1,000**
St Michael'S East Rangers Phase 3	Sunderland City Council	3,668.42		**3,668**
Aspire 2024	Gentoo Group Limited	500.00		**500**
UKSPF Links For Life	Sunderland City Council	1,846.95		**1,847**
Garfield Weston	Garfield Weston Fo Garfield Weston	20,000.00		**20,000**
Vital Community - Sector Support	Community Foundation #	4,982.00		**4,982**
Justice Together Initiative JTI - 2024	North East Law Cen Nelc	4,000.00		**4,000**
Household Support 5	Sunderland City Council	2,383.00		**2,383**
St Michael'S East Rangers Phase 3	Sunderland City Council	2,272.96		**2,273**
Access Foundation	The Access Foundation	9,556.00		**9,556**
UKSPF Links For Life	Sunderland City Council	4,210.30		**4,210**
Know Your Neighbourhood	The National Lottery Community Fund – Know Your Neighbourhood	10,450.75		**10,451**
Back In Control 2022-2025	The National Lottery Community Fund - Partnerships North East And Cumbria	44,780.00		**44,780**
Bentley Programme	Bently	500.00		**500**
Reeds Grassroots	Community Foundtion	2,989.00		**2,989**
Together Through Crisis - Additional Funding	Newcastle University	6,270.00		**6,270**

International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Notes to the Accounts for the Period ended 31st March 2025

London Marathon Foundation Solidarity Fund	Sported Foundation		2,000.00	2,000
Backhouse Park Support	Centrica Management Services		500.00	500
Rington - Womens Group	Community Foundation	4,988.00		4,988
Others	anonymous Donation	20,000.00		20,000
Lloyds Bank Foundation 2024-2027	Lloyds Bank Foundation	25,000.00		25,000
North East Ambulance Services	Vonne	2,750.00		2,750
St Michael'S Ranger 2024 - Extension	Sunderland City Council	5,223.10		5,223
Uksps Links For Life	Sunderland City Council	5,557.36		5,557
Leeds Buidling Society - 2024	Leeds Building Society	14,783.16		14,783
Womens Urgent Support Fund Round 2	Smallwood Trust Wusf	9,994.42		9,994
UKSPF Links For Life	Sunderland City Council	5,326.10		5,326
St Michael'S Ward 2024-2025	Sunderland City Council	1,831.37		1,831
Back In Control 2022-2025	The National Lottery Community Fund - Partnerships North East And Cumbria	44,780.00		44,780
Know Your Neighbourhood	The National Lottery Community Fund – Know Your Neighbourhood	3,483.59		3,484
Household Support Vi	Sunderland City Council	1,500.00		1,500
Arnald Clark Community Foundation	Arnald Clark Community Foundation	1,500.00		1,500
Nature Hubs - Starbucks 2	Hubbub Foundation Nature Hub Top Up	3,000.00		3,000
Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC)	Daniel Confirmed Not A Government Grant	2,000.00		2,000
NEMCA	Community Foundation	7,971.00		7,971
It Equipment - (Community Digital Health Hub)	Sunderland City Council	5,000.00		5,000
Stronger Shores Community Grants (Seeing Blue 2)	Sounth Tyneside Council	4,983.76		4,984
UKSPF Links For Life	Sunderland City Council	4,334.00		4,334
		305,810	2,500	308,310

International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Notes to the Accounts for the Period ended 31st March 2025

3) **Petty cash**

	Restricted funds	Unresticted funds	Total funds
Income			
Cash moved from bank account to petty cash	1,650		1,650
Expenditure			
Staff expenses	882		882
Volunteer expenses	819		819
Sessional work	21		21
Total	1,722	0	1,722
Surplus	-72	0	-72
Balance brought forward (last year)	206	0	206
Balance Carried Forward	134	0	134

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATION OF SUNDERLAND

England & Wales - Charity number 1186618

Accounts

Delivery:

ICOS has been able to deliver comprehensive and responsive advice and advocacy, providing support to migrant people living in the North East of England (the vast majority of beneficiaries were from Sunderland).

We have provided one to one support with issues such as accessing benefits, applying for housing, dealing with official correspondence (e.g., from schools, the NHS, or government bodies, such as letters regarding council tax). It helped to connect migrant people to essential services and entitlements. Many of the clients have been refugees- often refugees who have just been granted leave following a decision on their claim. We have also supported migrant people affected by modern day slavery, workplace exploitation, domestic abuse and hate crime. This is a time of huge change in their life, as they only have 28 days to leave their current accommodation, and apply for mainstream state support. Very often, this is also the time when they are able to seek employment in the UK for the 1st time. These processes often must be navigated at the same time, which is immensely difficult for people who are also usually dealing with the effects of isolation from their friends and family back home, while also getting used to living in a new country. Many of the clients are also survivors of state oppression and torture. Other migrants we have supported include economic migrants, students, and their families. Many are facing intersectional issues and multiple disadvantage (e.g., migrant women who live in a deprived area, and are affected by disadvantage or discrimination based on ethnicity, as well as sex. Our advice and advocacy work has covered prevention (e.g., ensuring that clients access support before problems arise- e.g., when they need to ensure the immigration status of their children), as well as emergency situations (e.g., supporting someone who is already homeless).

As part of the wider advice work, we have delivered effective employability support. This support has focused on sending job applications, creating / updating CVs, filling in profiles on job sites, creating covering letters, preparing for job interviews, supporting clients to have their qualifications from abroad verified/accepted, and support with applying for courses and training from external providers (including English language skills). Our staff have also helped with practical aspects for looking for work, such as travel arrangements and securing childcare. Such as multifaceted approach is needed, as many of our clients have limited experience of the UK labour market and can easily find themselves at a disadvantage, or even excluded (e.g., when they do not know how to enroll on a course, or what to include/not include in a CV). Our support has been flexible and holistic, and we have also been able to support our clients with meeting their Universal Credit commitments to ensure that they are not penalized (which would also make it less likely for them to find employment). We additionally, our flexible and holistic approach is evident in our inclusive practice- we have been providing support not just to those out of work, but also people in work who would like to change their job. Notably, clients, especially women, have been able to access STEM opportunities with regards to both- paid employment, as well as training. Overreliance on AI to

create content such as CVs, applications and covering letters is a new problem we are observing, and for people unfamiliar with the UK, and perhaps struggling with the English language, this risk of overreliance is even greater than in the general population, while they are less able to scrutinize AI-produced content.

Outside of advocacy and advice work, we have also been able to make a difference in other ways, including:

-Providing a safe space for migrant (predominantly Eastern European) women as part of the ICOS Women project, which now also includes the Mums Club.

-Providing wellbeing (including a variety of sports) activities through ICOS sports. These activities are decided on by those taking part, and a high level of involvement means good attendance and engagement levels, as well as better outcomes.

-Enabling people affected by modern day slavery to rebuild their lives, including through supporting them to access entitlements, immigration advice, and counselling (through our partner- Impact North East CIC

-Delivering locally- focused environmental activities, predominantly based in Backhouse Park, St Michael's Ward (in Sunderland), including clean ups, awareness raising sessions, and practical environmental action such as tree planting.

-Enabling (predominantly) migrant people to utilize and improve their skills, and gain a track record through volunteering in a variety of areas, including administration, communications, environmental volunteering, event / activities organizing and content creation.

-Getting people from different cultures and backgrounds together through events and activities (including socials, environmental and wellbeing activities).

-Influencing policy and practice affecting migrant people through research (often co-produced) and strategic advocacy.

-Empowering migrant people to enable them to become local councilors, council candidates, school governors, volunteers and board members to make sure that local services become more effective at meeting their needs.

Impact:

Out of the 193 people who have benefitted from one-to-one advocacy and advice with recorded data, 81 have reported improved wellbeing

Out of 135 with recorded data, 54 have reported being in an improved financial situation.

Out of the 98 people with recorded data, 29 reported an improved housing situation

Out of the 191 people with recorded data, 54 reported feeling more optimistic about their future

Out of the 66 people with recorded data, 20 reported an improved confidence level

143 people who have attended wellbeing activities have reported meeting new people from a different culture.

24 people have progressed into paid employment (the projects directly supporting employability work at ICOS were only worth £7000 in total during that period, which supported a total of 50 people, and about 40% of them progressed into paid employment.

89 people have achieved at qualification or progressed into education or training

51 people have reported receiving a benefit award

25 people have received support with their immigration status (either directly or through referrals)

20 clients have also reported feeling safer (this is only measured for some projects)

We have provided an estimated 130 clients with material support, including sim cards, food vouchers, food back referrals, clothing and toy items, or refunded travel costs.

We have delivered at total of 54 wellbeing activities, including a Coastal Walk, Tennis, Bowling, Seal Sands Walk, White Lea- Farm walk, Bowling, Souter Lighthouse, Sports, Santa Day, Snowboarding, Ceramics, Go Karting, Coastal Walk, Creating Bird Feeders, Kayaking, Water Sports, Spilmans Farm Trip, Rowing, Diggerland, Coastering and many more.

Sports: Through the Together Fund/RISE project, we have involved 139 BME people in sports activities. Through the evaluation of the project, we have learned that:

-almost 80% of the clients have said that the project had improved their mental health

-almost 90% of the clients have said that the project had improved their physical health

-almost 90% of the clients have said they had befriended new people during the project

-over 90% of the clients have said that the project had made them more active

Environmental: We have delivered a total of 78 environmental activity days through the East Rangers project alone, engaging a total of total of total of 350 people. 64 people- 70% of those we were able to ask asked took environmental action as a result of the project.

Projects which did not fully fit into the scope (e.g., due to their length, or being delivered by more than 1 partners)

Shared Sunderland:

Since February 2022, it the project has provided direct one–to–one support to 280 people, and provided support with a range of issues, including benefits, housing and healthcare, as well as immigration support/advice. Out of the 142 have left the project: 72 have reported improved financial situation. 61 have reported improved housing situation. 98 have reported improved wellbeing. 24 were in need of immigration advice and support, 58 needed support with housing (including registrations with housing associations, presenting to the council as homeless and general advice on housing, such as disrepair), 82 needed support with benefits, including applying for benefits and understanding decisions, as well as reviews and appeals, 16 needed support with accessing the health service, e.g., GP registrations, 33 needed support with managing their universal credit account, 36 were facing other problems, such as domestic abuse.
Most accessed more than 1 type of advice, and often struggled to navigate the system, hence, our holistic help enabled them timely access vital support in one place, providing an effective and streamline service.
The project has also made progress in empowering migrant and minoritized people in Sunderland, and making Sunderland a better place for them:

-21 migrant people have become Community Voting Champions, enabling them to learn about the importance, and the process of voting, and to engage with others to vote. This workshop was delivered with Tyne and Wear Citizens (TWIC).

-5 have become Project Steering Group members and taken part in project planning/shaping, creating the microgrants scheme, and appraising applications.

-3 have become school governors.

-30 are involved in working on the Shared Sunderland microgrant-funded-project, including applying, designing their projects. This includes one-off events, regular activities (e.g., coffee mornings).

-9 have become research champions/members of the PSG, working on a project researching the impact of the cost of living crisis on EE families.

-2 people have become board members (e.g., at a local regeneration charity) and 8 volunteers of mainstream organisations (e.g., Children's Services).

-2 BME individuals have been elected as councillors. 6 have applied to become candidates with various parties in the 2026 all-out elections.

-We have delivered Intercultural Sessions to staff at 7 local public (including schools) and voluntary/community sector organisations; these included information on cultures, such as East Asian, Eastern European, and African, and were delivered by lived-experience staff.

-We have worked with TWIC and 2 local schools to encourage them to implement the Antiracism

Charter (https://neu.org.uk/latest/library/anti-racism-charter-framework-developing-anti-racist-approach).

70/100

The 70/100 project, inspired by 70 years of Her Majesty The Queen's reign and 100 years anniversary of the founding of Backhouse Park, run from May 2022 till June 2024 ICOS has worked with the local community to design and deliver a series of events and activities in Backhouse Park, Sunderland, including training sessions. This has included events such as the Family Day Picnic, smaller sessions like the birdwatching sessions and planting trees. The project was funded through the Jubilee Fund at the National Lottery Community Fund. The project has achieved significant outcomes and met- and exceeded its targets:

TARGETS:

- Enable 70 individuals from the local community to acquire environmental skills, with 25 of them obtaining accredited training.

351 participants took part in environmental workshops and awareness to acquire environmental skills

128 people have acquired environmental skills, including 30 people, who took part in training and obtained an accredited qualification.

- Organise 25 events or workshops that will actively involve a minimum of 100 participants.

42 events/ workshops have been delivered

890 participants took part in events, 67 volunteers helped with preparation, setting up and delivering the events, and 351 participants took part in workshops/environmental awareness sessions.

150 clean ups/ litter pick organised where people took part in environmental action.

A total of 401 people have volunteered, including 67 who have volunteered on a more regular on in-depth basis (e.g., supported the planning and running of various events, or volunteered more than 3 times.

Many volunteers and additional ICOS staff members have gained valuable environmental skills.

We have been able to gather accurate data for 151 adults (we had missing data for 15 clients, and we were unable to contact 33 clients) who have stated that the project had the following impact on them:

-55% stated that their environmental awareness had improved

-59% stated that their environmental skills had improved

-59% stated that their wellbeing had improved

-37% stated that their financial situation had improved. While economic inclusion was not a major part of the project, we associate this change with people taking part in other /additional projects we deliver, such as advice/advocacy work, and employability work. We also know that some clients were able to progress into paid work as a result of the project, or sustain their employment (e.g., when it required them to perform regular training/refreshers which are expensive or not readily available).

-77% stated that they had taken action to protect the environment since the beginning of the project. The most popular types of environmental action were reported as recycling (41%), community litter picks (17%), and volunteering for community groups/organisations concerned with the environment (7%).

-Additionally, 87% rated the project at least 10, on a rising 1-10 Likert scale.

-We have plated a total of 290 trees on the park. While the initial batch of 105 planted in 2022 was unfortunately largely lost to antisocial behaviour, the trees planted since have mostly stayed intact.

-We have restored the sensory garden in Barley Mow Park, restored the fountain– turned – plant holder in Backhouse Park, and created a new fairy trail in Backhouse Park, much enjoyed by local children and families.

-We have installed a total of 20 bird houses, and 2 bird feeders, which have been made by the local people as part of the project (including children).

Many of the clients we have initial registration data for were still being supported at the end of March 2024, and they have now been able to achieve their outcomes.

Strengths, achievements and opportunities:

We have a very motivated, focused, and skilled workforce. Our staff are also committed to our organization's mission, and often willing to go an extra mile for the clients they support, and for the sake of the projects they deliver. Our staff members are also interested in upskilling themselves, and in their continuous professional development.

We have also got an increasing number of volunteers supporting our delivery, including many dedicated regular volunteers. Many of them are current students or recent graduates, but some come from other walks of life, including unemployed or economically inactive people, as well as the over 50s. This increasing volunteer base has enabled us to increase our capacity, notably in areas such as running events and some communications functions, such as social media and the newsletter. This is a vital resource to ICOS, and it helps us to deliver more services, and better services for the people. The main areas our volunteers have been involved in include wellbeing activities, environmental activities, women's activities, and sports, as well as office volunteering (e.g., administration and communication).

ICOS has been able to develop new partnerships with several organisations from the VCSE sector, as well as the private companies. These partnerships are enabling us to tap into more potential and increase our capacity to deliver our projects, including through accessing extra funds, accessing corporate volunteers, and applying for funding together. Organisations we have recently started working closely with include Newcastle Building Society, Durham Wildlife Trust, or British Gas.

Despite funding challenges outlined below, we have been successful in receiving long– term funding from several grant funders, including Smallwood Trust, Leeds Building Society Foundation, and Lloyds Bank Foundation, which should enable ICOS to sustain some level of service until at least January 2028.

We have started working on our strategic review, and have been able to gather feedback and input from our clients in order to plan future activities, and articulate our value. The review is currently in progress.

ICOS's has been able to amplify the voices of our clients and communities to influence processes affecting them. For example, we have been invited to participate in the North East ICB equity strategy. We have also been able to show the impact of different societal issues on our clients, such as hate crime, discrimination, access to healthcare and domestic abuse- notably migrant women (https://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2024-09-23/mum-called-prostitute-on-school-run-amid-eastern-european-discrimination , https://www.audible.co.uk/podcast/Domestic-abuse-and-Eastern-European-women/B0CMDTCT1L, https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/17445/, https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/17445/). We are able to use this knowledge to ensure decision makers are aware of the importance and the depth of the issues our clients face. We also use them to plan our activities, and create an evidence base testifying to the need for our work. ICOS has also featured in several good news stories in the local media, e.g., regarding our environmental work: https://www.sunderlandecho.com/news/volunteers-invited-to-be-good-natured-in-sunderland-4510479.

The ICOS Women project is growing in size and impact, and the women benefit not just from one to one support and social meet ups, but also co-produce the project through the Project Steering Group, currently consisting of 8, which decides the direction of the work. The group now also influences external bodies through research, including research projects focusing on the impact of poverty on Eastern European families.

Women have also been able to find a space within this group to develop their own projects and initiatives, including the Mum's Club (which was originally developed by a volunteer who had young children).

We are pleased that the Back in Control 2 project's Project Steering Group has continued to contribute to effective delivery of the project through enabling co-production with the clients. The

group currently involves 6 members, or all who have the experience of either modern day slavery, workplace exploitation, and in some cases- both. Through working with the PSG, we are implementing changes to the project in areas such as more effective wellbeing support, and or employability support.

Challenges:

Our clients are facing significant challenges accessing entitlements, benefits, housing, services and status. They are facing multiple challenges, as migrants are especially affected by the cost of living crisis and the housing crisis due to lack of resources they could fall back on, and having less community links they could benefit from (such as family members). Additionally, they are being profoundly affected by restrictive, inflexible, and outright hostile immigration rules, and the cost associated with being a migrant with a restricted immigration status (e.g., the NHS surcharge).

The financial outlook the charity is facing has been challenging. This is because of the lack of EU funding, the restrictive nature of the replacement UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), and its smaller size, the cost of living crisis, and many funders pausing their grant giving. Due to inflation (which has been especially high in recent years), the value of the grants awarded by many funders have dwindled in value (e.g., a £10 000 grant is now not enough to support a 20 hours' post, paid at a living wage level).

ICOS lacks spare capacity in many areas, especially when it comes to core functions, such as communications, data, and basic administration, and, to a lesser degree- finance. This is largely the result of the aforementioned funding challenges. Even when we do have enough money to pay for increased capacity, we cannot always make it work, as often such funding is short term, or our staff members cannot increase their hours (e.g., due to care commitments, studying, or their immigration status. Staffing changes and the need for unexpected recruitment has also affected the capacity. Most of them incurred due to personal circumstances of the staff, including their immigration status, caring responsibilities, as well as the impact of the racist riot (as described below).

We have had extended the delivery timescales for several projects due to capacity issues within our team, as well as when it comes to subcontractors.

About 10% - 15% of our clients on each of the projects disengage. This is due to the fact that we are dealing with a mobile, transient population- e.g., refugees often leave the area after being granted status, due to family connections elsewhere in the UK, availability of work, or employment prospects, as well as real and perceived discrimination. However, it takes up time and resources to engage with them (and make sure they are safe).

The financial situation of many of our clients has been negatively affected by the cost of living crisis, hence their financial situation is often reported as worse than at the point of registration. However, we know that in many cases, their situation would have been different if it was not for our intervention, as reported by our clients.

The 2024 racist riots have had a significant negative impact on community cohesion. Sunderland was one of the northern cities most affected by the riots (https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/24496976.six-people-appear-court-charged-sunderland-riots/). While the violence appears to have ceased, our community, including clients, staff, and volunteers have been deeply affected, and are worried that the violence will return, or that those who hold racist views will be emboldened to act on their hatred. The riots took part close to the train station, and most of our clients live in this area. Our staff and volunteers have been truly

frightened, and we had to close the office early several times, due to fear of our staff, clients and volunteers being attacked. We have also had to pay for taxis for our staff and volunteers. As a result, several volunteers have stopped coming, and one of our paid staff members quit and moved away to another city in the UK where they felt safer due to it being more multicultural. We are worried about the long term impact of these riots, and whether they will embolden racism, including criminal behaviour towards our clients.

External communications have been identifying as requiring improvement by clients (including volunteers), staff, and external agencies. Lack of capacity and focus on this area has been evident, and we need to improve our external communications, including communicating via multiple channels, social media, and the website.

Future plans:

-Undertaking a strategic review of our work to establish the importance of our work to our clients, and set out a vision for our organisation for the next 5 years

-Celebrate 15 years of ICOS, using this opportunity to gain more support and buy in from stakeholders, energize our organization, and plan for the future.

-Utilizing also the workstreams described above, to create a workplan for ICOS for the next 5 years, and a more detailed business plan for the period of June 2025 (when the current business plan ends) – June 2028.

-Further advance plans for income generation in order to secure the core of our work in the light of the financial challenges described above. These plans include establishing a coffee shop to generate extra income, and being commissioned by local / regional commissioners.

-Utilizing greater financial resources to create spare capacity within the organization to meet current and future challenges, and ensure good outcomes for our clients, and the wider community, as well as good staff wellbeing and morale.

-Improving external communications

-Building on our recent success, including the popular and well performing projects, such as ICOS Women, ICOS Sport / Wellbeing and our environmental work, as well as research and influencing work.

Case studies and quotes:

Employability:

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Northumbrian-Water-Case-Study-1.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Northumbrian-Water-Case-Study-2.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Northumbrian-Water-Case-Study-3.pdf

Advice and advocacy:

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/M.-Northumberland-Village-Homes.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/A-case-study-NHVF.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Case-Study-for-Northumberland-Village-Homes-Fund-2024-.pdf

Environmental:

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/70.100-Case-study-Kelly.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/70.100-Case-study-Anna.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Greener-Activities-Programme-Olusegun-Case-Study.pdf

Volunteering:

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Sandra-M.-Asare-Case-study.pdf

https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Volunteer-Case-Study-Folashade.pdf

Thank you to our funders!



International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Financial Statements
For the Period
1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Charity No: 1186618

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

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International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st March 2024

Name: International Community Organisation of Sunderland

Address: 14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

Charity No: 1186618

Trustees (who served during the year)

Rafal Marzec (Chair)
Iga Borsut (Treasurer)
Anna Heyman
Agnieszka Serafin
Nyashadzashe Tafaune

Independent Examiner

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24
CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT SIGN OFF

International Community Association of Sunderland

I have examined the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the Year ending 31st March 2024, together with the underlying accounting records, and confirm that the accounts are in accordance therewith.

Signed..... Dated.....3/10/24

MICHAEL HENDY A.C.M.A.
Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
Independent Reviewer

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Statement of Financial Activities for the Period ended 31st March 2024

Income	Notes	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Receipts					
Grants	2	418,412	0	418,412	335,763
Donations/Gift Aid/Fundraising			7,733	7,733	10,511
Trading Activities			4,311	4,311	694
Refund			3,484	3,484	418
Transfer			0	0	288
Donations from external bodies to clients			480	480	3,315
Interest received (savings account)			860	860	134
Subtotal		**418,412**	**16,868**	**435,279**	**351,122**
Asset & Investment Sales, etc.				0	0
Total Receipts		**418,412**	**16,868**	**435,279**	**351,122**
Payments					
Rent		11,986	4	11,990	14,370
Insurance		1,043	0	1,043	985
Salaries/NIN/HMRC		175,997	23,425	199,422	219,040
Payroll/Independent Examination		858	0	858	879
Pension (True Potential)		8,198	185	8,382	9,166
Events costs		4,807	2,483	7,290	4,867
Workshops		6,581	196	6,777	2,509
Sessional work		6,763	850	7,613	13,520
Consultancy		1,050	5,550	6,600	8,547
Translation		150	0	150	0
Evaluation		2,443	0	2,443	1,800
CIB Contracting		24,621	0	24,621	21,117
Training		2,685	0	2,685	471
Office costs: Admin, stationery, IT, cleaning		2,801	152	2,953	3,733
Other		0	0	0	0
Capital grant		5,357	0	5,357	0
Posters/ advertising		2,466	0	2,466	1,514
Participant expenses		22,484	50	22,534	32,146
Staff expenses		5,198	90	5,288	5,813
Volunteer expenses		3,741	353	4,094	3,645
Venue/Room hire		5,776	161	5,937	4,364
Bank fees		79	0	79	99
Refund		3,409	128	3,537	50
Transfer to savings account		20,511	0	20,511	2,345
Subtotal		**319,004**	**33,626**	**352,630**	**350,979**
Asset & Investment Purchases, etc.		**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total Payments		**319,004**	**33,626**	**352,630**	**350,979**
Surplus		**99,407**	**-16,758**	**82,650**	**143**
Transfer Between Funds		20,717	0	20,717	2,478
Funds Brought Forward		119,121	81,757	200,878	198,257
Funds Carried Forward		**239,245**	**64,999**	**304,245**	**200,878**

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2024

	2024 £ Unrestricted	2024 £ Restricted	2024 £	2023 £
Current Assets				
Cash at bank and in Hand	64,999	239,245	304,245	200,878
Debtors and Prepayments				0
Less Current Liabilities				
Creditors and Accruals			0	0
Net Current Assets	64,999	239,245	304,245	200,878
Funded By				
Unrestricted Funds			11,375	49,504
Restricted Funds			239,245	119,121
Savings			53,624	32,253
Total Funds			304,245	200,878

Approved by ...Igo Borsut..... Trustee

International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Notes to the Accounts for the Period ended 31st March 2024

1) Accounts Policies

a) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and follow the recommendations in Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by Charities (SORP).

b) Grants received are accounted for on a receivable basis and credited to income during any accounting periods.

c) Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when received.

d) General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the management committee in furtherance of the general objectives of the organisation.

e) Unrestricted funds are donations and income received from the objects of the charity and are available as general funds.

2) Grants

Funders		Restricted funds	Unresticted funds	Total funds
National Lottery Community Fund	Eastern European Support Project (EESP)- Awards for All	19,959		19,959
The National Lottery Community Fund - Partnerships North East and Cumbria	Back in Control 2022-2025	89,560		89,560
Sunderland City Council	East Street and Park Rangers 2022	5,030		5,030
Sunderland City Council	Household Support Fund	6,124		6,124
Justice Together Initiative	Justice Together Initiative	9,050		9,050
National Lottery Community Fund	Jubilee	25,323		25,323
Community Foundation Tyne and Wear & Northumberland	Willan Charitable Trust	9,882		9,882
National Lottery Community Fund and European Social Fund (ESF)	Wise Steps	7,212		7,212
The Bernicia Foundation	Bernicia Foundation	8,041		8,041
The Sported	Cash4Club	2,000		2,000
British Science Association	Community Buddies	4,000		4,000
Sunderland City Council	Community Chest	1,074		1,074
Community Foundation	Cost of living	7,959		7,959
Sunderland Counselling Service Anniversary Gr:	Sunderland Counselling Service	10,000		10,000
Sunderland City Council	Holiday Activities Fund	1,920		1,920
The National Lottery Community Fund – Know Your Neighbourhood	Know Your Neighborhood	27,869		27,869
Creative Lives/The National Lottery Community	Know Your Neighborhood 2	5,000		5,000
National Lottery Community Fund	Linden Family	5,000		5,000
Hubbub Foundation	Hubbub Nature Hubs	6,000		6,000
Northern Gas Networks' Community Partnering	Northern Gas Networks Community	8,416		8,416
National Lottery Community Fund	Northumberland Village Homes	4,547		4,547
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	Paul Hamlyn Foundation - Shared Sunderland	106,700		106,700
Platten Community Fund	Platten Family	9,024		9,024
Together Fund	Rise 2023	7,577		7,577
Durham County - Seeing Blue Project	Sea Scapes	2,000		2,000
Sir James Knott Trust	Sir James Knott Trust 2023	8,186		8,186
Sunderland City Council	St Michael's East Rangers Phase 3	12,778		12,778
The DPS Charity Fund	The DPS Charity Fund	2,500		2,500
Newcastle University	Together Through Crisis	3,980		3,980
	Other projects (below £1000)	1,700		1,700
		418,412	0	418,412

3) Petty cash

	Restricted funds	Unrestricted funds	Total funds
Income			
Cash moved from bank account to petty cash	1,600	0	1,600
Expenditure			
Staff expenses	625	0	625
Volunteer expenses	393	0	393
Participant expenses	36	0	36
Events costs	6	0	6
Workshops	177	0	177
Office costs: admin and stationery	19	0	19
Refund	109	0	109
Sessional work	104	0	104
Total	1,469	0	1,469
Surplus	131	0	131
Balance brought forward (last year)	75	0	75
Balance Carried Forward	206	0	206

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023/24
CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT SIGN OFF

International Community Association of Sunderland

I have examined the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the Year ending 31st March 2024, together with the underlying accounting records, and confirm that the accounts are in accordance therewith.

Signed..... Dated.....

MICHAEL HENDY A.C.M.A.
Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
Independent Reviewer

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATION OF SUNDERLAND

England & Wales - Charity number 1186618

Accounts

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Financial Statements
For the Period
1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Charity No: 1186618

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

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International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st March 2023

Name:	International Community Organisation of Sunderland
Address:	14 Foyle Street Sunderland SR1 1LE
Charity No:	1186618

Trustees (who served during the year)

Rafal Marzec	(Chair)
Iga Borsut	(Treasurer)
Anna Heyman	
Miroslaw Warmuz	(resigned 3rd June 2022)
Agnieszka Serafin	
Nyashadzashe Tafaune	(appointed 24th March 2023)

Independent Examiner

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/3
CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT SIGN OFF

International Community Association of Sunderland

I have examined the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the Year ending 31st March 2023, together with the underlying accounting records, and confirm that the accounts are in accordance therewith.

Signed..... Dated..12/4/24.....

MICHAEL HENDY A.C.M.A.
Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
Independent Reviewer

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Statement of Financial Activities for the Period ended 31st March 2023

Income	Notes	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Receipts					
Grants	2	307,013	28,750	335,763	341,026
Donations/Gift Aid/Fundraising			10,511	10,511	2,656
Trading Activities			698	698	0
Refund			418	418	325
Transfer			288	288	3,367
Donations from external bodies to clients			3,319	3,319	0
Interest received (savings account)			134	134	0
Subtotal		**307,013**	**44,109**	**351,122**	**347,375**
Asset & Investment Sales, etc.				0	0
Total Receipts		**307,013**	**44,109**	**351,122**	**347,375**
Payments					
Rent		14,370		14,370	7,440
Insurance		985		985	544
Salaries/NIN/HMRC		201,417	17,624	219,040	194,627
Payroll/Independent Examination		879		879	474
Pension (True Potential)		9,079	87	9,166	9,423
Events costs		3,627	1,240	4,867	879
Workshops		2,151	358	2,509	693
Sessional work		12,807	713	13,520	1,940
Consultancy		4,347	4,200	8,547	5,127
Evaluation		1,800		1,800	4,800
CIB Contracting		21,117		21,117	8,719
Training		419	52	471	198
Office costs: Admin, Stationery, IT, cleaning		3,676	57	3,733	3,994
Other		0		0	6,007
Posters/ advertising		1,514		1,514	1,948
Participant expenses		32,018	128	32,146	11,449
Staff expenses		5,813		5,813	3,319
Volunteer Expenses		3,320	325	3,645	4,313
Venue/Room hire		4,232	132	4,364	3,089
Bank fees		87	12	99	0
Refund			50	50	0
Transfer to savings account			2,345	2,345	8,516
Subtotal		**323,656**	**27,323**	**350,979**	**277,808**
Asset & Investment Purchases, etc.					
Total Payments		**323,656**	**27,323**	**350,979**	**277,808**
Surplus		**-16,643**	**16,786**	**143**	**69,567**
Transfer Between Funds		0	2,478	2,478	29,779
Funds Brought Forward		135,764	62,493	198,257	98,915
Funds Carried Forward		**119,121**	**81,757**	**200,878**	**198,257**

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

	2023 £ Unrestricted	2023 £ Restricted	2023 £	2022 £
Current Assets				
Cash at bank and in Hand	81,757	119,121	200,878	198,257
Debtors and Prepayments				0
Less Current Liabilities				
Creditors and Accruals			0	0
Net Current Assets	81,757	119,121	200,878	198,257
Funded By				
Unrestricted Funds			49,504	32,718
Restricted Funds			119,121	135,764
Savings			32,253	29,775
Total Funds			200,878	198,257

Approved by IGA BORSUT ..... Trustee 12.04.24

Borsut

International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Notes to the Accounts for the Period ended 31st March 2023

1) Accounts Policies

a) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and follow the recommendations in Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by Charities (SORP).

b) Grants received are accounted for on a receivable basis and credited to income during any accounting periods.

c) Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when received.

d) General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the management committee in furtherance of the general objectives of the organisation.

e) Unrestricted funds are donations and income received from the objects of the charity and are available as general funds.

2) Grants

Funders		Restricted funds	Unrestricted funds	Total funds
National Lottery Community Fund	Eastern European Support Project (EESP) Awards for All	9,988		9,988
National Lottery Community Fund	Back in Control 2022-2025	88,697		88,697
European Structural Investment Fund	Sunderland Community Led Local Development Programme (CLLD)	20,728		20,728
Community Renewal Fund / Gateshead Council	Community Renewal Grant	8,000		8,000
Sunderland City Council	Covid Champions	1,500		1,500
Community Foundation Tyne and Wear & Northumberland	Curtin PARP	4,992		4,992
Sunderland City Council	East Street and Park Rangers	34,182		34,182
Sunderland City Council - CrowdFunder	Fairies in the Park	3,000		3,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	Garfield Weston Foundation	5,000		5,000
County Durham Community Foundation / EVA	Greener Communities Programme	4,997		4,997
Sunderland City Council	Household Support Fund	16,570		16,570
Justice Together Initiative	Justice Together Initiative	8,000		8,000
National Lottery Community Fund	Jubilee	24,675		24,675
Lloyds Bank Foundation	Lloyds Bank Foundation		27,250	27,250
Community Foundation Tyne and Wear & Northumberland	Markle		1,500	1,500
Community Foundation Tyne and Wear & Northumberland	Newcastle Building Society 22/23	3,000		3,000
Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria	Operation Payback Fund	4,950		4,950
Sheats Foundation	Sheats Foundation	5,000		5,000
Sunderland City Council/ Spacehive	Capital grant - Spacehive	6,828		6,828
Community Renewal Fund / Gateshead Council	Strengthening the Sunderland Voluntary and Community Sector	5,115		5,115
NSE / Sports England	Together Fund (Rise)	4,844		4,844
Community Foundation Tyne and Wear & Northumberland	Willan Charitable Trust	9,883		9,883
Community Foundation Tyne and Wear & Northumberland	William Leech Charity	7,590		7,590
Sunderland City Council	Winter Support Fund	1,733		1,733
National Lottery Community Fund and European Social Fund (ESF)	Wise Steps	43,443		43,443
	Other projects (below £1000)	4,300		4,300
		307,013	28,750	335,763

3) **Petty cash**

	Restricted funds	Unrestricted funds	Total funds
Income			
Cash moved from bank account to petty cash	2,000	0	2,000
Expenditure			
Staff expenses	867	0	867
Volunteer expenses	989	0	989
Participant expenses	150	0	150
Events costs	16	0	16
Workshops	34	0	34
Training	17	0	17
Sessional work	31	0	31
Total	2,104	0	2,104
Surplus	-104	0	-104
Balance brought forward (last year)	179		179
Balance Carried Forward	75	0	75

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATION OF SUNDERLAND

England & Wales - Charity number 1186618

Accounts

The impact of our work:

Between May 2021 and April 2022, we have supported a total of 61 people with employability (including support with CV's, job applications, registering with agencies, job searching websites, interview preparation), and 20 people have successfully found employment or self-employment as a result. We have also supported a total of 74 people with accessing training and courses (including ESOL, food hygiene courses, digital courses and functional skills) and 28 accessed volunteering opportunities (internal and external opportunities). We have also supported a total of 87 people with benefit advice (including Universal Credit applications, Personal Independence Payment, ESA, council tax support, Maternity Allowance, Pension Credit and Child Benefit) and 51 people have received housing support- this included applications with housing associations such as Gentoo, Bernicia and local councils, supporting people getting onto priority for properties due to their housing need and resolving issues linking to housing). 17 of them found a new home. 70 people had received material/emergency support including food vouchers, fuel vouchers and data / mobile phone top-ups, including 19, who received support with access to digital services, including second hand devices and internet connection. 14 Clients received support with domestic abuse issues. Many of the clients needed support wit registering with communicating with, or registering with health services- e.g. registering a newly born child with a GP practice. 40 clients received support with the EU Settlement Scheme. 49 clients received a benefit award.

Additionally, 112 received support with translation of documents or in person, as well as over the phone (e.g. regarding council tax bills or energy bills).

We capture data from registration and evaluation forms for each project, we use a 1-10 scale to measure changes in regards to peoples financial situation, from our evaluations, we had found out that 47 people have reported an improved financial situation. We also use The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) on registration and end of project forms to capture any changes in our clients wellbeing, 25 beneficiaries had reported an improved mental health and wellbeing due to the support received. As a result of the work delivered by our Eastern European women's group, including wellbeing sessions, 22 women reported improved confidence (many of the clients have not yet exited this project, and we expect that more will report positive changes).

Moreover, ICOS organised environmental activities in Backhouse Park, St Michael's ward, Sunderland, engaging over 200 people through volunteering, environmental awareness raising sessions (such as bird watching or bat watching) and clean – ups. This work was funded by several funders, including Sunderland City Council's East Rangers initiative (https://icos.org.uk/east-rangers/) and the Jubilee Fund (https://icos.org.uk/jubilee-event/) at the National Lottery Community Fund.

As part of the Shared Sunderland programme (https://icos.org.uk/shared-sunderland/) we have provided advice, but also supported BME people into leadership[p and worked to advance racial equality. This work included being part of the Racial Justice in Education working group formed by the Tyne and Wear Citizens (TWIC) to ensure local schools do more to combat racism and forming a local TWIC Hub. In December 2021, we were awarded the TWIC listening award for this work. We have also held workshops and sessions on political leadership and are planning more such sessions next year, including one on leadership in education.

While ICOS has a particularly strong relationship with the Eastern European community, it has always been about building bridges between different communities. We regularly organise intercultural meetings, getting together migrant people from different backgrounds, including asylum seekers and

refugees, together with members of the local community. For example, on 25/06/2022, we organised an event to celebrate the Refugee Week, bringing together refugees from a number of countries, including Libya, Syria, Sudan and Ukraine, other migrants and local residents of St Michael's ward. With over 100 local people attending, we created an opportunity to get to know people from a different culture, socialise and sample international food, and take part in activities such as dancing and taster sessions of languages including Spanish, Ukrainian and Arabic.

In response to specific challenges facing Eastern European women, highlighted by our clients, in 2019, ICOS created the 1st ever Eastern European women's group in the North East (https://icos.org.uk/icos-women/). This project involves approximately 100 women annually and provides individual support, e.g., for women fleeing domestic violence, but also get the women together and provides social activities, such as yoga sessions, coffee met-ups and mindfulness sessions. As women taking part in the project grow in confidence and develop, many decide to volunteer and help others- e.g., recently, one of the women has started smaller project, which has organically grown out of ICOS Women- the Mum's Club, which gets together women and children. We are now expanding this work, as we have learned even more about the challenges facing them through our work – e.g. lack of safe spaces (not just physical, but also social) and the need to share their experiences with other women. We have also learned more about our current and potential clients through the research on Eastern European women undertaken with Sunderland University, as described below.

-Research

Between May 2021 and December 2021, ICOS worked with the University of Sunderland to research issues affecting Eastern European women in Tyne and Wear. This research uncovered wide spread discrimination, racism and misogyny directed at Eastern European women in areas including employment and public services:

Part 1 (Survey) https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/13971/

Part 2 (Qualitative findings: Focus groups and interviews)
https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/14580/

This research brought to light widespread discrimination affecting Eastern European women, including in accessing public services such as healthcare and council services, but also in employment. We are now planning next steps to address those issues.

The Ukrainian refugees are completely new to the UK and the region and often struggle to understand the local systems and culture, while also dealing with trauma caused by the war. They need intensive and holistic support. At ICOS, we are currently supporting 25 Ukrainian people living in Sunderland and we remain in touch with the community to identify more individuals in need of support. We provide practical, often intensive support with benefits, school admissions, GP registrations, college registrations and dealing with official correspondence (e.g. letters regarding council tax). We also provide them with emergency material support, such as food vouchers and free sim cards.

We have additionally been providing Ukrainian people who are ready to move into employment with employability support, including help with CVs, job applications, accessing training and improving their English Language skills.

Combatting and preventing exploitation by some of the hosts – including requests for money and doing odd jobs around the house has also been something ICOS has been dealing with: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-61562167?fbclid=IwAR3KsOqEoxRYsRfgHahSsQLvPMH8cD6pcE8dCw0x0M-1e49swX-9kYGLKBo

We have also been providing support with integration and activities to improve their wellbeing, including those run as part of the women's group, such as social outings and coffee mornings. Additionally, we provide advice on cultural integration and local customs and traditions. ICOS has been able to gain the trust of the Ukrainian community and currently employs a Ukrainian- speaking staff member to ease integration. We are currently working on an article for the North East Bylines. (https://northeastbylines.co.uk/), highlighting the issues Ukrainians face and the solutions we see to those problems and have also worked with Sunderland City Council's councillors to help them to understand the issues local people from the Ukraine are facing- e.g., through gathering case studies highlighting their struggles:

Case studies- Ukrainians living in Sunderland and the issues they face (anonymous) are available here: https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Case-studies-Ukrainian-community-April-June-2022-.pdf

-During, and in the immediate aftermath of the COVID19 pandemic, men from ethnic minority backgrounds had been telling us that they felt isolated and that they wanted to do something together and keep healthy while being on furlough. Many also work long hours in the local factories, and have limited opportunities to take part in physical exercise.

In response to those issues, working with a group of men, ICOS has established a sports project (https://icos.org.uk/icos-sports/), supporting local Eastern European and other migrants to be active and stay healthy and connected.

Activities are chosen by the group themselves, and so far include sessions such as:

- bowling
- darts
- pool/billiard
- ping-pong
- paintball
- go-karting
- quads
- air rifle
- archery
- futsal (indoor football)
- beach volleyball
- indoor volleyball
- hiking
- theme parks & zoo visit

Case studies- we have selected 3 case studies which illustrate the breadth and depth of our work:

Advice: https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Helena-case-study.pdf

Integration: https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/East-Rangers-Case-Study-Susan.pdf

Supporting victims of exploitation: https://icos.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BiC-Case-Study_Morgan.pdf

More case studies available here: https://icos.org.uk/case-studies/

Development work:

ICOS has created its new 2022- 2025 business plan and started several major projects, including registration with the Office of Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC), introducing a new data management system and improving our externa communications and fundraising.

Media links:

ICOS Women Video- 2021-2022: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NVVFVfjWM0

ICOS Women- Hot Yoga event: https://www.facebook.com/events/1066527844286263/1066532147619166/?ref=newsfeed

ICOS Women- Zumba: https://www.facebook.com/events/497035638887249/497036282220518/?ref=newsfeed

ICOS Women: Mum's Club- 1st meeting: https://www.facebook.com/events/1622394951474826/?ref=newsfeed

ICOS Women: Brusho Workshop: https://www.facebook.com/events/5143724649029323/?ref=newsfeed

ICOS 10 years' anniversary (2019): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT3zRsRfCbk

ICOS Sports- Futsal Cup: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tPQ0NQTRzQ

Public lecture at Sunderland University- Eastern European women:

https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=386281800207917&set=pcb.386283830207714

https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=386281896874574&set=pcb.386283830207714

https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=386282463541184&set=pcb.386283830207714

EUSS workshop, June 2022: https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=400930948743002&set=pcb.400933915409372

Refugee week event, 25/06/2022:

https://www.facebook.com/ICOSsunderland/videos/739093440710902

https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=414066987429398&set=pcb.414077690761661

https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=404178725084891&set=a.363399425829488

https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=414068930762537&set=pcb.414077690761661

https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=414075254095238&set=pcb.414077690761661

https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=414077184095045&set=pcb.414077690761661

https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=414077254095038&set=pcb.414077690761661

https://www.youtube.com/shorts/TnESXS9OE_U (attendee account)

100 years' anniversary of Backhouse Park, Sunderland: https://www.youtube.com/shorts/q_e1gtvJG8M

Shared Sunderland project: https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=396737662495664&set=a.363399425829488

Shared Sunderland- official launch:

https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=386913726811391&set=pcb.386914743477956

https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=386913863478044&set=pcb.386914743477956

Shared Sunderland- partnership meeting with New Horizons and Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre: https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=367836478719116&set=pcb.367836502052447

COVID support- thank you: https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=395579175944846&set=pcb.395586992610731

Volunteer videos:

https://www.youtube.com/shorts/jxw5Gj7UvSw

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RoB3znox2U

Volunteer- progression story from client to volunteer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pTpmO1tj_M

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Financial Statements
For the Period
1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

Charity No: 1186618

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

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International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st March 2022

Name: International Community Organisation of Sunderland

Address: 14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

Charity No: 1186618

Trustees (who served during the year)

Rafal Marzec (Chair)
Iga Borut (Treasurer)
Anna Heyman
Miroslaw Warmuz
Maciej Ejsmont
Edgaras Kozubovsky

Independent Examiner

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/2
CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT SIGN OFF

International Community Association of Sunderland

I have examined the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the Year ending 31st March 2022, together with the underlying accounting records, and confirm that the accounts are in accordance therewith.

Signed..... Dated..19/8/22

MICHAEL HENDY A.C.M.A.
Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
Independent Reviewer

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Statement of Financial Activities for the Period ended 31st March 2022

Income	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Grants	315,847	25,180	341,026	282,188
Donations/Gift Aid		2,656	2,656	1,319
Fundrasing/Traiding/Activities			0	9,861
Refund		325	325	611
Transfer		3,367	3,367	0
Total Income	**315,847**	**31,528**	**347,375**	**293,979**
Rent	7,440		7,440	7,040
Insurance	644		644	280
Salaries	191,370	3,457	194,827	177,146
Pension	9,324	100	9,423	0
Accounts, Payroll and Other Proffesional Fees	474		474	0
Travel and Subsistence	0		0	46
Events	879		879	1,445
Workshops	693		693	0
Consultancy	5,127		5,127	10,798
Sessional Work	1,940		1,940	116
Volunteer Expenses	4,313		4,313	1,225
Particpant Expenses	11,298	151	11,449	8,230
Staff Expenses	3,119	200	3,319	4,554
Venues/Room Hire	3,085		3,085	2,200
Training	198		198	25
Posters	1,949		1,949	763
CIB Contracting	8,719		8,719	0
Office costs	3,816	177	3,994	12,210
Evaluation	4,200	600	4,800	0
Sundries	6,007		6,007	7,575
Transfer to savings account		8,528	8,528	14,774
Total Expenditure	**264,594**	**13,214**	**277,808**	**248,426**
Net Income	**51,253**	**18,314**	**69,567**	**45,553**
Transfer Between Funds	0	0	0	0
Funds Brought Forward	84,511	14,404	98,915	53,363
Savings			0	0
Funds Carried Forward	**135,764**	**32,718**	**168,482**	**98,915**

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2022

	2022 £ Unrestricted	2022 £ Restricted	2022 £	2021 £
Current Assets				
Cash at bank and in Hand	62,493	135,764	198,257	60,147
Debtors and Prepayments		0	0	0
Less Current Liabilities				
Creditors and Accruals			0	-300
Net Current Assets	62,493	135,764	198,257	59,847
Funded By				
Unrestricted Funds			32,718	14,404
Restricted Funds			135,764	84,511
Savings			29,775	21,244
Total Funds			198,257	120,159

Approved by ..... **Trustee**

International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Notes to the Accounts for the Period ended 31st March 2022

1) **Accounts Policies**

a) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and follow the reccomendations in Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by Charities (SORP)

b) Grants received are accounted for on a receivable basis and credited to income during any accounting periods.

c) Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when received.

d) General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the management committee in furtherence of the general objectives of the organisation.

e) Unrestricted funds are dontions and income received from the objects of the charity and are available as general funds.

2) **Movement in Funds**

	Balance 1st April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Salaries	Transfers £	Balance 31st March 2022 £
Restricted						
Grants	84,511	315,847	264,594			135,764
Total Restricted Funds	84,511	315,847	264,594	0	0	135,764
Unrestricted Funds	14,404	31,528	13,214			32,718
Savings	21,244				8,531	29,775
Total Funds	120,159	347,375	277,808	0	8,531	198,257

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/2
CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT SIGN OFF

International Community Association of Sunderland

I have examined the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the Year ending 31st March 2022, together with the underlying accounting records, and confirm that the accounts are in accordance therewith.

Signed..... M Hendy ..... Dated..... 19/8/22

MICHAEL HENDY A.C.M.A.
Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
Independent Reviewer

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ORGANISATION OF SUNDERLAND

England & Wales - Charity number 1186618

Accounts

ICOS Impact Report

May 2020 – May 2021

Introduction:

This report builds on ICOS's Evaluation Strategy (created in 2020) and covers the period of between 01/05/2020 and 01/05/2021.

What has been achieved as a result of ICOS work?

During the period covered, ICOS supported a total of 343 clients through individual interventions (some took part in more than 1 project- e.g. needed support with employability and then also benefits), including advice, guidance, advocacy and employability support, not counting those clients who did not benefit from intensive support (e.g. event attendees). In total:

-We supported a total of 118 people with employability (including support with CV's, job applications, registering with agencies, job searching websites, interview preparation) and 37 people have successfully found employment or self-employment. We have also supported a total of 49 people with accessing training and courses (including ESOL, food hygiene courses, digital courses and functional skills) and 17 accessed volunteering opportunities (internal and external opportunities).

-We supported a total of 88 people with benefit advice (including Universal Credit applications, Personal Independence Payment, ESA, council tax support, Maternity Allowance, Pension Credit and Child Benefit)

-50 people received housing support, this figure includes applications with housing associations such as Gentoo, Bernicia and local councils, supporting people getting onto priority for properties due to their housing need and resolving issues linking to housing).

-We capture data from registration and evaluation forms for each project, we use a 1-10 scale to measure changes with regards to client's financial situation, from our evaluation we had found out that 96 people have reported an improved financial situation.

-We also used the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) on registration and end of project forms to capture any changes in our client's wellbeing, 90 beneficiaries had reported an improved mental health and wellbeing due to the support received.

As both- the regular/routine use of the Likert scale and the WEMWBS scale was being implemented during that period, not all clients who received one to one support were registered using the forms containing Likert scale financial situation questions or the WEMWBS.

-We supported 38 Eastern European victims of crime, including 12 victims of hate crime, 15 victims of antisocial behaviour and 11 victims of domestic violence with contacting the police, liaison with the solicitor, translations and other types of holistic support such as housing. 19 of the clients are reported they would be more confident in reporting crime in the future. During the project we used The Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale on our initial registration forms as well as on evaluations forms to measure any changes to clients wellbeing. From our analysis we have found out that due to support received 61% had reported an improved wellbeing.

-Through the Back in Control project, we supported 46 clients who exited within the period covered by this report. 37 reported improved financial situation (the situation of three clients decreased, while it did not change for two of the clients, there was not enough data for three clients) and 37 reported that they had gained more control over their life (the situation of three clients decreased, while it did not change for two of the clients, there was not enough data for four clients). This was measured using the Likert scale.

-Through the Back in Control project, we delivered modern day slavery awareness training to a total of 19 organisations based in the North East of England (including the Children's Society, the British Red Cross, counselling services and trade unions). The training was attended by a total of 64 people and was partly based on project client experience

Additionally:

-45 people had received material support including food vouchers, fuel vouchers and data / mobile phone top-ups.

-We have delivered online English language classes as a response to COVID19 as many centres had to close temporarily and our beneficiaries needed English language support during this time but this also created an opportunity for them to improve their wellbeing and networks. We had 23 individuals (including refugees and asylum seekers attending our English classes).

-We have continued to focus on improving the wellbeing of women through delivering women's group activities which took place online (over zoom) during COVID19 pandemic including 'coffee and chat' meetings, wellbeing meetings, arts and crafts activities and we also delivered a 'STEPS into STEM' online workshop exploring opportunities for BME women within the Science, technology, engineering and maths sector at which we had 13 attendees (https://icos.org.uk/2021/04/08/steps-into-stem-event-case-study/).

-Through the East Rangers project (https://icos.org.uk/past-projects/), ICOS engaged with 175 volunteers, removed over 5000 kilograms or rubbish and engaged with 126 children. This was achieved through delivering 40 activity days, including 5 educational workshops. ICOS has helped the council to save £33960 in man-hours (valued at £12 per hour per volunteer multiplied by the number of hours), according to a calculation by Sunderland City Council.

SROI analysis and social value

Health and wellbeing benefits of our work:

-Between May 2020 and May 2021, 96 people improved their health and wellbeing through ICOS's work, as measured through the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale. This means that ICOS contributed at least £18,400.32 to the NHS, based on an average of £191.67 [1] per person.

-Between May 2020 and May 2021, 37 clients reported an increase in feeling of being in control. This means that ICOS contributed and equivalent of at least £601,530.09 to each individual client, based on £16,257.57 [2]per person. The figure is likely even higher, given that some of the clients were victims of modern slavery- others, victims of workplace exploitation.

-Between May 2020 and May 2021, 37 people have found employment through ICOS's support. This means that:

a) ICOS has contributed at least £13,206.04 to individual clients, based on £356[3] per person in healthcare costs' reduction of someone being into work

b) ICOS has contributed at least ICOS has contributed at least £13,206.04 to the exchequer (the NHS), based on £356[4] per person in healthcare costs' reduction of someone being into work

Employment and the economy benefits of our work:

-ICOS has contributed at least £196100 to individual community members through helping them to find work, based on an average £5300[5] per person (37 clients, the figure constitutes an average increase in individual income after entering work)

-ICOS has contributed £977022 to the economy through wages of 37 clients who found work, at an average wage of £26,406[6] per person (North East of England average).

-ICOS has contributed at least £2974.8 to the local authority in saved council tax discount (based on £80.40[7] per claimant and 37 people going into work)

-Between May 2020 and April 2021, 49 individuals accessed basic vocational training (such as level 2 food hygiene). This means that ICOS contributed on

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1 Average annual NHS expenditure on mental health per person (England) per year was £166 per person in 2013. (NHS England, 2013). After an inflation adjustment, this equals £191.67

2 The feeling of being in control of life is valued at £14,080 per person per year for an individual between 25 – 49 (the vast majority of our clients), based on " Measuring the Social Impact of Community Investment:
A Guide to using the Wellbeing Valuation Approach", HACT; 2014. After inflation adjustment, this equals £16257.57

3 Reduction in healthcare costs of someone progressing into work from Future Jobs Fund – equals £300.Future Jobs Fund impact report (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/223120/impacts_costs_benefits_fjf.pdf). After adjustment for inflation, this equals £356.92

4 As above under "3"

5 DWP, 2013: Benefits for single individual working full-time: £4307 per person per year (needs inflation adjustment- 2007). Currently about £5300 when increased by inflation.

6 ONS- average wage in the North East, 2020

7 Cost per annum of Council Tax Discount- worth at least £6.67/peer month, equals £80.40 per annum. Sunderland City Council.

average £60461.1 to individuals who have completed basic level 1 / level 2 training with our support, based on £1,233.90[8] per individual completing training and 49 clients completing within that period.

We also recognise that there is a need to measure the impact of our advocacy and advice work through SROI however this has proven challenging due to lack of available comparators and proxy measures. We hope to be able to progress this part of our work in the future.

Views and feedback from our clients:

Feedback from clients was gathered between June and July 2021 over the phone, based on a randomly selected sample of 34 clients (10% of all the clients who received support during that period of time). A maximum of 3 attempts were made to contact each of the clients and we were able to reach a total of 21 out of the cohort of 34 clients.

<u>We asked the following questions:</u>

1. What support did you receive from ICOS?
2. Could you describe the impact ICOS's support has had on you in 2 – 3 sentences?
3. Can you rate the support you have received from ICOS on a rising 1 – 10 scale? (1 is "poor", 10 is "excellent")
4. How has ICOS's support impacted on you?
5. What is the most valuable type of support you have received form ICOS?
6. In your opinion, what could ICOS improve / do better?
7. Have we helped you to become more independent?
8. Where would you go if you did not know about ICOS to receive that support?
9. Did you regularly volunteer for ICOS (that is, more than 3 times during the last 12 months)?
10. Would you like to volunteer for ICOS?
11. If so- what would you like to do?
12. What are your hopes for the next 12 months?
13. What are your fears and worries about the next 12 months?
14. Would you be prepared to take part in a case study?

<u>Survey analysis:</u>

8 £1123.86 per person accessing training) Individual value of vocational training (from HACT 0 Housing Associations' Charitable Trust; 2016) When adjusted by inflation, this is £1,233.90

1. What support did you receive from ICOS?

The clients received support with various issues, from resolving problem with an energy provider, to attending English classes, reflecting the spectrum of problems ICOS supports clients with. Notably however, out of 21 clients, 8 received support with welfare issues, such as access to housing or benefits:

“I got a lot of help from ICOS, you provided me with financial advice, help with benefits, bus tickets to work, employment support, CV, food safety course and English language classes.”

Other clients reported having been supported through referrals to the EU Settlement Scheme, as well as attending English classes (which ICOS run in absence of other courses as the COVID19 pandemic struck):

“ICOS has helped me a lot, I have got help with English language classes with Monika and she is an amazing teacher and helped to improve my language. I could not speak any English the first time I came to ICOS and now I can speak and I understand much more, I can communicate. ICOS has helped me with my CV and translation of certificates and a statement of comparability from NARIC.”

2. Could you describe the impact ICOS’s support has had on you in 2 – 3 sentences?

Out of 21 respondents, only one client felt that the main issue she presented herself with had not been resolved, however, this issue was not fully within ICOS’s power to resolve:

“My daughter was getting help from ICOS but there was not much you did with our situation with my granddaughter*. The lady did help us both with getting status, we did not know we had to have it and she did give us information about it.” (*who had been removed from the family by social services).

Most clients found ICOS’s support valuable:

“ICOS have helped me so much in the past few months. I feel like I can always count on my project worker. I feel more comfortable knowing that there is someone there ready to help when I need it.”

“Because of all this help I am now starting accounting Level 1 at Gateshead college and can continue to look at accounting jobs when I finish this course and go back to being an accountant. My English has improved and now I’m ready to study functional skills.”

“Thanks to the organisation, I have improved my English language skills. I got help with everything and it really did have a very positive impact on me, really good help from your side.”

“Thanks to the organisation, I have improved my English language skills. I got help with everything and it really did have a very positive impact on me, really good help from your side.”

“Great was work done.; My problem was solved.”

3. Can you rate the support you have received from ICOS on a rising 1 – 10 scale? (1 is “poor”, 10 is “excellent”)

Out of 21 clients surveyed, 18 rated ICOS’s support as 10 and 1 each as 6, 8 and 9 respectively.

4. How has ICOS’s support impacted on you?

Most clients reported positive changes, and used words such as “better”, “improved”, “relaxed” and grateful. Several participants felt that they had already answered this question in their response to question 2 and that their response would be the same.

5. What is the most valuable type of support you have received form ICOS?

All responses to this question were positive and the vast majority of responses could be divided into two broad categories:

-Responses highlighting staff attitude and the quality of work delivered by staff (e.g. communication, friendliness, openness). In total, 10 clients made such comments:

“Always friendly and ready to help. Always available.”

“Frequent communication about the progress that was being made.”

“Always friendly and ready to help. Always available. On time.”

“Help from my support worker and the whole organisation – they provide a high quality work.”

“ICOS employees were very accommodating and they were helping me even when they didn’t have to (in their free time). They put all their effort into helping me and I am very grateful for their support.”

-Responses highlighting the result of ICOS’s work. In total, 5 clients talked about the practical results of the support:

“All the help I have got through Wise Steps and all the support with English classes with Monika, she is a very good teacher, help me improve my language.

“The [EU Settlement] status application, we both now have this.”

6. In your opinion, what could ICOS improve / do better?

12 clients could not think of any changes ICOS could make, however, several have suggested better organisational communication, including more information being available on social media:

“In my opinion, more social media engagement”.

2 clients have also suggested opening offices in other areas in the North East:

“To have an office in Newcastle”

Other comments were not repeat ones- e.g. one client wished ICOS to acquire a bigger venue.

7. Have we helped you to become more independent?

Out of the 21 respondents, 19 felt that we did help them to become more independent:

“Yes, definitely! I am a lot more independent than I was a year ago.”

“Yes, I am more financially independent now.”

However, some qualified their responses by highlighting that the improvement they had experienced was relative or limited: “Yes but I am still working on that because of the language barrier.”

“Yes. I still have some issues but you have helped.”

“Yes but I am still working on that because of the language barrier.”

Two felt we had not helped them to become more independent, including one who felt the support they received was brief/one off, and therefore had no impact on their independence.

It is also worth stressing that the questionnaire did not distinguish between the different types of independence, or defined it, hence, each of the clients has to base their response on their own understanding of what independence meant.

8. Where would you go if you did not know about ICOS to receive that support?

13 out of 21 clients indicated that they would not know where they would go for help and support- including one who even suggested they would have to return to their country of origin if they did not get support from ICOS:

“I would struggle to go anywhere else. Maybe would go back to Poland.”

Other clients named a range of organisations, including Jobcentre Plus (three clients), Citizens Advice Bureau (two clients), Red Cross, McMillan or ACAS. One person mentioned they would talk to a trusted friend, and one did not believe anyone (including ICOS) could help them.

9. Did you regularly volunteer for ICOS (that is, more than 3 times during the last 12 months)?

None of the randomly selected clients confirmed that they had regularly volunteered for ICOS, although one confirmed volunteering on an ad-hoc basis. It is worth highlighting that the clients were supported during the period of the pandemic, when most volunteering at ICOS stopped.

10. Would you like to volunteer for ICOS?

Out of 21, 14 clients indicated they would be prepared to volunteer for ICOS. While most simply responded “yes”, some commented in more depth: “yes, if I have time. I like working with people.”. On the other hand, 6 said would or could not volunteer for ICOS at the moment for varying reasons, including age (“I am too old to volunteer”; “I would like to when my health improves”), or indicated that they would like to volunteer in the future but could not commit now. Two clients asked for more information about volunteering at ICOS: “I will think about.

You can send me your newsletter and maybe I will join ICOS as a volunteer from time to time.", "I would like to find out more".

11. If so- what would you like to do?

There was a wide range of responses from potential volunteers, including that they would like to support ICOS with environmental projects (two responses), "anything" (four responses). Three clients mentioned skilled volunteering, including supporting clients with paperwork, accounting/finance and translations.

12. What are your hopes for the next 12 months?

While clients had many different hopes, 6 expressed their desire to learn new and improve current skills, including 5 who indicated that they would like to improve their English language skills. 6 mentioned the importance of work, either finding a new job, or keeping the current one (two clients), as well as progressing into a better job. Two clients mentioned hoping their health would improve, and other responses included getting a better accommodation, access to children's activities, having more money and family reunion.

13. What are your fears and worries about the next 12 months?

Many of the fears client had corresponded to the hopes they had for the future and included aspirations in areas such as work, career progression, skills improvement (in particular, improving English language skills). Additionally, two clients said they hoped to finding accommodation. Many mentioned the coronavirus pandemic as a factor affecting their long – rem prospects.

14. Would you be prepared to take part in a case study?

16 out of 21 respondents indicated that they would be happy to take part in a case study interview. Of those who did not explicitly want to take part, two said "no" (including one who indicated that the support they had received had been, in their opinion, too brief to warrant a case study) one was not sure if they would like to do that, and one had already been interviewed for a case study.

Conclusion: While at ICOS, we do recognise that, as the survey was undertaken by ICOS project staff and not by an external agency, there is likely to be bias, however, even taking any bias (e.g. clients might not have wanted to upset ICOS staff) into account, the overall results of the client survey appear extremely positive, and clients value the support they received, as well as how it was delivered. They would also struggle to identify alternative support if support from ICOS was not available. Clients appeared to be mostly very happy with the support they have received and where was a high degree of willingness to help/support ICOS in some way- including willingness to volunteer and take part in case studies. It is also clear that many of the clients want to improve their skills, in particular- English language skills and many are worried about keeping their job. ICOS also recognised that the sample if clients was relatively small, due to not all clients being available during the survey period and consideration will be given to increasing the sample to 15% in future years.

Case studies:

Employability- Well Included (Community Led Local Development)

Gosia, (not her real name) is Polish and approached ICOS in February 2021, because she needed help in looking for a job. ICOS discussed with Gosia her needs and expectations as it was very important to empower and enable her. Monika, the Senior Project worker at ICOS helped Gosia prepare a CV and helped and supported her when applying for cleaning and warehousing jobs as Gosia required help in speaking English. ICOS offered 1-2-1 support and English classes were arranged by ICOS to help Gosia, with her English-speaking Gosia was offered ESOL classes twice a week online by ICOS, which she happily accepted and attended. In the meantime, Monika helped Gosia prepare a CV, and this was sent off to recruitment agencies. ICOS helped her apply for jobs by offering their support in completing job application forms and carrying out job searches. In March 2021 there was advert on a Polish website involving sorting and recycling out second-hand clothes. ICOS helped Gosia complete an application form and prepared her for the interview. She was successful in securing the position with the company and accepted the offer. She was happy in accepting the role and with help that was given from ICOS. In May 2021 Gosia was exited from the programme. She now works for both organisation's and works two days in Prudhoe and two in Washington Galleries. Without ICOS's help and support this would not have been possible.

Employability- Wise Steps

AT has joined Wise Steps in November 2020, he has come from Romania quite recently and needed to find employment in the UK fast as he had no income and was not eligible for benefits in the UK. His English language was communicative but he has struggled with speaking in English confidently so AT was I referred to take part in English lessons with ICOS to help him improve on his speaking skills. At our first appointment we created a CV, registered on certain job searching websites and with various job recruitment agencies. AT had very limited job experience, his only work experience was working on self-employment basis in Romania but he wanted to try applying for jobs within production and warehouse setting in the UK. Together, we have looked into courses and training which would be beneficial for the participant and which would improve his chances of finding employment within this
sector. We have registered him onto Level 2 Food Safety course for manufacturing
and the participant has completed it within a day.
We have spent some time with applying for multiple jobs in food production sector,
manufacturing and warehouse operative roles and sent off CV's to potential employers. AT had been invited to 2 job interviews, after trying his best at both interviews, AT finally got offered a position of a production operative within the food
production sector. AT also received help with purchasing work safety boots for the
start of his employment. AT was grateful for the help he had received and he was really pleased that he managed to find employment so fast with our support.

Employability (self-employment)- Wise Steps

Resmiye started her journey on Wise Steps back in December 2019 when came to

ICOS for support as she wanted to open up her own business but needed help with
developing her idea further. Resmiye was a marbling artist back in Turkey but in the
UK she wanted to peruse a career in baking and dessert creation as it is something
she really enjoyed doing and she felt very inspired by developing her baking skills.
Resmiye has completed a level 2 food safety certificate for catering in February and
received help from ABC in creating a business plan, she has decided that before opening her own business, she would like to learn English language to a better standard, she has been attending English lessons with ICOS, JET and studying ESOL at college, her English language skills have already improved a lot along with
her confidence.
The next step for Resmiye will be doing functional skills and when she feels confident enough she will be opening her baking business as planned.
You can have a look at Resmiye's amazing cakes and desserts on her Instagram page @marbling_cakes_uk

Holistic assistance

Anna (name changed) came to ICOS for support as she needed help with finding employment and housing, she had recently lost her job and could not afford her private rent where she lived with a friend. Anna did not speak English well and she felt that her confidence was low which was impacting her finding employment.
We supported Anna with applying for Universal Credit and helped her with translation and representation at the Jobcentre Plus appointments. We worked with her and a new CV and a covering letter and we have spent some time on one-to-one basis with job applications and registering with agencies. Additionally, she started to attend English language classes to improve her speaking, writing and reading skills (ICOS helped her to enrol) which would improve her employment opportunities and with our support, managed to apply for and get two part-time jobs working in hospitality. We supported her with an application and registration for Gentoo housing and in May 2019 Anna moved into a two-bedroom council property near her place of employment which was very beneficial to her.
Anna has also started to get involved with ICOS women's group where she had opportunities to meet new people and get involved with volunteering.
In November, we supported her with a new job opportunity working as a baking assistant; since she has finished baking school back in her home country it was a job opportunity which has sounded very appealing to her.
Anna felt that due to support she received from ICOS, her English language and communication skills have improved enormously. Anna now feels that her opportunities have improved, she is more independent, and her financial situation has improved. Length of support: February 2019–January 2020

Holistic assistance

Susan arrived in the UK in late 2020. In her home country, she worked as a flight attendant,

but as an asylum seeker, she cannot work in the UK. She loved her job and would like to work again, but due to her current situation (claiming asylum) she is unable to enter paid employment at present. Susan joined ICOS as a volunteer in March 2021. Since that time, she has regularly taken part in clean ups in Backhouse Park, Sunderland, organised by ICOS. She is involved in the East Rangers project, which helps to keep the East part of Sunderland clean and help the environment. Volunteering helped Susan to meet new people from a range of countries and cultures and to organise her day- and having a daily routine, which helps her mental health. Moreover, she feels useful and is satisfied that she can make a difference in her community. While working with Susan, ICOS staff members have been able to find out about her future plans and aspirations, and found out that Susan was preparing for the IELTS (English) exam (https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/take-ielts/what-ielts), which would enable her to study in the UK, as she would like to settle down in the UK and would like to increase her chances of getting a good job. ICOS has been able to secure English language study books and a laptop computer for Susan to hear help on that journey. Moreover, ICOS have also supplied her with a used bicycle to help her to travel around the local area.

Volunteering

Karolina (quote): “Since I lost my job I have been struggling with problems such as lack of employment as well as access to information about benefits and entitlements. I also needed UK qualifications and wanted to progress into further education but I did not know any organisations which could help me. Coming to ICOS for help was a good call. I got support in many areas of live including education, money matters, job searching and made new friends. I wanted to pay back for the support and advice I had received, so in January 2020, I started volunteering for ICOS. I found charity work very motivating - being useful helps me to feel better. While helping with clerical tasks, I’m constantly improving my IT and English skills. As socialising has never been my strength, meeting new people and involving myself in events, meetings and courses gave me a lot of self-confidence and joy. I’m glad to be a new part of this amazing team and looking forward to learning even more new things.
ICOS is an organization with which I am associated almost from the beginning of living outside my country. Thanks to ICOS, I have met many interesting people from all over the world, I have broadened my level of English. I also had the opportunity to help take care of beautiful British parks and organize interesting, cultural events for children and adults. Volunteering also helped me gain practical knowledge in finance and administration.”

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Financial Statements
For the Period
1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

Charity No: 1141194

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

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International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31st March 2021

Name: International Community Organisation of Sunderland

Address: 14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

Charity No: 1141194

Trustees (who served during the year)

Rafal Marzec	(Chair)
Iga Borut	(Treasurer)
Anna Heyman	
Miroslaw Warmuz	
Maciej Ejsmont	
Edgaras Kozubovsky	
Marius Sinkunas	Resigned 02.02.2021
Agnieszka Serafin	Appointed 18.12.2020

Independent Examiner

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
SR1 1LE

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/1
CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT SIGN OFF

International Community Association of Sunderland

I have examined the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the Year ending 31st March 2021, together with the underlying accounting records, and confirm that the accounts are in accordance therewith.

Signed..... Dated..14/05/21

MICHAEL HENDY A.C.M.A.
Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
Independent Reviewer

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Statement of Financial Activities for the Period ended 31st March 2021

Income	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Grants	270,188	12,000	282,188	164,216
Donations/Gift Aid	0	1,319	1,319	7,893
Fundrasing/Traiding/Activities	0	9,861	9,861	4,000
Refund	604	7	611	419
Total Income	**270,792**	**23,187**	**293,979**	**176,528**
Rent	7,040	0	7,040	7,040
Insurance	280	0	280	280
Salaries	176,862	284	177,146	94,181
Accounts, Payroll and Other Proffesional Fees	0	0	0	0
Travel and Subsistence	46	0	46	319
Events	1,445	0	1,445	2,267
Workshops	0	0	0	120
Consultancy	10,798	0	10,798	7,520
Sessional Work	116	0	116	712
Volunteer Expenses	1,225	0	1,225	1,195
Particpant Expenses	8,230	0	8,230	4,105
Staff Expenses	4,554	0	4,554	903
Venues/Room Hire	2,200	0	2,200	2,816
Training	25	0	25	108
Posters	763	0	763	1,280
CIB Contracting	0	0	0	3,750
Office costs	12,100	110	12,210	4,159
Recruitment	0	0	0	900
Sundries	7,568	7	7,575	1,018
Transfer to savings account	1,454	13,320	14,774	6,484
Total Expenditure	**234,706**	**13,721**	**248,426**	**139,158**
Net Income	**36,086**	**9,466**	**45,553**	**37,371**
Transfer Between Funds	0	0	0	0
Funds Brought Forward	48,425	4,938	53,363	15,992
Savings			0	
Funds Carried Forward	**84,511**	**14,404**	**98,915**	**53,363**

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021

	2021 £ Unrestricted	2021 £ Restricted	2021 £	2020 £
Current Assets				
Cash at bank and in Hand	35,648	84,511	120,159	60,147
Debtors and Prepayments		0	0	0
Less Current Liabilities				
Creditors and Accruals			0	-300
Net Current Assets	35,648	84,511	120,159	59,847
Funded By				
Unrestricted Funds			14,404	4,938
Restricted Funds			84,511	48,425
Savings			21,244	6,484
Total Funds			120,159	59,847

Approved by ..... **Trustee**

International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

Notes to the Accounts for the Period ended 31st March 2021

1) **Accounts Policies**

a) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and follow the reccomendations in Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting by Charities (SORP)

b) Grants received are accounted for on a receivable basis and credited to income during any accounting periods.

c) Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when received.

d) General Funds are available for use at the discretion of the management committee in furtherence of the general objectives of the organisation.

e) Unrestricted funds are dontions and income received from the objects of the charity and are available as general funds.

2) **Movement in Funds**

	Balance 1st April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Salaries	Transfers £	Balance 31st March 2021 £
Restricted						
Grants	48,425	270,792	234,706			84,511
Total Restricted Funds	48,425	270,792	234,706	0	0	84,511
Unrestricted Funds	4,938	23,187	13,721			14,404
Savings	6,484				14,760	21,244
Total Funds	59,847	293,979	248,427	0	14,760	120,159

3) **Creditors**

	2021 £	2020 £
Accruals	0	300

International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

Financial Statements
For the Period
1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021

Charity No: 1141194

Certax Accounting (Sunderland) Ltd
14 Foyle Street
Sunderland
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International Community Organisation Of Sunderland

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14 Foyle Street
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ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/1
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International Community Organisation
Of Sunderland

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