

# **Waltham Forest Migrant Action**

## **Trustees' Report for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021**

### **Aims and Purpose**

The aim of Waltham Forest Migrant Action (WFMA) is to champion and campaign for the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants and to provide support for them through running a drop in centre where we provide a place for socialising, together with free professional immigration and welfare advice and casework, as well as helping with form filling, understanding official letters and bills, and signposting to health and education services. In this way we meet the objects of the charity.

Although we mainly serve the population of Waltham Forest, we do not limit our service to this area and, if we have the capacity, will help those who may come from further afield in London.

### **Governance**

WFMA was founded in 2013 and was previously known as Walthamstow Migrant Action Group. It was run as an unincorporated small charity. The name was changed 2 years ago and the constitution revised to strengthen the governance of the group and to become registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. We applied for registration and received this in May 2020.

Three trustees resigned during the year, all due to overseas postings, and were replaced either by election at the Annual General Meeting or appointment by the remaining trustees in accordance with our constitution.

The business of the charity was conducted by the trustees at 6 formal meetings during the year and at the AGM in September

### **Membership**

We introduced a membership scheme with the revision of our constitution and membership at the end of the year numbered 46.

### **Volunteers**

Although encouraged to become so, not all our volunteers are members. Nevertheless, they form a vital and much appreciated part of our operation. Most help to run our drop in centre, but some help with events and fund raising. It is a mark of their enthusiasm and loyalty that the majority have remained with us through the Covid pandemic.

### **Funding**

All our funding so far has been through events we have organised or participated in and canvassing by our members and trustees for individual donations. During this year we secured particular purpose donations which enabled us to start offering immigration casework to follow up on our advice. We have treated these donations as restricted funds.

Fundraising was severely affected by the Covid lockdowns and restrictions but we were able to increase our reserves by £5589.

Events raised £2473, membership fees amounted to £363, individual general use donations were £1761, and the immigration casework donations amounted to £7000.

We also received a grant from the London Borough of Waltham Forest of £760 towards office equipment and drop in expenses and a grant from the charity Servas of £500 to provide small hardship grants to visitors affected by the Covid conditions.

Since the AGM in September, some trustees have invested considerable effort into applying for grant funding to enable us to increase the breadth and quality of the service we can offer to migrants, as we recognise that we have probably reached the limit of the funds we can raise locally through our own efforts.

### **Reserves**

We do not as yet have a formal policy on reserves, but currently aim to maintain sufficient capital to keep the drop in operating for 6 months without income.

### **Accounting**

We currently maintain simple income and expenditure accounts utilising a single bank account. The treasurer reports the financial situation and cash movements in excess of £100 to the trustees at each of the formal trustee meetings. We have no paid staff and make no payments to trustees or volunteers other than re-imbursement of expenses.

### **Drop in**

Until the outbreak of Covid at the end of the previous year we ran our once a week drop in on the premises of the Walthamstow Salvation Army. At the end of the first lockdown we endeavoured to create a Covid safe operating environment, but unfortunately could not adapt the hall to be so. We therefore sought an alternative venue and discovered that the church hall at Blackhorse Road Baptist Church in Walthamstow was almost ideal, being large, airy and allowing for a one way system for people flow, thus easily facilitating social distancing,

We opened just before Christmas, but had to immediately close down again because of the implementation of the second major lockdown.

In the meanwhile, since the initial March lockdown, we operated a telephone service for those who still needed advice despite the very changed conditions. We kept volunteer interest by organising weekly Zoom meetings to compare notes and keep everyone informed of how we were doing.

Overall we serviced 163 calls, 103 women and 60 men. This is lower than the previous year when we recorded 192 visits at the drop in, but that is probably explained by the fact that although the drop in venue was relatively well known, our phone contact details had to be spread through the community in difficult circumstances with so many points of contact closed.

The calls included 81 immigrants from Africa, 45 from Asia, 17 from the Caribbean and Americas and 11 from the EU.

52 were offered professional pro bono immigration advice and 36 welfare and housing advice.

The balance was sign posting, form filling, bill queries or grant and foodbank requests.

We introduced our casework service during August, and by the end of the year had taken on 20 immigration cases, resulting in 15 Home Office applications of which 2 limited leave to remain extensions with access to public funds and one initial limited leave to remain with access to public funds had been successful. No applications have been rejected, but it is the nature of Home Office applications that they sometimes take time to be processed, so the balance had yet to be decided by the end of the year.

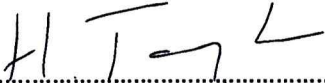
We also implemented an electronic visitor data collection system which has been developed for us by two of our members. We have a written GDPR policy and where applicable our visitors have our privacy notice explained.


### **Campaigning**

Covid has made campaigning take a back seat this year, but we have continued to publish our monthly electronic newsletter which is distributed to members, volunteers and to all who have registered an interest in our organisation. We use it to raise awareness of matters affecting asylum, refugees and migrants and it has received considerable praise among its readers for the quality and interest.

In summary, we regard the year as having been successful despite the trying pandemic condition and that we have met our charitable objects as fully as circumstance has allowed.

Agreed by the trustees by means of electronic circulation and reply on 24 June 2021

Helen Taylor..........Date.....5th July 2021  
Trustee

Clive Bower..........Date.....7th July 2021  
Trustee





CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name  
**Waltham Forest Migrant Action**

No (if any)  
1189600

## Receipts and payments accounts

**CC16a**

For the period  
from

Period start date  
01/04/2020

To

Period end date  
31/03/2021



### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Membership	363	-	-	363	293
Donations	1,761	-	-	1,761	1,272
Immigration Casework Grant	-	7,000	-	7,000	-
Immigration Casework Fees	650	-	-	650	-
Council Grant	-	760	-	760	-
Servas Hardship Grant	-	500	-	500	-
Events Income	2,474	-	-	2,474	5,130
Mutual Aid Group	-	203	-	203	49
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>5,248</b>	<b>8,463</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,711</b>	<b>6,744</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>5,248</b>	<b>8,463</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,711</b>	<b>6,744</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Administration, Stationary, Publicity etc	1,259	-	-	1,259	1,186
Premises Hire	316	-	-	316	600
Welfare Advice	2,550	-	-	2,550	2,400
Immigration Casework	-	3,499	-	3,499	-
Harship Grants	-	200	-	200	-
Insurance	99	-	-	99	99
Mutual Aid Group	-	199	-	199	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>4,224</b>	<b>3,898</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,122</b>	<b>4,285</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>4,224</b>	<b>3,898</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,122</b>	<b>4,285</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>4,565</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,589</b>	<b>2,459</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>5,417</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,417</b>	<b>2,958</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>6,441</b>	<b>4,565</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,006</b>	<b>5,417</b>

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Barclays Bank	5,408	4,565	-
	PayPal	1,033	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>6,441</b>	<b>4,565</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		Douglas Saltmarsh	30-Apr-21
		Clive Bower	30-Apr-21