

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Charity number 1187477

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2024



Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

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COMMUNITY ACCOUNTING
WEST YORKSHIRE

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

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Prepared by West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors

The trustees during the financial year and up to and including the date the report was approved were:

Name	Position	Dates
Peter Baldwin	Chair	Appointed 8 August 2024
Richard Davies		
Dr David Belford		Appointed 19 March 2024 Deceased September 2024
Siegfried Breuning		
Bryan Mucheriwa		
Susan Sanderson		
Zeraslasie Shiker		Resigned 19 June 2023
Claire Way	Treasurer	Resigned 31 March 2024
Charity number	1187477	Registered in England and Wales

Registered and principal address	Bankers	
St Michaels Welcome Centre	Co-operative Bank	Lloyds Bank
Westgate Common	P O Box 250	17 Westgate
Wakefield	Skelmersdale	Wakefield
WF2 9RW	WN8 6WT	WF1 1JZ

Independent examiner

Alan Dodd FCCA

West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) formed on 21 January 2020, governed by an association model constitution as amended on 17 August 2021.

Method of recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees of the charity are appointed by the members at the AGM or by the trustees throughout the year.

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects

(a) The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by educating and informing about the issues relating to asylum-seekers and refugees.

(b) To promote social inclusion for the public benefit, by encouraging and supporting voluntary, community and faith organisations to welcome asylum-seekers and refugees enabling them to access community facilities, enabling them to participate more effectively within the wider community, and so aid their integration within the community.

(c) To relieve poverty and hardship among those who are seeking or have sought asylum, refugees, and their dependants, and people suffering poverty and hardship in the wider community, by providing financial and other material support, interpreting / translating / advocacy / health / housing advice and education.

(d) To help asylum-seekers and refugees adapt to life in the UK by: advancing their education and training, and helping them to access facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupations.

The charity's main activities

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary (WDCoS) offers welcome, inclusion and friendship to asylum seekers passing through Wakefield and to asylum seekers and refugees living in Wakefield. In line with the national vision, we endeavour to offer a place of welcome and safety to people fleeing violence and persecution.

We keenly encourage organisations, networks and all faith groups to be inclusive; we also promote and value the varied contributions asylum seekers and refugees make to society. WDCoS aims to enable people from all backgrounds to confidently take part in community activities and celebrate the richness of diversity. We positively promote good neighbourliness and actively challenge hostility and discrimination.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our Trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular

- (a) the prevention or relief of poverty
- (b) the advancement of education
- (d) the advancement of health or the saving of lives
- (e) the advancement of citizenship or community development
- (f) the advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science
- (h) the advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation or the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity
- (j) the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage.

Achievements and performance

Year ended 31 March 2024 was our fourth year as a CIO and another busy year of successful service delivery to our beneficiaries in a challenging environment.

In recent years, particularly through the Covid period, WDCoS has received substantial funding, largely from Wakefield Council, to provide Media support and Digital inclusion activities. This has enabled us to develop a Welcome to Wakefield website together with related activities, and to supply mobile phones and tablets to asylum seekers improving inclusion and integration. This proved invaluable in supporting our beneficiaries through the difficult Covid period and its aftermath.

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

Looking to the future, however, the trustees have approved a Development Plan 2024 focusing back onto the core activities of our charity of:

Developing further the Sanctuary, St Michael's Church Hall

Maintaining and extending the English Teaching Programme, and

Administering the Asylum Seekers Support Fund

These activities will be the focus of our plans for much needed fund raising and volunteer recruitment over the next phase of our development.

The Background

For many years Wakefield has been a centre for asylum seekers awaiting Home Office approval. Although precise numbers are not available and the numbers fluctuate from time to time, there are currently several hundred, with capacity for around 900, asylum seekers at any given time. Many are currently housed in Hostels or Hotels, and some are dispersed in the community.

Asylum seekers frequently arrive in Wakefield, confused and traumatised, without personal belongings or suitable clothing and with little or no fluency in the English language. These are our target beneficiaries to whom we provide a warm welcome and to help them in their new unfamiliar environment with a range of services. They require ongoing mental and physical support on their difficult journey towards "leave to remain" and integration into the community.

Their progress is often complicated by frequent relocations, required by the Home Office, to various parts of the country.

Those who are deemed not to have a right to asylum can appeal. This process can take many years. Some refused asylum seekers can no longer return to their country of origin because of war or ongoing conflict, so they remain in the UK but with minimal support. This group have little choice but to live for years in a state of economic destitution.

As asylum seekers gain the right to remain in the UK and are given refugee status, those within the Wakefield typically settle here. Although this has been happening for years on a very small scale, in recent years these numbers have increased. New refugees are particularly vulnerable and need support to set up home, find employment, claim benefits and settle into the community in a more permanent way. WDCoS provides help and support along their pathway from arrival to settled status.

The Sanctuary Centre

The drop-in Sanctuary is open 2 days a week, every Wednesday and Friday from 10.00 to 15.00 and we are now opening every Tuesday for special activities. It is our objective to open 5 days per week. The Sanctuary provides a friendly welcome for asylum seekers and refugees, with our volunteers offering drinks and biscuits, a space to chat or play a game, or they help to solve problems such as finding a job when they have leave to remain, where to go for advice or how to complete a form. We typically welcome up to 60 visitors a week to the Sanctuary and will progressively increase the range of activities and services offered.

For example, during the year we welcomed Bevan Health Care, who provide basic health care and advice for asylum seekers attending the Sanctuary through their mobile treatment and consulting unit. In addition, we shall soon be introducing remedial drama activities on Tuesdays together with an appointments system for providing signposting advice.

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

The Sanctuary Centre (continued)

Our clothing store volunteers continue to process requests for clothing from the 4 initial asylum accommodation centres in our area and also directly to asylum seekers and refugees in need. Asylum seekers frequently arrive in our area with little or no personal effects or suitable clothing. During the last 3 months to 31 March 2024 an average of 87 men women and children a week have been provided with much needed clothing and footwear including expectant and new mothers and children.

We were also able to provide pushchairs, footballs, table tennis bats and balls, lunch boxes and flasks, stationery, books and board games. Funding from the Church of Latter-Day Saints has proved invaluable for the purchase of new underwear and a set of clothing for newly arrived asylum seekers together with the purchase of new shoes. We are also grateful for the donation of clothing from donor organisations and individuals.

The food store for asylum seekers and refugees has continued to develop with about 30 people a week supplementing their groceries from the food store. The emphasis has been on canned and dry foodstuffs together with fresh vegetables and long-life milk. The continued operation of the food store has only been made possible with support from Wakefield Street Kitchen, George Street Morrisons' Fresh Produce department, the Church of the Latter-Day Saints and Wakefield District Council.

Aligned to the Sanctuary, WDCoS has a bursary from the Art House to lease Studio 3, where a supportive, well-established craft group meets each week, producing beautiful hand-crafted goods, some of which have been sold and the proceeds used to purchase much-needed warm coats for the clothing store. Also in Studio 3, a longstanding asylum seeker develops his art and readily uses his skills to support other asylum seekers.

Records are not maintained of the nationalities of users of the Sanctuary Centre, but the following nationalities have been recently represented - Afghanistan, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Honduras, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Turkey and Yemen.

English Teaching Program

We provide both on-line classes and face-to-face classes. Teaching a basic level of proficiency in the English language is important to allow refugees and asylum seekers to communicate in their new environment. The classes also provide a safe space for learners to share experiences together in a relaxed atmosphere to share experiences together.

One-hour on-line classes take place daily at 10.00 and 14.00 Monday to Friday delivered by 10 volunteer teachers. Average attendance is 5 learners. Feedback clearly shows that these lessons are regarded by learners as an enjoyable social experience in addition to improving basic English.

Not bound by geography, it is possible for asylum seekers to maintain contact with the group through on-line classes, even if they are moved to another part of the country, so helping to mitigate the negative effects on mental health when familiar routines and relationships are abruptly severed.

The face-to-face classes take place at Urban House reception centre once a week. The classes began at once a week with 4 volunteer teachers run Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced Groups. A second weekly session was started in 2023 divided into lower and higher level. The classes are well attended up to 30+ but fluctuate with the number of residents at Urban House.

Teaching English to this group of learners has its challenges as ability can vary from quite advanced English to some who have had little schooling and may not be literate in their own language. It generally takes 1 year to progress to basic English usage.

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

Asylum Seekers Support Fund

An early and essential function of WDCoS has been to offer direct financial support to a limited number of asylum seekers who have no recourse to public funds, through the Asylum Seeker Support Fund and this has continued through the past year. Most of the people helped by this fund cannot legally leave the country, are not allowed legally to work and have no recourse to Public Funds, they are trapped by the system. They endure difficult times in poverty and are living in fear of indefinite detention or deportation.

The fund has three administrators who make decisions collectively. Each week a small payment, currently averaging £30 to an average of 10 individuals to cover their basic needs. They are also given a bag of groceries each week, tailored to their particular requirements. Toiletries, clothes and household items are shared as appropriate when available. These individuals and their families are known to the administrators of the fund, who follow their progress and seek to ensure their ongoing well-being. There is an expectation that these individuals will live within the law and will progress their legal cases. In many cases support is only required for a limited time before they are granted leave to remain and gain the right to work..

The fund can also be used for one-off purposes, such as emergency accommodation, travel expenses to solicitors' appointments, or temporary support for new refugees setting up home in the UK for the first time.

The Future

Trustees are dedicated to maintaining and developing our support and friendship to asylum seekers and refugees in our area. Our immediate priority is to secure additional financial support through core funding, and progressively extend the opening times and range of activities of our Sanctuary at St Michael's Church Hall. We shall then seek further funding to enable us to employ a centre supervisor to move to the next stage which will involve redeveloping the Sanctuary to provide improved facilities for our asylum seekers and refugees.

Our Supporters

WDCoS has continued to have good working relationships both with other third sector agencies supporting asylum seekers and refugees, as well as with Wakefield Council, and other government agencies. Agencies and organisations with whom we have mutually supportive links We continue to work well alongside the government contractors who provide IACs and dispersed accommodation for asylum seekers in the district. The contractor's welfare officers currently ensure that WDCoS information is in their welcome packs and actively encourage their clients to contact WDCoS.

WDCoS is able to call on a broad cross-section of community backing. We are actively supported by Wakefield Council's Communities and Public Health teams and by individual elected members We have cooperative and supportive relationships with local community groups, local businesses, and local faith groups. In particular, the trustees record their sincere thanks to Bishop Tony Robinson who is retiring this year, for his consistent encouragement and support.

WDCoS would not be able to operate without the continued support of its volunteers. WDCoS volunteers and community have continued to offer support to asylum seekers, refugees and each other. We thank everyone for their resourcefulness, generosity and their commitment to friendship and welcome all the help received from our volunteers and supporters, whether in person, over the internet or of a financial nature. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Financial review

The net payments for the year were £26,909, including net payments of £7,185 on unrestricted funds and net payments of £19,724 on restricted funds.

At the time of signing these accounts the trustees have reassessed the charity's ability to continue for at least 12 months from the date that the accounts are approved and conclude that no material uncertainties exist that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

Reserves policy

The charity's free reserves, at the year end were £9,730.

The trustees have agreed to a formal reserves policy, to maintain unrestricted funds of 3 months of general overheads.



Approved by the board of trustees on 20/11/2024

P Baldwin (Trustee)

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the CIO for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 9 to 13.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Charities Act;
- 2 the accounts do not accord with those records.

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

Signed: 

Name: Alan Dodd FCCA

25/11/2024

West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary
Receipts and payments account
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Receipts					
Grants and donations	(2)	9,404	20,266	29,670	68,017
Room hire and refreshment income		65	-	65	-
Other income		111	269	380	251
WMDC emergency assistance food aid		-	-	-	2,358
Total receipts		9,580	20,535	30,115	70,626
Payments					
Cash to asylum seekers		-	17,587	17,587	18,560
Website costs		-	1,334	1,334	1,793
Food		922	5,042	5,964	6,721
Clothes and shoes		-	2,498	2,498	3,853
Freelance workers		-	6,465	6,465	6,780
Rent		9,850	150	10,000	1,380
Volunteer expenses		-	171	171	205
Utilities		1,870	-	1,870	1,513
Telephone and broadband		881	734	1,615	1,597
Printing, postage and stationery		227	-	227	126
Repairs and maintenance		-	-	-	260
Cleaning materials		28	-	28	41
Insurance		344	-	344	523
Event costs		255	-	255	-
Activity equipment		-	-	-	184
Arts and crafts		55	-	55	311
IT equipment		105	4,859	4,964	4,362
Refreshments for events and projects		-	-	-	871
Training		-	-	-	825
Independent examination		1,386	-	1,386	720
Beneficiary legal assistance		-	-	-	75
Miscellaneous		18	264	282	142
Emergency accommodation for asylum seekers		-	250	250	737
Promotional items		-	905	905	1,696
Musical sessions and equipment		-	-	-	6,340
Photography and videoing of events		-	-	-	1,005
Nursery care		-	-	-	4,440
Trustee expenses		150	-	150	-
Waste collection		674	-	674	-
Total payments		16,765	40,259	57,024	65,060
Net receipts / (payments)		(7,185)	(19,724)	(26,909)	5,566
Fund balances brought forward		16,915	56,087	73,002	67,436
Fund balances carried forward	(3)	9,730	36,363	46,093	73,002

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Statement of assets and liabilities

as at 31 March 2024

	2024	2024	2024	2023
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cash funds				
Cash at bank	9,717	36,363	46,080	72,948
Cash in hand	13	-	13	54
Total cash funds	<u>9,730</u>	<u>36,363</u>	<u>46,093</u>	<u>73,002</u>

Amounts due to the charity

	2024
	£
Gift aid to be claimed to 31 March 2024	<u>1,345</u>
	<u>1,345</u>

Assets retained for the charity's own use

Yestel 10" tablets for use by asylum seekers in initial accommodation
Media equipment
Clothing store PCs
Resource centre PCs

Liabilities

	2024
	£
Accruals	<u>1,386</u>
	<u>1,386</u>

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees on 20/11/2024

P Baldwin (Trustee)



Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The trustees have taken advantage of section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 and have prepared the accounts on a receipts and payments basis.

There has been no change to the accounting policies since last year.

No changes have been made to the accounts for previous years.

Taxation

As a charity the organisation benefits from rates relief and is generally exempt from income tax and capital gains tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary
Notes to the accounts continued
for the year ended 31 March 2024

2 Grants and donations

	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
Age UK	-	2,000	2,000	-
Prosper Together	-	1,150	1,150	-
Wakefield District Housing	-	700	700	1,500
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council	-	3,000	3,000	21,440
Latter-day Saints	-	-	-	1,539
Leeds Community Foundation	-	-	-	9,794
NOVA	-	-	-	3,840
Urban Housing	-	-	-	1,000
Other donations	9,404	13,416	22,820	28,904
	<u>9,404</u>	<u>20,266</u>	<u>29,670</u>	<u>68,017</u>

3 Restricted funds

	Balance b/f £	Incoming £	Outgoing £	Transfers £	Balance c/f £
Age UK	-	2,000	1,992	-	8
Anonymous York Donor	661	-	661	-	-
Asylum Seekers' Support Fund	25,651	12,584	17,837	-	20,398
Awards 4 All	332	-	171	-	161
Awards 4 All Top Up grant	75	-	75	-	-
Beneficiary legal assistance	335	-	-	-	335
Anonymous Food Donor	-	180	180	-	-
Latter-day Saints and general clothing store	2,964	652	2,498	-	1,118
Nova - Live Well Wakefield	8,200	-	4,099	-	4,101
Nova Clothing Store and Resource Centre	2,291	-	2,291	-	-
Nova - Digital Inclusion	371	-	371	-	-
Prosper Together	-	1,150	497	-	653
The Mears Foundation	326	-	-	-	326
Urban Housing LLP	1,000	-	-	-	1,000
Wakefield and District Health	734	-	734	-	-
Wakefield District Housing	1,352	700	1,475	-	577
WMDC - Digital Inclusion	2,307	-	2,214	-	93
WMDC - food grant	122	3,000	2,726	-	396
WMDC - media project	9,019	269	2,438	-	6,850
WMDC - Urban House	347	-	-	-	347
	<u>56,087</u>	<u>20,535</u>	<u>40,259</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>36,363</u>

Wakefield District City of Sanctuary

Notes to the accounts continued

for the year ended 31 March 2024

3 Restricted funds (continued)

Fund name	Purpose of restriction
Age UK	For a social digital inclusion project.
Anonymous York Donor	To provide clothes and shoes and food.
Asylum Seekers' Support Fund	The Asylum Seekers Support Fund.
Awards 4 All	For the Clothing Store.
Awards 4 All Top Up grant	To 'top up' weekly shopping for food store recipients.
Beneficiary legal assistance	Donations towards legal assistance.
Anonymous Food Donor	For additional food provision.
Latter-day Saints and general clothing store	To provide clothes and shoes.
Nova - Live Well Wakefield	For key worker sessional payments.
Nova Clothing Store and Resource Centre	To run the Clothing Store and Resource Centre.
Nova - Digital Inclusion	For a Digital Inclusion Project.
Prosper Together	To support households on the edge.
The Mears Foundation	For a Digital Inclusion Project.
Urban Housing LLP	For a Digital Inclusion Project.
Wakefield and District Health	To provide English classes.
Wakefield District Housing	Provision of milk.
WMDC - Digital Inclusion	For a Digital Inclusion Project.
WMDC - food grant	For the Food Store.
WMDC - media project	For the Media Project.
WMDC - Urban House	For outdoor equipment at Urban House.

4 Related party transactions

Donations from trustees and related parties

The total aggregate value of unconditional donations to the charity from the trustees or related parties was £749 (2023: £750).

Trustee expenses

During the year 1 trustee was paid a total of £150 in respect of travel (previous year: no trustees and £nil).

Trustee remuneration and benefits

No trustee received any remuneration or benefit during this or the previous year.