

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

England & Wales · Charity number 1191436

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2020-09-23
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	49-51 Cambridge Road Rock House Hastings East Sussex TN34 1DT
Phone	07895536946
Email	info@therefugeebuddyproject.org
Website	www.therefugeebuddyproject.com

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE(1) TO RELIEVE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP TO THOSE GRANTED REFUGEE STATUS OR SEEKING SANCTUARY BY PROVIDING ADVICE AND GUIDANCE TO ENABLE THEM TO BECOME ECONOMICALLY SELF-SUPPORTING ON AN ONGOING BASIS.(2) THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT AMONG PEOPLE WHO ARE REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS AND ARE SOCIALLY EXCLUDED ON THE GROUNDS OF THEIR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC POSITION, BY:-(A) PROMOTING AND/OR CO-ORDINATING SERVICES AND FACILITIES TO ASSIST THEM TO ADAPT WITHIN A NEW COMMUNITY(B) PROVIDING EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES(C) PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL, RECREATIONAL, ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS INVOLVING THE WIDER COMMUNITY THAT BUILDCONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM AND IMPROVE THEIR CONDITIONS OF LIFE (3) TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF THOSE GRANTED REFUGEE STATUS OR SEEKING SANCTUARY AND THEIR DEPENDENTS.(4) THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT BY PROMOTING ACTIVITIES TO FOSTER UNDERSTANDING AND SOCIAL COHESION BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS.

Activities: Supporting the integration of people seeking refuge in Hastings, Rother and Wealden

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Economic/community Development/employment, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, Other Defined Groups

Geography

- East Sussex

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-06-30	£322,832	£291,604	-	-
2024-06-30	£452,074	£555,752	-	-
2023-03-31	£411,943	£333,239	-	-
2022-03-31	£175,977	£107,581	-	-
2021-03-31	£18,451	£24,903	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Yeser Mohammad	Chair	2021-06-14
Barbara Malaihollo		2023-09-08
Geraldine Miric		2023-09-18
Patricia Jane Hartley		2024-04-10
Rodrigo Correa		2023-09-08
Zainab Alsafi		2024-12-09

Accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

(Registered Charity - Registration Number:- 1191436)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2025

Reference and Administrative Information

Trustees

Z. Alsafi
R. Correa
P.J. Hartley
B. Malaihollo
G. Miric
Y. Mohammad

Charity Correspondent and Principal Address

R. Leal
The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden
3rd Floor, Rock House
49-51 Cambridge Road
HASTINGS
East Sussex TN34 1DT

Bankers

NatWest Bank plc

Independent Examiner

T. E. Reynolds FCA
23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

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THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2025

The Trustees present their report for the ended 30th June 2025

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden is constituted as a charitable incorporated organization whose only voting members are its Charity Trustees registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales in September 2020 under charity number 1191436. It is governed by a constitution last updated in September 2020.

Organisational structure

The Charity Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity.

The Trustees meet together as a body on a regular basis. Additionally, the Trustees, in their various roles, are involved in the day to day activities of the Charity.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing Trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. Potential trustees are identified from the volunteers and other individuals involved with the Charity. They are invited to attend Trustees' meetings as observers and are given more details of the charity's aims and activities and, if all agree, they are then proposed as new trustees at a subsequent Trustees' meeting. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Induction and training of trustees

Following appointment, new trustees are introduced to their new role and given copies of the trust deed and a guide to the policies and procedures adopted by our charity. A number of publications from the Charity Commission are also provided including the guidance on charities and public benefit and on the relief of hardship, promotion of social inclusion, preservation and protection of mental health and promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit. This ensures that new trustees are aware of the scope of their responsibilities under the Charities Act. Initially, new trustees work with an existing Trustee assisting on particular activities and projects run by the charity.

Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the risks the Charity faces and have drawn up a risk matrix which identifies the major risks by area of activity, the nature of those risks, the likelihood of the risks happening and the measures taken to manage them. The Trustees review this risk matrix regularly at their meetings. The Trustees are satisfied that systems are in place, or arrangements are in hand, to manage the risks that have been identified. In particular, insurance cover is in place and the finances of the Charity are kept under review. Appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks, supported by regularly reviewed policies, are made for all staff and volunteers within the Charity.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims and objectives

The objectives of the Charity are set out in the Charity's trust deed and are summarised as follows:-

- To relieve financial hardship to those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary by providing advice and guidance to enable them to become economically self-supporting on an ongoing basis
- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among people who are refugees and asylum seekers and are socially excluded on the grounds of their social and economic position
- To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary and their dependents.
- The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by promoting activities to foster understanding and social cohesion between people from different backgrounds.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2025
(continued)

Strategy and mission

The Refugee Buddy Project started in 2017, with the aim of creating a culture of welcome in Hastings and St Leonard's. We started as a community group welcoming people seeking refuge who had recently arrived in Hastings. Now, we are a refugee & migrant-led charity supporting families and individuals from refugee backgrounds with our buddy programme, advocacy, and financial & emotional support.

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE YEAR

Overview of Activities

Between April 2024 and June 2025, the charity continued its core work supporting refugee and migrant communities through buddying, casework, volunteering pathways, cultural programming, and community engagement. Continuation core funding from the National Lottery (Reaching Communities) commenced in September 2024.

Staffing and Governance

A new Head of HR & Operations and a Head of Programmes & Administration were recruited in late 2024. They took up relevant training to support their skills reviewed organisational policies, and began working on strategic planning for sustainability beyond Year 3. One staff member did not pass probation. A new Finance Manager was recruited following the departure of the previous post-holder.

Programme Delivery

The Buddy Scheme supported 45 volunteers and 188 participants. Across the period, 41 participant matches were completed, surpassing volunteer-matching targets for our funders. The Dove Café provided training and supported progression into employment for several sessional workers.

Through the Migrants Organise, Justice Together Partnership, the charity delivered casework in immigration, welfare benefits, health, housing, and destitution support. The organisation also responded to concerns regarding Home Office accommodation practices by coordinating an urgent multi-agency stakeholder response.

Cultural and Community Work

The charity coordinated Refugee Week 2024 and 2025, delivering over 90 events in partnership with more than 100 local organisations and raising £4,000 (2025). Key programmes included Stitch for Change, Plants Make Places, the Young Creatives Collective, and Flavours Without Borders, strengthening public engagement and representation.

Partnerships

The organisation remained active in regional networks, including the East Sussex Migration Partnership, Homes for Ukraine partnerships, and Hastings Community of Sanctuary. Cultural partnerships with Hastings Museum & Art Gallery, the De La Warr Pavilion, and Flatland Projects supported exhibitions, residencies, and public programmes.

Organisational Development

A new programme monitoring system was embedded; 16 organisational policies were reviewed; and impact evaluation work progressed with external evaluators. A new shared drive was introduced, with file migration ongoing. Staff completed safeguarding (Level 3) and management training.

Challenges and Rising Community Safety Concerns

The charity operated in a context of increased racist narratives and tolerance of discriminatory behaviour, which adversely affected community confidence and participation. Following race-related unrest in summer 2024, participants reported heightened fear and anxiety. The organisation prioritised maintaining a **safe, welcoming space** and undertook advocacy with local politicians and the police service to address community safety concerns. Multi-agency meetings were convened to improve responses and protections for vulnerable families.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2025
(continued)

Public Benefit

All activities advanced the charity's aims: supporting people seeking refuge, improving integration, reducing hardship, and promoting a culture of welcome. The work delivered direct social, emotional, practical, and cultural support to hundreds of individuals and contributed to community cohesion.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of period

The accounts reflect a year with a lower level activity due to reduced availability of both grants and other sources of income. In order to accommodate this lower level of activity the Charity has reduced its level of expenditure and the accounts for the year show a surplus for the year compared to the deficit for the previous year.

The Dove Café continues to show a small surplus whilst providing a well used meeting point and a training opportunity for refugees who are interested in the hospitality industry.

The Charity has continued to increase its level of donations from the public to support its activities outside of those that are grant funded.

At the end of the year the Charity had sufficient funds and resources to enable it to complete both the various activities it has received grants for and to enable it to set up the staffing and other resources for the grant funding it had been awarded at the end of the period.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have reviewed the reserves of the charity. Their policy is to maintain sufficient funds to meet three months' operating costs.

Principal funding sources/plans for the future

In September 2024 the Charity received new funding from Reaching Communities National Lottery until August 2027. This has enabled the Charity to fund four part-time roles – 2 support workers posts, 1 Head of Programs 1 head of Operations and HR, 1 freelance Finance Manager and CEO as well as covering 3 year's rent for a social space.

We have successfully applied to the Justice Together Fund in partnership with Migrants Organise and POMOC for continuation funding for our part-time Caseworker who will train to become OISC qualified in immigration casework. This funding now runs through to April 2026.

We received further funding to deliver support for people arriving on the Homes for Ukraine scheme from ESCC delivering from June 2024 – July 2025.

The core buddying and volunteering work is funded through two small charitable trusts.

The Charity continues to receive donations from the general public which are used to fund the work we do with people on No Recourse to Public Funds.

Investment policy and objectives

The charity has no long-term investments. Our cash reserves are held current bank accounts.

Conflicts of interest

Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the other trustees and, in accordance with the Trust's policy, withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED ENDED 30th JUNE 2025
(continued)

Trustees remuneration.

The Trustees bring a wealth of experience of refugee and migrant rights, charitable and community projects, financial and project oversight and strategy and more. They generously volunteer their time to oversee the Charity and no Trustee receives remuneration for their role as Trustee. Details of transactions in the year between the Trustees and the Charity are set out in Note 4 to these accounts.

Reference and administrative information

The names of the Trustees throughout the period and at the date of this report were as follows:-

Z. Alsafi
R. Correa
P.J. Hartley
B. Malaihollo
G. Miric
Y. Mohammed

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above

Y. MOHAMMAD

P. J. HARTLEY

Trustee and Chair

Trustee

23rd April 2026

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT
HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2025**

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Project") for the year ended 30th June 2025, which are set out on pages 7 to 13

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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 Project's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

T. E. REYNOLDS FCA

23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

23rd April 2026

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total funds 15 months to 30 Jun 2024 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Voluntary income	2(a)	20,018	-	20,017	62,906
Activities for generating funds	2(b)	62,388	-	62,388	49,085
Grants received	2(c)	40,676	199,750	240,426	340,083
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		<u>123,082</u>	<u>199,750</u>	<u>322,832</u>	<u>452,074</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of generating funds	3(a)	12,071	8,678	20,749	23,402
Charitable activities	3(b)	75,229	192,125	267,354	534,125
Governance costs	3(c)	3,500	-	3,500	(1,775)
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		<u>90,800</u>	<u>200,803</u>	<u>291,604</u>	<u>555,752</u>
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES		32,282	(1,053)	31,228	(103,678)
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS	11	166	(166)		-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>32,448</u>	<u>(1,219)</u>	<u>31,228</u>	<u>(103,678)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	11	36,867	33,953	70,820	174,498
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	11	<u>£69,315</u>	<u>£32,734</u>	<u>£102,048</u>	<u>£70,820</u>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 9 to 13 form part of these accounts

**THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30th JUNE 2025**

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible	7	12,538	7,481
		<u>12,538</u>	<u>7,481</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	8	6,236	29,245
Short term deposits			-
Cash at bank and in hand		128,240	41,780
		<u>134,476</u>	<u>71,025</u>
CREDITORS - amounts falling due within one year	9	(4,075)	(7,686)
DEFERRED INCOME		(40,890)	-
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>89,511</u>	<u>63,339</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>£102,049</u>	<u>£70,820</u>
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
Unrestricted	11	69,315	36,867
Restricted	11	32,734	33,953
		<u>£102,049</u>	<u>£70,820</u>

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:-

Y. MOHAMMAD
Trustee and Chair

P. J. HARTLEY
Trustee

23rd April 2026

The notes on pages 9 to 13 form part of these accounts

1 Accounting policies

1 (a) Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

These financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with FRS102(2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2019 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102)).

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

1 (b) Funds structure

Unrestricted income funds comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects. Unrestricted funds include designated funds where the trustees, at their discretion, have set aside resources for a specific purpose

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with the specific restrictions and terms imposed by the grant awarding organisation or by donors. Details of the funds are provided in Note 11 to the accounts.

1 (c) Incoming resources

Recognition

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:-

- the Charity becomes legally entitled to the benefit or use of the resources;
- and inflow of economic benefit is probable; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Grants

Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant

Grants where there are performance or service deliverables required by the terms of the grant, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to payment through its performance. Where those service performance or service deliverables have not been met by the year end then the appropriate element of the grant received is accounted for as Deferred Income and recognised when the deliverables are met.

Events and trading activities

Funds raised from events and trading activities are reported gross - i.e. before any related costs have been deducted from the proceeds.

Gift Aid Tax claims

These and other tax claims are included in the accounts at the same time as the cash donations to which they relate.

Volunteer help

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services donated by volunteers has not been included in these accounts, except where the services provided are in the nature of professional services where a fee would otherwise be charged, in which case the donated service is valued at their chargeable rate

Investment income

Investment income is included when receivable.

Charitable trading activity

Incoming resources from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2025

1 (d) Resources expended

Liability recognition.

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category

Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it was incurred

Costs of generating funds

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, or incurred in trading activities undertaken to raise funds.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both direct pay and non-pay costs and support costs relating to those activities.

Governance costs

These include the costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings and cost of any legal advice to the trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

1 (e) Tangible fixed assets for use by the Charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:-

- Furniture, fixtures and fittings	10 years
- Computing and office equipment	5 years
- Catering equipment	4 years

1 (f) Pensions

Employees of the Charity are entitled to join a defined contribution "money purchase" scheme. The Charity's contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in Note 6.

2 INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2025	Total funds 15 months to 30 Jun 2024
	£	£	£	£
2 (a) Voluntary income				
- donations	£ 20,018	£ -	£ 20,018	£ 62,906
2 (b) Activities for generating funds				
- events	35,196	-	35,196	14,500
- The Dove Café income	27,193	-	27,193	34,585
	<u>62,388</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>62,388</u>	<u>£ 49,085</u>
2 (c) Incoming resources from charitable activities				
- grants receivable	£ 40,676	£ 199,750	£ 240,426	£ 340,083

Grant income is treated as "Restricted" as it has been given to fund specific items of expenditure. If there is an underspend on a grant then any surplus may be, with the agreement of the granting body, transferred to Unrestricted Funds.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2025

3 EXPENDITURE

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total funds 30 Jun 2024 £
3 (a) Costs of generating funds				
The Dove Café - costs	12,071	8,678	20,749	22,892
Other fund raising costs	-	-	-	510
Total costs of generating funds	<u>£ 12,071</u>	<u>£ 8,678</u>	<u>£ 20,749</u>	<u>£ 23,402</u>
3 (b) Charitable activities				
General administration				
- Insurances	1,312	-	1,312	1,465
- Office rent and council tax	334	-	334	36,604
- Utilities	1,312	63	1,375	-
- Professional fees	833	9,456	10,289	4,490
- Phone and internet costs	2,003	370	2,372	2,437
- Equipment costs	1,409	-	1,409	4,128
- Stationery and office costs	1,001	295	1,297	1,865
- Depreciation	2,892	-	2,892	1,232
	<u>11,095</u>	<u>10,185</u>	<u>21,280</u>	<u>52,221</u>
Project and activity costs				
- activities	-	-	-	62,871
- advertising and promotion	13,759	23,988	37,747	14,689
- event costs	10,347	7,268	17,615	26,798
- family expenses	-	7,223	7,222	61,072
- licences	1,026	3,782	4,807	3,834
	<u>25,131</u>	<u>42,260</u>	<u>67,391</u>	<u>169,264</u>
Staff and volunteer costs				
- staff salaries including pension and NIC	21,690	105,906	127,596	223,790
- staff expenses	429	1,988	2,417	5,570
- sub-contractors	-	12,007	12,007	609
- staff training	16,533	17,387	33,920	78,412
- volunteer costs and expenses	350	2,393	2,743	4,259
	<u>39,003</u>	<u>139,680</u>	<u>178,683</u>	<u>312,640</u>
Total cost of charitable activities	<u>£ 75,229</u>	<u>£ 192,125</u>	<u>£ 267,354</u>	<u>£ 534,125</u>
3 (c) Governance costs				
- Independent examiners fees	<u>£3,500</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£3,500</u>	<u>£(1,775)</u>

4 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS AND TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

No payments have been made to the Trustees for their roles as Trustees of the Charity during the period.

5 CORPORATION TAX

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2025

6 STAFF COSTS

	2025	30 Jun 2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	119,107	202,432
Social security costs	5,687	16,715
Pension costs	2,803	4,643
	<u>£127,597</u>	<u>£223,790</u>

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was 4.5 (2024 - 5)

7 FIXED ASSETS

	Furniture & Fittings	Office Equipment	Catering Equipment	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
As at 1 June 2024	6,656	2,832	-	9,488
Additions in year	1,219	2,894	3,835	7,948
As at 30 June 2025	<u>7,876</u>	<u>5,726</u>	<u>3,835</u>	<u>17,437</u>
Depreciation				
As at 1 June 2024	(1,148)	(860)	-	(2,007)
Charge for the year	(788)	(1,145)	(959)	(2,892)
As at 30 June 2025	<u>(1,935)</u>	<u>(2,005)</u>	<u>(959)</u>	<u>(4,899)</u>
Net book value at 30 June 2025	<u>£ 5,940</u>	<u>£ 3,721</u>	<u>£ 2,876</u>	<u>£ 12,538</u>
<i>Net book value at 30 June 2024</i>	<u>£ 5,509</u>	<u>£ 1,972</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ 7,481</u>

8 DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Grants receivable	-	25,015
Sundry debtors	6,236	4,230
	<u>£6,236</u>	<u>£29,245</u>

9 CREDITORS - amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Restricted Funds		
Sundry creditors	-	6,139
	<u>-</u>	<u>6,139</u>
Unrestricted Funds		
Sundry creditors	4,075	1,547
	<u>£4,075</u>	<u>£7,686</u>

10 DEFERRED INCOME

Deferred Income represents grant income received in advance of the charity meeting the performance and deliverable targets that form part of the grant.

	£	£
Restricted	32,890	-
Unrestricted	8,000	-
	<u>£40,890</u>	<u>£0</u>

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
 NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2025

11 SUMMARY OF FUND MOVEMENTS

	Balance at 01-Jul-24 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers In/(out) £	Balance at 30-Jun-25 £
Restricted funds					
ESCC - Homes for Ukrainians	-	75,000	(65,158)	-	9,842
Justince Together Partnership	27,000	3,750	(16,143)	-	14,607
National Lottery	6,953	108,200	(106,868)	-	8,285
Stitch for Change		12,800	(12,634)	(166)	0
	<u>33,953</u>	<u>199,750</u>	<u>(200,803)</u>	<u>(166)</u>	<u>32,734</u>
Unrestricted funds	36,867	123,082	(90,801)	166	69,314
	<u>£70,820</u>	<u>£322,832</u>	<u>£(291,604)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£102,048</u>

12 OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Total future minimum payments under non-cancellable operating leases	2025 £	2024 £
Leasehold property - leases expiring within 2 - 5 years	<u>£11,500</u>	<u>£17,500</u>

13 SUMMARY OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	<u>12,538</u>	-	<u>12,538</u>	<u>7,481</u>
Current assets	68,852	65,624	134,476	71,025
Liabilities				
Amounts falling due in one year	(4,075)	-	(4,075)	(7,686)
Amounts falling due after one year			-	
Deferred Income	(8,000)	(32,890)	(40,890)	
	<u>56,777</u>	<u>32,734</u>	<u>89,511</u>	<u>63,339</u>
	<u>£69,315</u>	<u>£32,734</u>	<u>£102,049</u>	<u>£70,820</u>

14 MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CHARITY AS A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

- The Trustees confirm that:-
- the charity has not given any financial guarentees to another organisation
 - there are no debts outstanding at the year-end that represent a charge on the assets of the charity.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

England & Wales - Charity number 1191436

Accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

(Registered Charity - Registration Number:- 1191436)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024

Reference and Administrative Information

Trustees

Z. Alsafi
R. Correa
P.J. Hartley
B. Malaihollo
G. Miric
Y. Mohammad

Charity Correspondent and Principal Address

Rossana Leal
The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden
Creative Media Centre
45 Robertson Street
HASTINGS
East Sussex TN34 1HL

Bankers

NatWest Bank plc

Independent Examiner

T. E. Reynolds FCA
23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

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2	Report of Trustees
9	Independent Examiner's Report
10	Statement of Financial Activities
11	Balance Sheet
12	Notes to the accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024

The Trustees decided to change the charity's year end so that it aligned more precisely with the grant cycle. Accordingly the Trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the fifteen months ended 30th June 2024.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden is constituted as a charitable incorporated organization whose only voting members are its Charity Trustees registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales in September 2020 under charity number 1191436. It is governed by a constitution last updated in September 2020.

Organisational structure

The Charity Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity.

The Trustees meet together as a body on a regular basis. Additionally, the Trustees, in their various roles, are involved in the day to day activities of the Charity.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing Trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. Potential trustees are identified from the volunteers and other individuals involved with the Charity. They are invited to attend Trustees' meetings as observers and are given more details of the charity's aims and activities and, if all agree, they are then proposed as new trustees at a subsequent Trustees' meeting. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Induction and training of trustees

Following appointment, new trustees are introduced to their new role and given copies of the trust deed and a guide to the policies and procedures adopted by our charity. A number of publications from the Charity Commission are also provided including the guidance on charities and public benefit and on the relief of hardship, promotion of social inclusion, preservation and protection of mental health and promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit. This ensures that new trustees are aware of the scope of their responsibilities under the Charities Act. Initially, new trustees work with an existing Trustee assisting on particular activities and projects run by the charity.

Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the risks the Charity faces and have drawn up a risk matrix which identifies the major risks by area of activity, the nature of those risks, the likelihood of the risks happening and the measures taken to manage them. The Trustees review this risk matrix regularly at their meetings. The Trustees are satisfied that systems are in place, or arrangements are in hand, to manage the risks that have been identified. In particular, insurance cover is in place and the finances of the Charity are kept under review. Appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks, supported by regularly reviewed policies, are made for all staff and volunteers within the Charity.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims and objectives

The objectives of the Charity are set out in the Charity's trust deed and are summarised as follows:-

- To relieve financial hardship to those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary by providing advice and guidance to enable them to become economically self-supporting on an ongoing basis
- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among people who are refugees and asylum seekers and are socially excluded on the grounds of their social and economic position
- To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary and their dependents.
- The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by promoting activities to foster understanding and social cohesion between people from different backgrounds.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024
(continued)

Strategy and mission

The Refugee Buddy Project started in 2017, with the aim of creating a culture of welcome in Hastings and St Leonard's. In the last five years. We started as a community group welcoming people seeking refuge who had recently arrived in Hastings. Now, we are a refugee & migrant-led charity supporting families and individuals from refugee backgrounds with our buddy programme, advocacy, and financial & emotional support

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE YEAR

This period saw the project move through the tail end of 3 years of core funding from Reaching Communities Lottery funding (July 2024) to securing a further 3 years of continuation funding September 2024- September 2026. The uncertainty of this period had an effect on project staffing and morale. In spite of this uncertainty we were able to continue to operate also securing continuation funding to expand our work from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Homes for Ukraine (HfU) and this included a training budget for the development and delivery of training for ESCC staff on how to work better with refugees and Migrants. We were also funded for 2 years in a row by Arts Council England to develop and deliver our cultural and creative strategy of working with local creative communities and artists and engage the local refugee and migrant communities in the arts.

We continued to work with local communities to create a culture of welcome through the recruitment, training and ongoing support of local volunteers who are matched with migrants and people seeking refuge in the areas of Hastings, Rother & Wealden.

As part of the national Justice Together initiative through our partnerships with Migrants Organise and POMOC we continue to provide support, advice and referrals to local specialist organisations for people who continue to come to us as a first point of call when they need support but don't know how to access this.

With the support of Lottery funds we have been able to develop a program of support including learning and gaining front of house and working in a commercial kitchen skills at the Dove Café to the communities we serve.

Having secured continuation funding for another 3 years the project has now recruited a new team, continues to work with local communities to create and culture of welcome creating safe spaces for migrants and people seeking refuge to rebuild their lives.

Cultural Curiosity Training to staff at East Sussex County Council

At the end of June 2024, the main bulk of twenty sessions had been delivered to 200 plus delegates. This included three bespoke sessions for school staff, social work students and library staff. The workshops we designed by The Refugee Buddy Project in consultation with ESCC. The success of the first batch of training secured a 2nd year of funding to deliver more sessions in 25/25.

Evaluation feedback from 48 participants at eight sessions evidences that the training has been well received so far:

- 98% are 'likely' or 'very likely' to recommend the training to colleagues.
- 96% rated the quality of delivery, subject knowledge and pace of trainer as 'excellent'.
- 88% reported increased knowledge, skills and understanding after attending the training.
- 75% rated the overall effectiveness of the training as 'excellent' and 23% rated it 'good'.

Case work – The Dove Café – The Annual Christmas Market

We continue to work towards relieving financial hardship by providing advice, information and advocacy for people to become economically self supporting. Our work at The Dove Café is crucial to this as is case work and support provided by our support workers.

We are part of the Justice Together partnership, in a collaboration with Migrants Organise and Pomoc and we advocate for migrants and people seeking refuge who are being discriminated against in access to housing, health services, education and the home office.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024
(continued)

We carry out case work and referrals and subsequently have strong partnerships with local organisations and institutions. Our case worker is undergoing training to become an Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) Level 1 Immigration Adviser.

Our case worker and support workers provide ongoing information, advocacy and referrals to specialist agencies.

In January 2024 the local hotel housing many of the people we were supporting closed down. For those who had been granted leave to remain we were able to support with buying them suitcases and train tickets so they could travel to other towns where they had friends and family.

Many were stranded with nowhere to go and not eligible for housing support locally. Some presented locally for housing support and were turned away. We provided advocacy support in order to ensure that a housing needs assessment was carried out. On 2 occasions we challenged successfully a decision not to provide emergency housing where it was deemed they were eligible.

By putting out a call to our buddies we were able to find home, a shared house 10 people and we continue to provide ad hoc support to some of these people.

Case work support included support with finding immigration solicitors, sim cards, reuniting with siblings, provision of clothing/suitcases, accessing dental services, train tickets, access to housing, support with setting up bank and universal credit accounts.

At the **Dove Café** we recruit and support project participants into organizing social gatherings, pop up dinners, workshops to share understanding and knowledge of different cultures through food, music and the arts. We now work with a large group of refugee and migrant women, although not exclusively, offering a safe space at the Dove café to volunteer and learn front of house skills, practicing English, cashing up. Also the basics of working in a professional kitchen. The Dove Cafe is a safe space to build the personal confidence, language, barista and customer care skills needed to enable people who have never worked in the UK

Our popular annual **Christmas Market** at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery supported by over 800 people from the local community in 2023, who show up to support our work. Project participants take up free stalls to sell carefully crafted handmade cultural artefacts or cakes which are bought by the public in support of the project and the project participants. Our Christmas market has become an annual Christmas fixture.

The Buddy Scheme

The Refugee Buddy Project (TRBP) takes a rigorous approach to supporting people seeking sanctuary and refuge in the UK, which utilises the engagement of local people through our buddy volunteers programme with, more recently, participants through the Homes for Ukraine scheme..

This concept recognizes the value of developing networks of support, where friendship with a buddy is a gateway to integrating a participant in the wider community and in cultural life whilst encouraging empathy, friendship and support from local people.

Our activities facilitate the sharing of skills and experience which is motivational for exploring employment opportunities not previously considered.

Our evaluations have revealed that many older participants experience higher degrees of isolation as a result of language and mobility obstacles, as well as the reality that many are unable to find work owing to ability and age. Some may live in more remote and isolated areas, and while a buddy can be the first point of contact for a participant, the connection is also critical for expanding networks of support and activities in order to be more independent and have access to additional options.

Activities of TRBP include one to one informal English language practice with a buddy out in the community, for example, in a local cafe. These Informal sessions can cover topics such as how to pay utility bills, the UK Council Tax system or booking appointments but in essence they are one to one English language support in a less formal setting allowing for the guest to feel motivated and encouraged to practise their language skills.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024
(continued)

A peer support community network has been established through our buddy support network. Buddies support each other sharing good practice, concerns and tips for informal English conversation, places to go, activities and ideas of things to do. The Buddy Peer support network has become a unique form of support that can significantly contribute to buddy's well-being and resilience. Buddy's often question if what they are doing has any impact on the person they are matched with and in this set up they are given the support needed to understand that their volunteering is having a huge impact on how their buddy is experiencing rebuilding their new life in the UK.

Where the buddy is engaged in other community organizations, this network acts as an events information sharing pool. For example a local organization invited people to take part in a for workshops for refugees. The take up had been very low and it was shared in our peer support network which resulted in buddies taking their refugee buddies to the workshops the week after.

The power of buddying may be transformative for both the guest and the Buddy; it is the establishment of genuine friendship and relationship, in which each person feels and responds to the other's humanity, with TRBP providing support through whatever methods are available.

Outcomes may be far-reaching and unexpected.. One our Buddys comments:
"Imagine finding yourself friendless, just you and your child in a strange city in a strange country where you don't speak the language and where you have no idea how to communicate with your child's teacher or your landlord or even where to buy the basics you need to survive. Now imagine what it would be like to have someone local who is a friendly face in a sea of strangers and who is prepared to give up a small amount of time to help you practise basic conversation and to navigate those challenges that seem simple when you know how the systems work. Being that Buddy is an absolute honour, knowing that you can help those who have experienced unimaginable trauma and gradually watch them, and their child develop in confidence and independence is an experience that cannot be underestimated; it is as enriching for you as it is for those you are in the position to support. Being a Buddy has definitely changed my life for the better."

Refugee Week – Creative collaborations

Another key and vibrant aspect of TRBP's work includes events for participants and Buddies, which are an important and colourful feature. We believe that the arts play an important role in bringing people together, building community, and allowing for expression that transcends language and cultural barriers. The charity now pioneers peer-led collaborative programmes which foster a culture of welcome, uniting people through food, culture and storytelling. Believing in the transformative power of art, the charity now delivers major arts and cultural programmes during Refugee Week.

Our strategy is one of facilitating the coming together of diverse communities in Hastings to support each other, particularly in this current climate of hostility. We have reached out to Hastings rich artistic/creative heritage, and work to enable friendships and build solidarity through creativity.

Our annual programme **Stitch for Change** and the **Creative Call to Action** during Refugee Week's national celebrations, invites guests and Buddies to come together in order, literally, to weave, embroider and narrate their stories. This year's collaboration with the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-On-Sea sees participants creating garments that will be modelled on the catwalk at an event in Refugee Week.

In fortnightly sessions, older Ukrainian guests, whose English language skills are generally limited, can communicate through their sewing as well as sharing with others their skills and technique.

Our **Stitch for Change** project, now in its 4th year is a facilitated patchwork, sewing and embroidery story telling workshops hosted by cultural institutions working collaboratively with the Buddy Project. Project participant's and volunteer buddies are invited to immerse themselves in sewing, embroidery and textiles and are supported into the art of storytelling by creating their own patchwork story. This project is about providing a safe space for people to tell their own stories, using their own narratives and having control of how these stories are told and presented.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024
(continued)

The workshops are coordinated and facilitated by experienced freelance facilitators, managed by the Refugee Buddy Project and are open to buddies and project participants. Patchwork stories created during the workshops are exhibited and or performed during Refugee Week.

In 2024 our collaboration with Hastings Museum & Art Gallery was nominated and won a National Museums Association award for our project *Flavors Without Borders, Illuminating Invisible Histories*.

At the heart of this project was the sharing of food and facilitated conversation about personal objects, an intergenerational and multinational community share untold stories of seeking refuge and making new lives in Hasting. Some of these stories were captured on a short film for viewing during Refugee Week, which took place from 17 – 23 June 2024. In parallel to the film screening, the guests' were photographed with their objects which in turn were displayed at the museum. This project, a series of suppers, worked towards improving the legacy and visibility of refugee and migrant communities in the museum. 20 people took part in this project and it highlighted that this was clearly only the beginning of a much larger project.

Refugee Week UK

Taking part in the national Refugee Week UK allows us to build on creative relationships in the local community and promote a culture of welcome. Our program of activities involves commissioning local artists and allow us to offer some paid CPD in the form of an Assistant Project Management role from a migrant or refugee background.

Refugee Week takes place at the end of June and the theme is different every year. Our program in Hastings is part of a national series of events in which we invite local artists and partners to celebrate with us by organizing a local creative action, here in Hastings which draw attention to the lives of people seeking refuge.

Refugee Week Hastings, Rother and Wealden provide more opportunities for migrant and refugee artists, local businesses and local individuals to get involved in our work.

Local engagement

At the end of August 2024, the project had registered and supported 353 participants. 157 of these referred to specialist services as described below. Project participants are also matched with a buddy and or referred to a specialist service or provided with Case work Support by The Refugee Buddy Project. This enables us to follow up on the outcome of referrals and offer additional support if needed.

In addition to the above, at the end of August 2024, a total of 214 local volunteers had been recruited, cleared and inducted by the project. 196 of these were matched with a migrant or person seeking refuge.

Current referral/signposting routes:-

Eggtooth Mental - Health support - Health in Mind – mental health support - HARC - benefits advice - Brighton Housing Trust – Specialist immigration - Food bank services - Trussel Trust - Seaview – Destitution support - Rother Voluntary Action – Wealden Voluntary Action - Specialist refugee support volunteer led organizations in Eastbourne and Lewis.

Refugee Week 2023/2024 – Social Gatherings – Pop Up suppers

Our Refugee Week programmes of Creative Actions have been designed for the widest possible intergenerational audience, to build solidarity and shared understanding. We have prioritised creative involvement by people with lived experience of migration and those seeking refuge. We offered paid opportunities for many emerging local artists who express a desire to work with our stakeholders or support The Refugee Buddy Project (TRBP), that otherwise we don't have capacity or budget to facilitate.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024
(continued)

The last two Refugee Week Celebrations have brought together 110 local and international artists, 49 of these were from migrant and refugee backgrounds. A total of 63 events including Community Picnics, The Pub Quiz, World Refugee Day Showcase and several exhibitions in collaborations with the De La Warr Pavillion, Hastings Museum & Art Gallery, Electro studios reaching over 6000 visitors. The programme has included emerging and established artists, including well-known local names such as Quentin Blake, Sue Tilley and Euan Roberts, up and coming artists Jamie Sinclair, Sophie Malpas and Abraham Osorio and a host of young artists show-casing their work for the first time.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of period

The accounts reflect a period with a high level of activity using both grant funding and its own resources to support its beneficiaries. During the period several grant funded programs came to an end and this is reflected in the reduction in the charity's funds at the end of the period.

The Charity has been successful in a number of grant applications prior to the end of the period including some which are to fund ongoing work over a number of years.

In addition the Charity has been successful in increasing its level of donations from the public to support its activities outside of those that are grant funded.

At the end of the year the Charity had sufficient funds and resources to enable it to complete both the various activities it has received grants for and to enable it to set up the staffing and other resources for the grant funding it had been awarded at the end of the period.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have reviewed the reserves of the charity. Their policy is to hold enough funds to meet three months' operating costs .

Principal funding sources/plans for the future

The Charity has received new funding from Reaching Communities National Lottery until July 2027, which has been expanded to now fund four part-time roles – 2 support workers posts, 1 Head of Programs 1 head of Operations and HR, 1 freelance Finance Manager and CEO as well as covering 3 year's rent for a social space.

We have successfully applied to the Justice Together Fund in partnership with Migrants Organise and POMOC for continuation funding for our part-time Caseworker who will train to become OISC qualified in immigration casework. This funding now runs April 2022 – April 2026.

We received further funding to deliver support for people arriving on the Homes for Ukraine scheme from ESCC delivering from July 2023 – July 2024 with continuation funding till 2026.

The core buddying and volunteering work is funded through two small charitable trusts.

The Charity continues to receive donations from the general public which are used to fund the work we do with people on No Recourse to Public Funds.

Investment policy and objectives

The charity has no long-term investments. Our cash reserves are held current bank accounts.

Conflicts of interest

Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the other trustees and, in accordance with the Trust's policy, withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024
(continued)

Trustees remuneration.

The Trustees bring a wealth of experience of refugee and migrant rights, charitable and community projects, financial and project oversight and strategy and more. They generously volunteer their time to oversee the Charity and no Trustee receives remuneration for their role as Trustee. Details of transactions in the year between the Trustees and the Charity are set out in Note 4 to these accounts

Reference and administrative information

The names of the Trustees throughout the period and at the date of this report were as follows:-

Zainab Alsafi (appointed 9th December 2024)
Rodrigo Correa
Jane Hartley (appointed 10th April 2024)
Martin Kempton (resigned 22nd August 2024)
Barbara Malaihollo
Geraldine Miric
Yaser Mohammed
Irene Zarza Rubio (resigned 28th January 2024)

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above

Y. MOHAMMAD
Trustee and Chair

P. J. HARTLEY
Trustee

29th April 2025

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30th JUNE 2024

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Project") for the fifteen months ended 30th June 2024, which are set out on pages 10 to 16

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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 Project's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act

Independent Examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

T. E. REYNOLDS FCA

23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

29th April 2025

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Voluntary income	2(a)	63,006	(100)	62,905	37,975
Activities for generating funds	2(b)	47,324	1,761	49,085	12,614
Grants received	2(c)	37,985	302,098	340,083	361,354
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		<u>148,315</u>	<u>303,759</u>	<u>452,074</u>	<u>411,943</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of generating funds	3(a)	13,665	9,737	23,402	26,383
Charitable activities	3(b)	160,144	373,981	534,125	305,581
Governance costs	3(c)	(1,775)	-	(1,775)	1,275
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		<u>172,034</u>	<u>383,717</u>	<u>555,752</u>	<u>333,239</u>
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES		(23,719)	(79,959)	(103,678)	78,704
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS	10	35,308	(35,308)		-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>11,589</u>	<u>(115,266)</u>	<u>(103,678)</u>	<u>78,704</u>
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	10	25,279	149,219	174,498	95,794
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	10	<u>£36,868</u>	<u>£33,953</u>	<u>£70,821</u>	<u>£174,498</u>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 14 to 16 form part of these accounts

**THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2023**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible	7	7,481	7,348
		<u>7,481</u>	<u>7,348</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	8	29,245	2,017
Short term deposits			-
Cash at bank and in hand		41,780	182,665
		<u>71,026</u>	<u>184,682</u>
CREDITORS - amounts falling due within one year	9	(7,686)	(17,532)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>63,339</u>	<u>167,150</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>£70,820</u>	<u>£174,498</u>
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
Unrestricted	10	36,867	25,279
Restricted	10	33,953	149,219
		<u>£70,820</u>	<u>£174,498</u>

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:-

Y. MOHAMMAD
Trustee and Chair

29th April 2025

P. J. HARTLEY
Trustee

The notes on pages 12 to 16 form part of these accounts

1 Accounting policies

1 (a) Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

These financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with FRS102(2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2019 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102)).

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

1 (b) Funds structure

Unrestricted income funds comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects. Unrestricted funds include designated funds where the trustees, at their discretion, have set aside resources for a specific purpose

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with the specific restrictions and terms imposed by the grant awarding organisation or by donors. Details of the funds are provided in Note 10 to the accounts.

1 (c) Incoming resources

Recognition

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:-

- the Charity becomes legally entitled to the benefit or use of the resources;
- and inflow of economic benefit is probable; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Grants

Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant

Grants where there are performance or service deliverables required by the terms of the grant, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to payment through its performance.

Events and trading activities

Funds raised from events and trading activities are reported gross - i.e. before any related costs have been deducted from the proceeds.

Gift Aid Tax claims

These and other tax claims are included in the accounts at the same time as the cash donations to which they relate.

Volunteer help

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services donated by volunteers has not been included in these accounts, except where the services provided are in the nature of professional services where a fee would otherwise be charged, in which case the donated service is valued at their chargeable rate

Investment income

Investment income is included when receivable.

Charitable trading activity

Incoming resources from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.

1 (d) Resources expended

Liability recognition.

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category

Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it was incurred

Costs of generating funds

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, or incurred in trading activities undertaken to raise funds.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both direct pay and non-pay costs and support costs relating to those activities.

Governance costs

These include the costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings and cost of any legal advice to the trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

1 (e) Tangible fixed assets for use by the Charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:-

- Furniture, fixtures and fittings 10 years
- Computing and office equipment 5 years

1 (f) Pensions

Employees of the Charity are entitled to join a defined contribution "money purchase" scheme. The Charity's contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in Note 6.

2 INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
2 (a) Voluntary income				
- donations	£ 63,006	-£ 100	£ 62,906	£ 37,975
2 (b) Activities for generating funds				
- events	-	-	-	-
- The Dove Café income	47,324	1,761	49,085	12,614
	<u>47,324</u>	<u>1,761</u>	<u>49,085</u>	<u>£ 12,614</u>
2 (c) Incoming resources from charitable activities				
- grants receivable	£ 37,985	£ 302,098	£ 340,083	£ 361,354

Grant income is treated as "Restricted" as it has been given to fund specific items of expenditure. If there is an underspend on a grant then any surplus will be, with the agreement of the granting body, transferred to Unrestricted Funds.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

3 EXPENDITURE

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
3 (a) Costs of generating funds				
The Dove Café - costs	13,230	9,662	22,892	24,865
Other fund raising costs	435	75	510	1,518
Total costs of generating funds	<u>£ 13,665</u>	<u>£ 9,737</u>	<u>£ 23,402</u>	<u>£ 26,383</u>
3 (b) Charitable activities				
General administration				
- Insurances	264	1,201	1,465	642
- Office rent	-	36,604	36,604	25,984
- Professional fees	2,016	2,474	4,490	3,173
- Phone and internet costs	710	1,727	2,437	1,016
- Equipment costs	2,858	1,271	4,128	4,226
- Stationery and office costs	241	1,623	1,865	2,766
- Depreciation	1,232	-	1,232	776
	<u>7,321</u>	<u>44,900</u>	<u>52,221</u>	<u>38,583</u>
Project and activity costs				
- activities	15,783	47,089	62,871	33,776
- advertising and promotion	612	14,077	14,689	4,127
- event costs	547	26,251	26,798	9,311
- family expenses	33,526	27,546	61,072	26,978
- licences	155	3,679	3,834	3,789
	<u>50,623</u>	<u>118,641</u>	<u>169,264</u>	<u>77,982</u>
Staff and volunteer costs				
- staff salaries including pension and NIC	61,080	162,709	223,789	160,644
- staff expenses	(80)	5,650	5,570	7,419
- sub-contractors	581	28	609	14,680
- staff training	38,993	39,420	78,412	2,808
- volunteer costs and expenses	1,626	2,633	4,259	3,465
	<u>102,200</u>	<u>210,439</u>	<u>312,640</u>	<u>189,016</u>
Total cost of charitable activities	<u>£ 160,144</u>	<u>£ 373,981</u>	<u>£ 534,125</u>	<u>£ 305,581</u>
3 (c) Governance costs				
- Independent examiners fees	<u>£(1,775)</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£(1,775)</u>	<u>£ 1,275</u>

4 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS AND TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

No payments have been made to the Trustees for their roles as Trustees of the Charity during the period.

5 CORPORATION TAX

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

6 STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	202,432	149,470
Social security costs	16,715	7,931
Pension costs	4,643	3,243
	<u>£223,789</u>	<u>£160,644</u>

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was 5 (2023 - 5)

7 FIXED ASSETS

	Furniture & Fittings	Office Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
As at 1 April 2023	6,656	1,467	8,123
Additions in year	0	1,365	1,365
As at 30 June 2024	<u>6,656</u>	<u>2,832</u>	<u>9,488</u>
Depreciation			
As at 1 April 2023	(482)	(293)	(775)
Charge for the year	(666)	(566)	(1,232)
As at 30 June 2024	<u>(1,148)</u>	<u>(860)</u>	<u>(2,007)</u>
Net book value at 31 March 2022	<u>£ 6,174</u>	<u>£ 1,174</u>	<u>£ 7,348</u>
Net book value at 31 March 2023	<u>£ 5,509</u>	<u>£ 1,972</u>	<u>£ 7,481</u>

8 DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Grants receivable	25,015	1,761
Sundry debtors	4,230	256
	<u>£29,245</u>	<u>£2,017</u>

9 CREDITORS - amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted Funds		
Sundry creditors	1,547	4,609
	<u>1,547</u>	<u>4,609</u>
Restricted Funds		
Sundry creditors	6,139	12,923
	<u>£7,686</u>	<u>£17,532</u>

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FIFTEEN MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

10 SUMMARY OF FUND MOVEMENTS

	Balance at 01-Apr-22 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers In/(out) £	Balance at 31-Mar-23 £
Restricted funds					
Arts Council - Refugee Week 2023	22,853	29,660	(76,436)	23,923	-
East Sussex County Council	50,404	124,970	(158,987)	(16,387)	-
Sussex Community Council	8,817	-	(5,922)	(2,896)	-
National Lottery	42,771	90,379	(120,789)	(5,408)	6,953
Justice Together Partnership Vulnerable Persons	0	58,750	(21,584)	(10,166)	27,000
Resettlement Program	2,398	-	-	(2,398)	-
Sundry grant funded projects	21,976	0	(0)	(21,976)	-
	<u>149,219</u>	<u>303,760</u>	<u>(383,718)</u>	<u>(35,308)</u>	<u>33,953</u>
Unrestricted funds	25,279	148,315	(172,034)	35,308	36,867
	<u>£174,498</u>	<u>£452,075</u>	<u>£(555,752)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£70,820</u>

11 OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Total future minimum payments under non-cancellable operating leases		
Leasehold property - leases expiring within 2 - 5 years	<u>£17,500</u>	<u>£18,921</u>

12 SUMMARY OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	<u>7,481</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,481</u>	<u>7,348</u>
Current assets	30,933	40,092	71,026	184,682
Liabilities				
Amounts falling due in one year	(1,547)	(6,139)	(7,686)	(17,532)
Amounts falling due after one year			-	
	<u>29,386</u>	<u>33,953</u>	<u>63,339</u>	<u>167,150</u>
	<u>£36,867</u>	<u>£33,953</u>	<u>£70,820</u>	<u>£174,498</u>

13 MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CHARITY AS A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

The Trustees confirm that:-

- the charity has not given any financial guarantees to another organisation
- there are no debts outstanding at the year-end that represent a charge on the assets of the charity.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

England & Wales - Charity number 1191436

Accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

(Registered Charity - Registration Number:- 1191436)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

Reference and Administrative Information

Trustees

R. Correa
M. Kempton
B. Malaihollo
G. Miric
Y. Mohammad
I. S. Rubio

Charity Correspondent and Principal Address

Alex Kempton
The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden
Creative Media Centre
45 Robertson Street
HASTINGS
East Sussex TN34 1HL

Bankers

NatWest Bank plc

Independent Examiner

T. E. Reynolds FCA
23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

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THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

The Trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the year to 31st March 2023

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden is constituted as a charitable incorporated organization whose only voting members are its Charity Trustees registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales in September 2020 under charity number 1191436. It is governed by a constitution last updated in September 2020.

Organisational structure

The Charity Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity.

The Trustees meet together as a body on a regular basis. Additionally the Trustees, in their various roles, are involved in the day to day activities of the Charity.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing Trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. Potential trustees are identified from the volunteers and other individuals involved with the Charity. They are invited to attend Trustees' meetings as observers and are given more details of the charity's aims and activities and, if all agree, they are then proposed as new trustees at a subsequent Trustees' meeting. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Induction and training of trustees

Following appointment, new trustees are introduced to their new role and given copies of the trust deed and a guide to the policies and procedures adopted by our charity. A number of publications from the Charity Commission are also provided including the guidance on charities and public benefit and on the relief of hardship, promotion of social inclusion, preservation and protection of mental health and promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit. This ensures that new trustees are aware of the scope of their responsibilities under the Charities Act. Initially, new trustees work with an existing Trustee assisting on particular activities and projects run by the charity.

Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the risks the Charity faces and have drawn up a risk matrix which identifies the major risks by area of activity, the nature of those risks, the likelihood of the risks happening and the measures taken to manage them. The Trustees review this risk matrix regularly at their meetings. The Trustees are satisfied that systems are in place, or arrangements are in hand, to manage the risks that have been identified. In particular, insurance cover is in place and the finances of the Charity are kept under review. Appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks, supported by regularly reviewed policies, are made for all staff and volunteers within the Charity.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims and objectives

The objectives of the Charity are set out in the Charity's trust deed and are summarised as follows:-

- To relieve financial hardship to those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary by providing advice and guidance to enable them to become economically self-supporting on an ongoing basis
- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among people who are refugees and asylum seekers and are socially excluded on the grounds of their social and economic position
- To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary and their dependents.
- The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by promoting activities to foster understanding and social cohesion between people from different backgrounds.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023 (continued)

Strategy and mission

The Refugee Buddy Project started in 2017, with the aim of creating a culture of welcome in Hastings and St Leonard's. In the last five years. We started as a community group welcoming people seeking refuge who had recently arrived in Hastings. Now, we are a refugee & migrant-led charity supporting families and individuals from refugee backgrounds with our buddy programme, advocacy, and financial & emotional support

Report on the activities for the year

We have continued to work to create a culture of welcome by recruiting, training and supporting volunteers to be buddies for people seeking refuge in the area. The buddies offer informal English conversation and support their partner to explore their new home and get involved in social activities. In the period covering this report we had 40 active local buddies matched with a person seeking refuge in the Hastings, Rother and Wealden areas, and a waiting list of volunteer buddies from the community, who are ready to be matched with someone seeking refuge.

We have built safe spaces for connection and community-building. The Dove Cafe is a warm, welcoming and communal space open to all that provides food and hot drinks on a pay-as-you-feel or free basis. At the cafe, we host a range of workshops and pop-up activities and showcase creative and artistic work exploring themes of refuge, migration, equity and justice. We also encourage participants to use the space to organise their own meetings, events and social activities, with the support of cafe staff.

We have created platforms for people to tell their own stories. For example, Stitch for Change (SFC) is a community sewing and patchwork storytelling project, inspired by the Chilean arpillera movement and through our extensive community engagement work throughout the year for Refugee Week in June. These projects allow people to share their personal stories of displacement and seeking refuge in a structured and supported environment and engage with the local community. Our project participants are encouraged to lead on developing their own activities, share their work with the community, through local exhibitions of the work produced. The project is currently engaged with participants from Ukraine, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Hong Kong, Iraq and Honduras. The end of project shows have been attended by hundreds of people.

In 2022-2023 we engaged with 380 adult participants and 7 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children across Hastings Rother and Wealden from a variety of communities including the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Programme, and the Asylum Dispersal Area in Hastings.

We engaged with 144 active volunteers – these volunteers continued to be active from 2020-2021 or who registered, went through our clearing and induction process and then went on to be matched with a family and regularly buddied them, or volunteered at our social events and activities.

The total number of engagements across volunteers and participants is therefore 524, a number which is a significant achievement for our organisation especially as this number does not include people who have only come to events or are customers in the Community Café.

We continue to be a refugee and migrant led organisation; our activities are participant led with our Project staff playing a support and facilitation role. We continue to develop successful partnerships with EggTooth, the De La Warr Pavilion, Hastings Museum and Art Gallery and are working for a second year with East Sussex County Council to deliver our programme for those people newly arrived on the Homes for Ukraine scheme as well as developing training for ESCC on the refugee experience and how it can inform practise across the corporation. We also continue to engage with other local service providers such as Seaview, Health in Mind and a variety of NHS providers who refer into our services, as well as national networks. We continue to develop our expertise in case work as part of the national Justice Together Program with a view to achieving a qualified OISC level 1 status.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023 (continued)

Community cohesion & Engagement

In November 2022 we launched The Dove Café. Having worked hard for several months to get the Community Café up and running, we were able to have an event which welcomed people from across the Community including local Councillors to celebrate the formal launch of this community space. Free Community Screening of Limbo Film May 2023 Stade Hall

Limbo is a 2020 British comedy-drama film, directed by Ben Sharrock. The film centres on four asylum seekers who are staying on a remote island in Scotland, and taking cultural awareness classes, while awaiting the processing of their refugee claims.

The film was followed with community buffet of traditional Syrian food, and an opportunity to socialise and discuss the film. People were asked to register online to reserve their ticket. It was a sold-out event with 40 people attending.

Community Fundraising events

In 2022 several of these were held to raise funds of our work in Hastings Rother and Wealden. Community donations received in 2021-2022 reached over £50,000.

“A Journey Home” was an evening of music & spoken word to raise funds for The Refugee Buddy Project.

The evening drew on the different cultural and musical influences, all related to a journey somewhere and finding a home to settle in. We All find refuge in our homes, should we be lucky to have one. Two, local, professional opera singers Chiara Vinci & Anthony Flaum & pianist Elizabeth Rowe took us on a musical journey from opera to music hall to jazz, interspersed with real-life images and stories from The Refugee Buddy Projects work.

Paris Grande Drag Bingo at The Nest

Organised by Paris Grande, this was an evening of bingo and drag performances which funds for The Refugee Buddy Project

Christmas Market 2022

Our Christmas Fair which was held again at Hastings Museum and Gallery in December 2022. There were 469 visitors at this event and increase of 167 from the previous year showing significant growth. There were 20 volunteers – six project participant and 14 volunteers – who helped throughout the day in various activities such as setting up, organising the stall holders and people management. There were also four project participants supported to sell goods on the day as stall holders. This engagement is again an increase on 2022 showing impressive growth year on year of our delivery.

We ran a variety of smaller events throughout the year including a repeat of the women's only Eid party we ran in Year 1 – run again as the women enjoyed it so much the previous year. This was again a big success with the women in our community who were able to come together in a private space and share food and dance together.

Over 40 local businesses and artists donated to our Christmas Raffle which this year made over £1000.

We had pop ups at the community café and have been able to engage with a number of participants who start off volunteering in the café, move on to become guest chef for the café, developing their employability skills and career options.

In total we have run five social events this year as well as our Refugee Week programme and have had four pop ups three by participants and one by a volunteer with refugee background, and have worked with four guest chefs in our participant pool.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023 (continued)

Thanks to the cost of living uplift we have been able to take on an additional member of staff in the café 18 hours a week to support our Community Café Development Manager who has been working hard to provide extra services to the community in this time of particular hardship.

In addition to the above thanks to an additional grant we have been able to secure our additional office space for longer, ensuring that we have a confidential office space in which to see and support our participants. This has been invaluable this year especially as a Home Office hotel was opened in Hastings in November 2022 and we were able to professionally and efficiently support the residents of this hotel with not only clothing and other necessities but also with applying for their financial support from the Home Office, which we would not have been able to do in such a professional manner were it not for this additional space.

We saw and supported 105 people who were placed in the hotel, completed individual needs assessments with each of them to ensure that their individual needs were met in a person centred and wholistic manner.

The Dove Community Café also provided a regular space for these residents to come and eat nutritious meals in a warm and friendly space.

Matching – Buddying

At the heart of what we do is the ongoing recruitment and training of local volunteers and matching with newly arriving people seeking refuge in Hastings, Rother and Wealden.

Volunteers are expected to meet with their refugee buddy a minimum of once a week and practice informal English conversation.

Number of matchings: 40

Number of informal English conversations taking place: 2000 hours

Once engaged through Matching participants have access to ongoing English language conversation through their 121 meetings with their buddy as well as through participating as volunteers or just attending the various community gatherings/events organised by the Refugee Buddy Project. Many of our project participants have also benefited from our partnership collaboration Together South with Groundwork South which offered employment preparation support and ESOL. We referred 44 people to this programme in 2022-2023

Case studies showing impact in:

1. Access to employment preparation opportunities: Adeel, Fatima, Emani
2. Improved confidence and ability in English language: Adeel, Haneen, Ulyana, Mila
3. General increased well being and self-confidence: Adeel, Haneen, Mila
4. Access to social activities and community: Fatima, Emani, Haneen, Ulyana, Mila

1. **Adeel** is a young Syrian photographer, who has been in the UK for the last three years. He joined the Refugee Buddy Project as he wanted to improve his English and develop his photography. Since joining the project and being matched with a buddy, his English skills and confidence have grown dramatically. He has gained the motivation and self-belief to pursue his photography and with the Support of a mentor has put on an exhibition of his work at a local cafe and at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery.
2. **Fatima** is originally from Sudan and lived in Lebanon for 16 years. She has been in the UK for three years with her husband and children. Since arriving, she has regularly attended The Refugee Buddy Project's social and cultural activities and begun cooking for events. With the support of the project, she has received 121 support in learning to read and write in English, regularly caters at events including Stitch for Change, and has hosted her own Sudanese lunch pop-up at a local cafe. The success of this led to a job offer from the cafe.
3. **Emani** is originally from Syria and lived in Egypt for seven years before coming to the UK two years ago. She joined The Refugee Buddy Project to improve her English and learn about self-employment in the UK. She has also taken Employment Preparation sessions, where she's learnt how to write a CV, how to look and apply for jobs and where to find official government guidance on self-employment. Through these sessions, Emani grew her confidence and gained the motivation to take the first steps towards starting her own catering business. Emani was also

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023 (continued)

involved in the Dove Cafe and with their support, completed several online training courses in food hygiene and allergens training, before planning a catering event in a local community kitchen. Her Syrian pop-up dinner served 40 customers.

4. **Haneen** was born in Syria and has lived in the UK since 2013. She joined the Refugee Buddy Project to improve her English and attended both one to one and group sessions. She has been matched with two buddies that she practices informal English with. Since joining the project, Haneen's English has improved and she has gained confidence in herself and her language ability. She has also been volunteering at social events and encouraged others to learn English and engage in local opportunities. Most recently, she has begun volunteering at our The Dove Community Cafe, where she is continuing to improve her English.
5. **Ulyana** is from Ukraine and came to the UK as part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. She joined The Refugee Buddy Project to improve her English, while she was waiting to be able to enrol at college. She didn't speak English when she first came to the UK, but after meeting with her buddy weekly, she is now able to form simple sentences. She is very self-motivated and the introduction to English language has given her the confidence to supplement her own learning using online websites and apps. She has enjoyed getting to know her neighbourhood and has explored Hastings Old Town with her buddy.
6. **Mila** is a young woman from Ukraine, who was referred to us by another organisation. She was living in emergency accommodation after a hosting arrangement fell through. She felt very isolated there and didn't have any means of cooking, or even access to a kettle. She was also keen to improve her English and find work as soon as possible. With support from the project, she was referred for some online ESOL and employability classes with Together South. We also provided an emergency food package and toiletries, along with a kettle and cooking facilities. We were able to match Mila with one of our volunteers who lived locally who was a similar age, to help with English practise and settling into the area. Mila has now been here for several months and is much more confident in her English and ability to find work.

Refugee Week 2022

This year, Refugee Week (June 20th - 26th) saw a unique series of creative actions and events taking place in multiple locations across Hastings & St Leonards and beyond, which highlight and value the migrant experience, promoting the Refugee Week 2022 theme *healing through creativity and conversations*.

Over 18 organisations, 15 artists and dozens of local volunteers generously created and supported activities and events in locations across the town. All of these actions were coordinated by the Refugee Buddy Project.

Many events were free, though some did require reservations, with any profits from sales going to The Refugee Buddy Project. Activities included a pub quiz at The St Leonard, artists' talks and exhibitions at Stella Dore and The Big Yin galleries, films at Kino Teatr, creative drawing, photography, reading and clay work with Picnic, Black Butterfly, Afri-Co-Lab, St Leonards Ceramics and Suzie Zamit, and work from children at Ore Village Primary Academy was displayed at Project 78 galleries. There was also a film showing of Ukrainian film *The Earth Is Blue as an Orange* (with English subtitles) at The Electric Palace Cinema to celebrate the new Ukrainian arrivals in our town.

The Refugee Buddy Project organised five main events and encouraged other local organisations to highlight the plight of people seeking refuge through their social media channels as well as in organising events or taking part in the activities we delivered.

Mr Gay Syria Free Film Screening and Panel Discussion

To Celebrate Refugee Week and June PRIDE Month, which falls in June we worked with Hastings Museum & Art Gallery to offer an evening at the cinema with some marvellous traditional Syrian food. We screened Mr. Gay Syria a documentary which follows two gay Syrian refugees who are trying to rebuild their lives.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023 (continued)

The screening was followed by a panel discussion hosted by Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants, and included Laura Clarke, co-Founder and Director of EggTooth as well as one of our project participants who has direct experience of the themes of film.

Stitch for Change ran fortnightly workshops on Friday afternoons starting in February and we each created a patchwork square featuring an object or image which tells part of our individual story. The resulting patchwork squares from this exhibition, displayed in the museum over the summer.

'Where are you really from?', Stitch For Change Patchwork Story Telling Exhibition at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery.

The exhibition explored our roots, stories and sense of identity. This project invited members of the community to come together to share and sew. People were asked to bring an image or object to use in their sewing and final piece to represent a memory or experience of their past.

This project was a collaboration between Hastings Museum and Art Gallery and The Refugee Buddy Project, supported by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund.

The work was on display for Refugee Week 2022 and the Sanctuary Festival, which takes place in the museum grounds on Sunday 26 June.

Faith, Family, Community and Home - an exhibition at The Nest.
Photos capturing life in his new home by young Syrian photographer Nour Alezou.

This exhibition presented the work of Nour Alezou and was the result of a mentoring programme run by The Refugee Buddy Project. This mentoring programme saw Shannon Ghannam of Magnum Photos working with Nour over the course of several months to explore themes around faith, family, community and home.

All Refugees Welcome - a look at dominant media narratives and the creation of public attitudes towards refugees and migrants.

Held in the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill on Sea, this panel discussion sought to ask questions about the role images have played in our understanding of migration and asylum seeking in the UK, the dominant narratives that prevail and the counter narratives that emerge. Most importantly we will discussed the impact these narratives have on individuals, families and communities settling in the United Kingdom.

This panel discussion was for anyone interested in this subject but particularly will look at visual strategies for those working in refugee support services or the media reporting on these issues. Speaking at this panel were: Jess Crombie, Amak Mahmoodian, Daniel Trilling, Maz Saleem, Shannon Ghannam and Rossana Leal.

Community Bike Ride and Picnic

This was sea-front bike ride from the Labyrinth Bike Project at Goat Ledge to our new Dove Cafe, where we enjoyed a free community feast cooked by Palestinian-Syrian chef Momo

People were asked to bring their own bikes or borrow one for the ride from the Labyrinth Project.

Justice Together Partnership

This partnership funds 1x part time Case Worker role offering case work support of the local refugee and migrant community. This person is working towards achieve level 1 OISC qualification which would qualify them to give Level 1 immigration advice. Our aim is to get most of our staff qualified to this level so we can provide this advice locally. There are currently 2 qualified OISC level 4 persons in the Hastings Rother and Wealden areas.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023 (continued)

In this period the Caseworker took on 72 cases with the following breakdown:

- 21 immigration
- 22 housing
- 6 welfare benefits assistance
- 3 education
- 8 health-related
- 11 other including 1 divorce and applying for driving licenses and Blue Badges.

Chatsworth Hotel

In November 2022 we were alerted the arrival of 81 asylum seeking men being accommodated at a local hotel on Hastings seafront. We immediately visited the hotel with our team and community language interpreters.

We registered many of them and conducted initial needs assessments. We established all of the men were in need of legal representation, at least 3 men need urgent medical appointments, including one with concerning mental health issues. Many did not have mobile phones and reported these had been taken from them upon arrival in the UK by authorities. We were able to give the men mobile phones, access to legal support, support with filling in the S95 forms so they can access the financial support to which they are entitled, GP and dentist appointments, appointments at opticians and buying of glasses, access to interpreters.

Our individual needs assessments also established all the men needed warm clothes, including shoes as many of them were still wearing flip flops, they needed personal hygiene supplies and telephones. None appeared to be in receipt of financial support from the Home Office - despite being to entitled to this in hotels prior to dispersal - which meant they have absolutely no money.

We also established that there were some young people there who ages had been assessed by the Home Office as in their 20s, but they told us that that they are under 18. We referred these young people to East Sussex County Council and they were removed from the hotel having undergone age assessments.

We invited the men to our café where they could eat for free and have a warm place to socialise.

We took part in the Emergency Hotels meetings coordinated by East Sussex Migration Partnership attended by all the heads of services and were able to update and coordinate our support.

We have since coordinated huge local community support for these men including offers of free hot drinks in local cafes near the hotel, free kitchen space so the men can cook for themselves ingredients funded by our project funds and a collection of perishables and snacks. Many of the men have volunteered in the Dove Café and at our events.

GCSE School

In September of 2022 we started GCSE school in our new offices. Run by volunteers on a Wednesday afternoon GCSE school is student led and a support session for children doing their GCSE. Nine students attended regularly and were supported in English writing, sciences and maths. GCSE school was started as a direct result of our Listening and Speaking Report carried out last year.

Summary

Our many social activities, meetings and The Dove Café continue to be supported by the local community. We continue to have a waiting list of local volunteers who want to be buddies to newly arriving people seeking refuge. We brought in over £50,000 in community donations in this period.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023 (continued)

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of period

The accounts reflect the significant increase in the activity of the Project in the year with the total income increasing to £411,944 from £175,977 and the total expenditure increasing to £333,239 from £107,080.

The Charity has been successful in a number of grant applications in the year and this success has enabled it to significantly increase its level of activities as set out more fully in the Review of Activities and Achievements in this section of the report.

In addition the Charity has been successful in increasing its level of donations from the public to support its activities outside of those that are grant funded.

At the end of the year the Charity had sufficient funds and resources to enable it to complete the various activities it has received grants for.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have reviewed the reserves of the charity. Their policy is to hold enough funds to meet three months' operating costs .

Principal funding sources/plans for the future

The Charity continues to be funded from Reaching Communities National Lottery until July 2024, which has been expanded to now fund four part-time roles – 2 Developmental posts, a Café Manager and a Café Assistant Manager, as well as covering 1 year's rent for a social space.

The Together Project, an EU AMIF funded project delivered in collaboration with Groundwork South was delivered in 21/22 to December 2022 and received a one-year extension from AMIF at a reduced rate for delivery until December 2023. This programme has now come to an end.

We have successfully applied to the Justice Together Fund in partnership with Migrants Organise and POMOC for continuation funding for our part-time Caseworker who will train to become OISC qualified in immigration casework. This funding now runs April 2022 – April 2026.

We received further funding to deliver support for people arriving on the Homes for Ukraine scheme from ESCC delivering from July 2023 – July 2024.

The core buddying and volunteering work is funded through two small charitable trusts.

The Charity continues to receive donations from the general public which are used to fund the work we do with people on No Recourse to Public Funds.

Investment policy and objectives

The charity has no long-term investments. Our cash reserves are held current bank accounts.

Conflicts of interest

Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the other trustees and, in accordance with the Trust's policy, withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises

Trustees remuneration.

The Trustees bring a wealth of experience of refugee and migrant rights, charitable and community projects, financial and project oversight and strategy and more. They generously volunteer their time to oversee the Charity and no Trustee receives remuneration for their role as Trustee. Details of transactions in the year between the Trustees and the Charity are set out in Note 4 to these accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023 (continued)

Reference and administrative information

In June 2022 both Rossana Leal and Alex Kempton stood down from the Board of Trustees. Rossana Leal as the founder of the project with the support of Alex Kempton both ran the project and were responsible for recruiting a board of Trustees. Once this was achieved it was felt the right time for both to step down in order to lead on the strategy and delivery of the project. Rossana Leal is now the CEO and Alex Kempton is the Director of Operations and Campaigns. We also have additional staff and our new organisational structure can be found below

The names of the Trustees throughout the period and at the date of this report were as follows:-

Dr Mursheda Chowdhury (resigned 1st June 2023)
Rodrigo Correa (appointed 8th September 2023)
Christine Harmer-Brown (resigned 1st June 2023)
Lisa Hickman (resigned 17th August 2023)
Alexandra Kempton (resigned 13th June 2022)
Martin Kempton
Rossana Leal (resigned 13th June 2022)
Barbara Malaihollo (appointed 8th September 2023)
Geraldine Miric (appointed 18 September 2023)
Yeser Mohammed
Chantal Refahi (resigned 8th September 2023)
Irene Zarza Rubio (appointed 8th September 2023)

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above

Y. M. MOHMMAD
Trustee and Chair

M. KEMPTON
Trustee

28th January 2024

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Project") for the year ended 31st March 2023, which are set out on pages 12 to 19

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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 Project's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act

Independent Examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

T. E. REYNOLDS FCA

23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

28th January 2024

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Voluntary income	2(a)	36,775	1,200	37,975	21,029
Activities for generating funds	2(b)	12,614	-	12,614	-
Grants received	2(c)	30,000	331,354	361,354	154,948
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		79,389	332,554	411,943	175,977
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of generating funds	3(a)	8,400	17,983	26,383	2,155
Charitable activities	3(b)	59,271	246,310	305,581	103,926
Governance costs	3(c)	1,275	-	1,275	1,500
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		68,946	264,293	333,239	107,581
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES		10,443	68,261	78,704	68,396
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS	10	2,941	(2,941)		-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		13,384	65,320	78,704	68,396
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	10	11,895	83,899	95,794	27,397
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	10	£25,279	£149,219	£174,498	£95,793

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 14 to 19 form part of these accounts

**THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible	7	7,348	4,449
		<u>7,348</u>	<u>4,449</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	8	2,017	1,073
Short term deposits			-
Cash at bank and in hand		182,665	92,193
		<u>184,682</u>	<u>93,266</u>
CREDITORS - amounts falling due within one year	9	(17,532)	(1,922)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>167,150</u>	<u>91,344</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>£174,498</u>	<u>£95,793</u>
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
Unrestricted	10	25,279	11,895
Restricted	10	149,219	83,898
		<u>£174,498</u>	<u>£95,793</u>

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:-

Y. M. MOHMMAD
Trustee and Chair

28th January 2024

M. KEMPTON
Trustee

The notes on pages 14 to 19 form part of these accounts

1 Accounting policies

1 (a) Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

These financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with FRS102(2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2019 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102)).

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

1 (b) Funds structure

Unrestricted income funds comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects. Unrestricted funds include designated funds where the trustees, at their discretion, have set aside resources for a specific purpose

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with the specific restrictions and terms imposed by the grant awarding organisation or by donors. Details of the funds are provided in Note 10 to the accounts.

1 (c) Incoming resources

Recognition

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:-

- the Charity becomes legally entitled to the benefit or use of the resources;
- and inflow of economic benefit is probable; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Grants

Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant

Grants where there are performance or service deliverables required by the terms of the grant, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to payment through its performance.

Events and trading activities

Funds raised from events and trading activities are reported gross - i.e. before any related costs have been deducted from the proceeds.

Gift Aid Tax claims

These and other tax claims are included in the accounts at the same time as the cash donations to which they relate.

Volunteer help

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services donated by volunteers has not been included in these accounts, except where the services provided are in the nature of professional services where a fee would otherwise be charged, in which case the donated service is valued at their chargeable rate

Investment income

Investment income is included when receivable.

Charitable trading activity

Incoming resources from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.

1 (d) Resources expended

Liability recognition.

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category

Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it was incurred

Costs of generating funds

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, or incurred in trading activities undertaken to raise funds.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both direct pay and non-pay costs and support costs relating to those activities.

Governance costs

These include the costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings and cost of any legal advice to the trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

1 (e) Tangible fixed assets for use by the Charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:-

- Furniture, fixtures and fittings 10 years
- Computing and office equipment 5 years

1 (f) Pensions

Employees of the Charity are entitled to join a defined contribution "money purchase" scheme. The Charity's contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in Note 6. There were no outstanding contributions at the year end

2 INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
2 (a) Voluntary income				
- donations	£ 36,775	£ 1,200	£ 37,975	£ 21,029
2 (b) Activities for generating funds				
- events	-	-	-	-
- The Dove Café income	12,614	-	12,614	-
	<u>12,614</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,614</u>	<u>£ -</u>
2 (c) Incoming resources from charitable activities				
- grants receivable	£ 30,000	£ 331,354	£ 361,354	£ 154,948

Grant income is treated as "Restricted" as it has been given to fund specific items of expenditure. If there is an underspend on a grant then any surplus will be, with the agreement of the granting body, transferred to Unrestricted Funds.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3 EXPENDITURE

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
3 (a) Costs of generating funds				
The Dove Café - costs	8,111	16,754	24,865	1,776
Other fund raising costs	289	1,229	1,518	379
Total costs of generating funds	<u>£ 8,400</u>	<u>£ 17,983</u>	<u>£ 26,383</u>	<u>£ 2,155</u>
3 (b) Charitable activities				
General administration				
- Insurances	642	-	642	836
- Office rent	4,491	21,493	25,984	7,662
- Professional fees	2,166	1,007	3,173	2,802
- Phone and internet costs	292	724	1,016	25
- Equipment costs	967	3,259	4,226	1,807
- Stationery and office costs	1,194	1,571	2,766	117
- Depreciation	775	-	776	-
	<u>10,528</u>	<u>28,055</u>	<u>38,583</u>	<u>13,249</u>
Project and activity costs				
- activities	18,406	15,371	33,776	1,339
- advertising and promotion	636	3,491	4,127	630
- event costs	399	8,912	9,311	6,598
- family expenses	18,169	8,809	26,978	8,667
- licences	149	3,639	3,789	2,228
	<u>37,759</u>	<u>40,222</u>	<u>77,981</u>	<u>19,462</u>
Staff and volunteer costs				
- staff salaries including pension and NIC	6,694	153,950	160,644	62,607
- staff expenses	491	6,928	7,419	297
- sub-contractors	3,675	11,005	14,680	6,743
- staff training	-	2,808	2,808	719
- volunteer costs and expenses	124	3,341	3,465	849
	<u>10,984</u>	<u>178,033</u>	<u>189,017</u>	<u>71,215</u>
Total cost of charitable activities	<u>£ 59,271</u>	<u>£ 246,310</u>	<u>£ 305,581</u>	<u>£ 103,926</u>
3 (c) Governance costs				
- Independent examiners fees	<u>£ 1,275</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ 1,275</u>	<u>£ 1,500</u>

4 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS AND TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

During the year payments were made to the following Trustees for specific grant funded part time roles independent of their roles as Trustees of the charity:-

- Alex Kempton £7,138 (2022 - £13,406) for her role as Operations and Campaigns Manager with responsibility for the administration of the charity

- Rossana Leal £7,138 (2022 - £14,396) for her role as Project Development Officer with responsibility for the development of the Project

These payments have been fully funded from grants made specifically for the purpose of funding these roles and so none of the Unrestricted Funds of the charity have been used for the purpose of making these payments.

Alex Kempton and Rossana Leal both resigned as Trustees on 13th June 2022 but continue to support the Charity in their administrative roles.

No payments have been made to these individuals or to any other Trustees for their roles as Trustees of the Charity during the year.

5 CORPORATION TAX

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

6 STAFF COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	149,470	57,259
Social security costs	7,931	3,578
Pension costs	3,243	1,770
	<u>£160,644</u>	<u>£62,607</u>

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was 5 (2022 - 4)

7 FIXED ASSETS

	Furniture & Fittings £	Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost			
As at 1 April 2021	2,982	1,467	4,449
Additions in year	3,674	0	3,674
As at 31 March 2022	<u>6,656</u>	<u>1,467</u>	<u>8,123</u>
Depreciation			
As at 1 April 2021	-	-	-
Charge for the year	(482)	(293)	(775)
As at 31 March 2022	<u>(482)</u>	<u>(293)</u>	<u>(775)</u>
Net book value at 31 March 2022	<u>£ 2,982</u>	<u>£ 1,467</u>	<u>£ 4,449</u>
Net book value at 31 March 2023	<u>£ 6,174</u>	<u>£ 1,174</u>	<u>£ 7,348</u>

8 DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Grants receivable	1,761	744
Sundry debtors	256	329
	<u>£2,017</u>	<u>£1,073</u>

9 CREDITORS - amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Unrestricted Funds		
Independent examiners fees	2,775	1,500
Sundry creditors	1,848	194
	<u>4,623</u>	<u>1,694</u>
Restricted Funds		
Sundry creditors	12,910	228
	<u>£17,532</u>	<u>£1,922</u>

10 SUMMARY OF FUND MOVEMENTS

	Balance at 01-Apr-22 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers In/(out) £	Balance at 31-Mar-23 £
Restricted funds					
Arts Council - Refugee Week 2023	-	27,000	(4,147)	-	22,853
Blue Thread	-	20,000	(5,464)	-	14,536
East Sussex County Council	15,140	114,956	(95,685)	15,992	50,404
Sussex Community Council	-	10,000	(1,183)	-	8,817
National Lottery	29,954	107,627	(94,810)	-	42,771
Ground Works/Together Vulnerable Persons	2,725	21,303	(22,736)	-	1,291
Resettlement Program	12,655	(744)	(9,602)	89	2,398
Sundry grant funded projects	23,424	32,413	(30,666)	(19,022)	6,149
	<u>83,898</u>	<u>332,555</u>	<u>(264,293)</u>	<u>(2,941)</u>	<u>149,219</u>
Unrestricted funds	11,895	79,389	(68,946)	2,941	25,279
	<u>£95,793</u>	<u>£411,944</u>	<u>£(333,239)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£174,498</u>

11 OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Total future minimum payments under non-cancellable operating leases		
Leasehold property - leases expiring within 2 - 5 years	<u>£18,921</u>	<u>-</u>

12 SUMMARY OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	7,348	-	7,348	4,449
Current assets	22,553	162,129	184,682	93,266
Liabilities				
Amounts falling due in one year	(4,623)	(12,910)	(17,532)	(1,922)
Amounts falling due after one year			-	
	<u>17,931</u>	<u>149,219</u>	<u>167,150</u>	<u>91,344</u>
	<u>£25,279</u>	<u>£149,219</u>	<u>£174,498</u>	<u>£95,793</u>

13 MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CHARITY AS A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

The Trustees confirm that:-

- the charity has not given any financial guarantees to another organisation
- there are no debts outstanding at the year-end that represent a charge on the assets of the charity.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

England & Wales - Charity number 1191436

Accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

(Registered Charity - Registration Number:- 1191436)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022

Reference and Administrative Information

Trustees

M. Chowdhury
C. Harmer-Brown
L. Hickman
M. Kempton
Y. Mohammad
C. Refahi

Charity Correspondent and Principal Address

Alex Kempton
The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden
Creative Media Centre
45 Robertson Street
HASTINGS
East Sussex TN34 1HL

Bankers

NatWest Bank plc

Independent Examiner

T. E. Reynolds FCA
23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

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14	Independent Examiner's Report
15	Statement of Financial Activities
16	Balance Sheet
17	Notes to the accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022

The Trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the to 31st March 2022.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden is constituted as a charitable incorporated organization whose only voting members are its Charity Trustees registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales in September 2020 under charity number 1191436. It is governed by a constitution last updated in September 2020.

Organisational structure

The Charity Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity.

The Trustees meet together as a body on a regular basis. Additionally the Trustees, in their various roles, are involved in the day to day activities of the Charity.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing Trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. Potential trustees are identified from the volunteers and other individuals involved with the Charity. They are invited to attend Trustees' meetings as observers and are given more details of the charity's aims and activities and, if all agree, they are then proposed as new trustees at a subsequent Trustees' meeting. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Induction and training of trustees

Following appointment, new trustees are introduced to their new role and given copies of the trust deed and a guide to the policies and procedures adopted by our charity. A number of publications from the Charity Commission are also provided including the guidance on charities and public benefit and on the relief of hardship, promotion of social inclusion, preservation and protection of mental health and promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit. This ensures that new trustees are aware of the scope of their responsibilities under the Charities Act. Initially, new trustees work with an existing Trustee assisting on particular activities and projects run by the charity.

Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the risks the Charity faces and have drawn up a risk matrix which identifies the major risks by area of activity, the nature of those risks, the likelihood of the risks happening and the measures taken to manage them. The Trustees review this risk matrix regularly at their meetings. The Trustees are satisfied that systems are in place, or arrangements are in hand, to manage the risks that have been identified. In particular, insurance cover is in place and the finances of the Charity are kept under review. Appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks, supported by regularly reviewed policies, are made for all staff and volunteers within the Charity.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2022 (continued)

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims and objectives

The objectives of the Charity are set out in the Charity's trust deed and are summarised as follows:-

- To relieve financial hardship to those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary by providing advice and guidance to enable them to become economically self-supporting on an ongoing basis
- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among people who are refugees and asylum seekers and are socially excluded on the grounds of their social and economic position
- To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary and their dependents.
- The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by promoting activities to foster understanding and social cohesion between people from different backgrounds.

Strategy and mission

The Buddy Project was set up by Rossana Leal in 2017 who initially worked with people arriving as part of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme (VPRP) (formally the Syrian Resettlement Programme), under which the UK committed to accepting 20,000 people escaping war in Syria. East Sussex committed to resettling around 200 people as part of this programme and the first families arrived in Hastings in 2016.

Working in partnership with the Local Authority Resettlement Programme Caseworkers, The Refugee Buddy Project built a network of volunteers made up of local people who wanted to help those arriving in their town. Providing orientation assistance, informal English conversations, and a sense of community welcome, the Project was designed to reflect the kind of community welcome Rossana and her family received when they arrived from Chile in the 1970s escaping the Pinochet regime.

The Refugee Buddy Project has continued to grow and expanded to support the families arriving in neighbouring Bexhill and then Wealden Boroughs, and currently supports over 45 families across these three areas of East Sussex who arrived via the VPRP.

As well as welcoming people via the VPRP, Hastings is also part of the Home Office Asylum Dispersal System for people seeking asylum in the UK, along with other Local Authorities across the UK. Under this scheme Hastings has up to 106 people seeking asylum in the Borough at any one time, all of whom are unable to work due to their Immigration Status, and who survive on around £39.50 per week per person. The Refugee Buddy Project increasingly works with this community as well, providing buddying, financial assistance and casework support along with delivery of support for people on the Homes for Ukraine.

From 2017 to date, the organisation, which became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in 2020, has developed from connecting newly arriving people seeking refuge with local communities and individuals, to leading and campaigning around the issues encountered in the process of resettling and building a new life in the UK, in line with its charitable objects. This has included hearing the stories of the people we work with, our project participants, and putting these into reports for the decision makers. This has also involved developing partnerships and collaborative pledges with local arts and community organisations in order to ensure the voices of those seeking refuge are not only heard but can play a crucial role in leading the conversations on the issues relevant to their needs.

We provide support to explore their new town and begin a new life. We 'match' them with a Buddy to support people in getting to know their new community; to practice conversational English, Employment preparation support - computer skills, CV writing, and interview skills.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2022 (continued)

The Charity offers space for ongoing facilitated conversation and reflective practice through regular training and support sessions for the buddies, thus building strong relationships in and across different communities. We act as a first point of call for the communities who are attached to our services and activities. We refer to existing specialist services, sometimes advocating on their behalf but mainly enabling people to access relevant support services. There is no other organisation that is also migrant and refugee led working closely with the refugee, migrant and BAME communities in this area doing this type of work. We refer to specialist mental health services and during the COVID19 pandemic we have referred to the local mutual aid volunteer led organisations. Hastings is officially a town of Sanctuary as ratified by Hastings Borough Council.

The Charity has gone from being run on a purely voluntary basis to securing informal self-employed funding arrangements 2/3 days a week, to more sustainable funding which will be presented in the 2021-2022 reporting period.

Use of volunteers

At the time of writing this report, The Refugee Buddy Project has 45 active buddy relationships and supports over 150 people seeking refuge at various stages of their immigration cases. The Charity also has over 200 local people in a close network of volunteers who provide support and engage with the Project and its aims in a variety of ways from buddying people seeking refuge to helping with fundraising and events.

When volunteers sign up to join the Charity they are asked to complete a Confidentiality Agreement and to have a referee provide a Character Reference. Volunteers then go through an Induction led by the Founder and Director, the Chair of Trustees and a current volunteer Buddy. This induction is an opportunity for new volunteers to learn about the ethos and values of the Charity as well as hear the experiences of current volunteers. It is also a crucial chance to learn about the expectations of volunteers, including the boundaries around volunteering with vulnerable people. The section on boundaries is delivered by the Chair of Trustees, Dr Mursheda Chowdhury, who has had a long career in the medical and medical education field and is well placed to deliver this type of training.

The recruitment of new Buddies and matching is ongoing and this will include referrals to the Together programme mentioned in Principal Funding Sources

Activities and achievements

2021-2022 was the first year of the lottery funding for project development. It involved the recruitment, appointment and supporting of new project of staff. The identification of office and café spaces. Ongoing community engagement and support. Ongoing development of participant led events and activities with special projects. Partnership and collaboration arrangements with referral and like minded local and national organisations. Ongoing fundraising. Strengthening of the Board of Trustees with a view to operation staff standing down. Embedding our unique refugee and migrant led ethos and approach towards working with people seeking refuge in the Hastings, Rother and Wealden areas of East Sussex.

Recruitment, appointment and training of staff:

Lottery funding secured three part-time staff and the AMIF funded project Together run jointly with Groundwork South secured a fourth part-time staff member. The Project Director and Operations Manager worked closely with the Board to develop the job descriptions to recruit and put in place a Buddy Coordinator and a Café Manager. Trustees ensured that relevant policies were adopted to support this employment in accordance with the law. The project moved from working from home during lock down to working in a shared office space

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2022 (continued)

Buddy Coordinator

The first person to be appointed as the Buddy Coordinator gave her notice in after 3 months which led to the need to recruit for a 2nd time. The role was advertised widely and we received 43 of applications, we interviewed 7 people, and gave the role to the most outstanding of them all. She is now in place having been successfully recruited in September 2021 and, with our support, has grown into the role, brought her expertise to the role and has recently been promoted to senior Buddy Coordinator.

The work of the Buddy Coordinator, which is central to the project, supports our participants in areas such as employment support and mentoring, English Language support and supporting people into further and higher education. We also coordinate support such as food bank vouchers, benefits advice, housing support and more.

Café Manager

A Café manager was recruited in September 2021. Without a Café, her role would be to find a café space and developed a business plan. Whilst looking for café space she would support the project participants into achieving their food hygiene certificates and organise pop up suppers. The aim of the pop-up suppers is to familiarise the project participants with all the elements involved in setting up a self-employed catering business. During this time the Café manager also contacted local businesses, retailers and had conversations about a setting up a community café for people seeking refuge. These conversations were impactful in that the café has received immense support from the local community. In the same ways the café manager began working with the refuge and migrant community to involve them in the development of the café plans.

Working closely with the project director, the café manager also began putting together all administrative and policies in place. These included volunteer inductions, health and safety and Induction and supporting new staff

With a café now in place, the project continues to support project participants who want to explore catering as a self-employment opportunity.

Whilst we could support with the practical elements such as logistics, planning, food hygiene and health & safety we quickly identified we could not provide financial expertise, with how to become self-employed and invoicing. We are developing referral relationships with organisations that can provide support with this element.

Project coordinator (outreach, finance and administration)

Funding was secured from ESCC to fund the role of a Project Coordinator carry out outreach and organise enrichment activities.

The coordinator had direct contact with the Project participant and the wider migrant and refugee community, encouraging them to take up the services and activities we deliver.

The fund covers the one hour per week, informal English language conversation sessions- weekly one to one matching meetings online, group or face to face between the local volunteer buddy and a recently arrived refugee or migrant. The coordinator administrated these sessions, which were around 42 per week during the period of this report.

The project coordinator also co-ordinated, promoted and organised one of our special projects Stitch for Change 2 (SFC) which was delivered in collaboration with Hastings Museum & Art Gallery. More information about SFC below.

All staff have completed a suite of mandatory training including Equality and Diversity in the Workplace; Safeguarding Adults and Safeguarding Children; and GDPR Principles. In addition, team members have completed role-specific training such as food hygiene certificates and CPD training such as Community Interpreting.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2022 (continued)

Looking for an office and Café space:

We spent several months looking for a space which could accommodate a community café with confidential space, with no success. Rental prices have considerably risen locally post pandemic resulting in many spaces we looked at being unaffordable or being quickly snapped up by others offering more money. We therefore were forced to decide to take up two separate spaces to accommodate both our social and more confidential activities. This also meant we needed to secure additional funds to cover the costs of this new approach. We secured additional funding from Lottery £14,000 and from East Sussex County Council £15,000

Reviewing of administrative and financial monitoring in order to meet the needs of monitoring and accounting for allocated and unallocated funding. We have moved from using spreadsheets to record volunteer and project participant activities to using a database. In the same way we have moved from the using of spreadsheets to Quick Books.

The director of operations oversees and manages both of these with the assistance of the finance and administrative support.

Community engagement & support: Community led activities

Inductions are a key element and an ongoing activity for the Buddy Coordinators (BC) role and after shadowing the Project director the Buddy Coordinator is now developing and delivering these with the ongoing support of the Chair of Trustees. In doing the inductions the Buddy coordinator is able to know and see exactly who is coming into the organisation to become a buddy. Inductions happen on a monthly basis to meet the demand of our waiting list.

In 21/22 the project recruited and inducted 70 new buddies. The Buddy Coordinator continues to support the buddies by offering a 6-month reviews which offer project exit or continuing options, a minimum of one mandatory group Reflective Practices session with a qualified psychotherapist, ongoing support on a closed online platform and by offering an open-door policy for buddies to see her as and when they need additional support. In 21/22 we were supporting 42 matching relationships.

The Buddy Coordinator has direct ongoing contact with all the project participants. This direct contact has been crucial in our ethos towards being participant led. Ideas for activities, events and requests for ongoing support need to come from the project participants to the Buddy Coordinator, the Outreach Worker and the Café Manager. At the end of 21/22 we were supporting a total of 119 participants regularly.

Activity	Number of people engaged 21/22
Number of volunteers engaged	122
Number of Inductions	70
Number of matching relationships and informal English support	42
Number of participants supported (adults)	119
Number of attendees at events and activities*	749
Total number of people engaged in above categories**	1,102

*this number relates to activities in which attendee engagement is tracked;

** this number is a conservative estimate based on figures which are able to be accurately captured, it does not include estimates of other engagements outside these activities

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2022 (continued)

Participant led activities:

All of the following activities give both the buddies and the project participants a chance to volunteer in this way learning new skills and gaining confidence to practice and hear English in a safe and supported environment.

Community Welcome the Spring Equinox party a celebration with food, dancing, live music and lots of activities for the children fac paintings, child play and drumming. Attended by 300 people from refugee and migrant communities and the local buddies.

A collaboration with Hastings Museum & Art Gallery (HM&AG) involved the delivery of arts workshops by one of our project's participants in the lead up to the Lampedusa Cross exhibition. and led by Helen Dodaki, an artist with refugee experience. The museum hosted ten art workshops for local refugee and migrant families. These aspiring artists developed their practice and created work around the British Museum Spotlight loan of the Lampedusa Cross and Dark Water, Burning World. Their work was then featured in the Crossings: community and refuge exhibition at the museum. The participants saw their works on show and experience the process of creating and showing work. The workshops were carefully and skilfully delivered by one of our project participants with lived experience who also recruited the 20 participants who took part.

A film by fizzle and presented by Fatima Esaily: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5MforzTTiw&feature=youtu.be>

Stitch for Change took place at HM&AG. Moving on from the exhibition at the De La Warr Pavillion the workshops leading up to an exhibition took place at HM&AG. Facilitated by community arts practitioners Jimena Pardo and Janey Moffatt around 30 people with refugee and migrant backgrounds and the buddies, explored their stories and created 20 individual patchwork stories which were then exhibited at the museum during Refugee Week 22. The Stitch for Change project also offers a space for participants to come together bi-weekly to sew and talk and practice English.

One highlight has been a 22 year old young Syrian man who arrived in the UK in summer 2021. He had been attending Stitch for Change and had improved his English significantly as well as his confidence. As part of the project the participants had to write a label for their piece of sewing to explain why they made it and what it meant to them. The young man wanted to try and write not only in Arabic but also in English, which he managed to successfully do. This would not have been possible when Stitch for Change started and, while the participant is also attending college classes, this opportunity to have an informal space in which to practise and improve his English language and also his confidence has been crucial to his development. See below a section of some of the labels written which also describe the types of stories the participants share.

"I lived in the same conditions before and after the war in Syria where everything was fine, and the war came to break and destroy my dreams and those of all young people and families. My parents bought a house for me and my brother to grow our families and live an easy, happy life. The house was destroyed, and my dreams were destroyed with it."

"We settled in Lebanon for 16 years. We ran away from one war and stumbled into another war of race and humiliation as the people of Lebanon did not want to accept us. Later, the July War started in Lebanon which was very hard for us, but we persevered. We applied for asylum from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and were granted asylum here in England.

At long last, we have settled in Hastings, where we feel safe and secure."

BBC South East Politics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ovER0kHHSw&feature=youtu.be>

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2022 (continued)

Christmas Market and Christmas Lecture at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery. In celebration of British Museum Spotlight Loan *Crossings: community and refuge*, the Refugee Buddy Project hosted its annual Christmas fair at the museum. The venue was filled with craft stalls, festival snacks, and plenty of cheer. The event was also a fund raiser in support of those seeking refuge in our community. The event also hosted a lecture by Syrian born, UK based artist Issam Kourbaj, whose work, *Dark Water, Burning World* hosted in Hastings as part of the Spotlight Loan. The lecture was attended by 60 people who were treated to Syrian food. This was also the last chance to see the Lampedusa Cross and *Dark Water, Burning World* before they continue their tour to other venues in the UK. This event was attended by 329 people.

Partnerships and collaborations:

To identify referral routes for our participants, to have conversations about future collaborations and coordinate our work with key stake holders in our area of work. Arts at the heart of how we work – communicate our message – rebuild our lives and tell our stories

Eggtooth: our ongoing collaboration with Eggtooth includes referrals from us for their art therapy support. We have referred NUMBER to them. These are people who expressed they need mental health support, who have not been supported by a GP. Our aim here is to support the participant by providing a safe personal space to work things out and be ready to ask for any further support if required. The referrals to Eggtooth are fast and tend to provide immediate support for the participants who present with anxiety and the notion that their request for support are not being met.

De la Warr Pavilion – We continue to collaborate with the De La Warr Pavilion. In 2021 we exhibited *All in the same storm, Pandemic Patchwork stories*. We began the year by co-hosting an online talk *Culture and Migrant Rights* which how the culture sector, including the artists, museums and art galleries can become meaningful participants on conversations and action around migrant rights. We kicked off Refugee week 21 with an online workshop about *Stitch for Change – Expression of Togetherness* - hosted by the De La Warr Pavilion.

Lo Recordings -

Hastings Contemporary – We were invited by Culture Shift to the Hastings Contemporary to see a Quentin Blake exhibition and have a conversation about what art means to us. We invited members of the refugee community to take part. This was an important initial discussion which led to us taking part in the first local Geocache adventure. See section on Refugee Week for more information.

Good Stuff invited us to take part in Painting the Prom summer project which involved decorating a stretch of "suntrap" booths on the lower promenade of St Leonards seafront with murals designed by local residents. We engaged a local artist Sarah Gomez Harris who worked with on during lock down on the develop the Myth Busting social media cards used the previous year to challenge negative and mainstream narratives around the issue of people seeking refuge. We chose one of the designs used in this campaign and matched artist Sarah Gomez Harris with one of our participants herself an artist who also facilitated the workshops at HM&AG. In this way the rest of the community we work with, with an interest in arts was able to feed in to the new collaboration. Our mural now sits alongside the murals of a number of other important community groups and artists who do important work with the Hastings communities. We continue to receive positive feedback form local people who feel it is important to express the narrative of welcome and solidarity to people seeking refuge in our town.

Local Authorities: we continue to develop these collaborations and partnerships in the boroughs of Hasting, Rother and Wealden. These began with our project playing a crucial role in the integration of newly arriving people seeking refuge through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme, mainly Syrian people. This work has continued through the matching of people with buddies, delivery of social gatherings as described earlier. During 21/22 this collaboration transferred to and supporting the families arriving through the Afghan Resettlement Program (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). Volunteers from our project helped to prepare 4 houses for the new families and they are now matched with buddies and are taking part in social gatherings.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2022 (continued)

We continue to have direct contact with the case workers and programme coordinators in all three boroughs. We attended regular Task and Finish cross local authority partnership meetings with all the heads of services providing support for the newly arriving families. One particular outcome of attending these meetings is we were able to share our Education report with the person responsible for allocating school places for the newly arriving refugee children.

Sanctuary Festival: The project has a presence at Sanctuary Festival.

Special projects:

We have two special projects which have run a run in a yearly basis since we began. Both are participant led and our aim to platform refugee and migrant stories, talent and skills.

Refugee Week 21 was mainly held online due to lockdown. We supported 3 participants to create paintings for an online art exhibition. We provided the art materials, and the three participants were mentored by one of our volunteer buddies, also the education and engagements member of staff at the De L a Warr Pavilion. We asked a local shop in a busy area if we could use her window to display something celebrating refugee week. An installation was produced by one of our project participants, also a student of interior design and architecture and displayed during Refugee Week. we also worked with 2 more project participants who filmed themselves cooking their favourite Syrian meal and the recipe and how to film was share in our social media. During refugee week we also encouraged people to visit the mural on the seafront and take selfies.

Geocache – Culture Shift for Hastings Contemporary: We were one of six community groups invited to take part designing a geocache. The Refugee Buddy Project led by two group members, Leigh Malaihollo and Fatima Esayli, a young Sudanese Architecture and interior design student designed and installed geocache based on the mural on the seafront by Sarah Gomez Harris and Helen Dodaki. The geocache can be found at Country Park in Hastings.

Geocaching is a form of digital treasure hunt with uses GPS enabled technology to help people locate the hidden geocaches. People are asked to download the free app to start the adventures. People who find the hidden geocache are encouraged to give feedback and we still receive positive messages from people who find the geocache.

Stitch For Change is a textiles and embroidery project, hosted by The Refugee Buddy Project, which grew in response to the covid pandemic and lockdown. Our aim was to promote the meditative benefits of hand stitching and to provide a method of connection during a time of isolation and separation. The workshops provided a safe space for people to connect, converse in English, and tell their stories. The pandemic patchworks quilts were exhibited during refugee week 21. We held an online workshop to discuss the Stitch for Change project and community organising during lock down – <https://www.dlwp.com/event/stitch-for-change/>

All of the activities in refugee week 21 began conversations with local shops, community groups, artists and other local businesses which laid down the roots for Refugee Week 22.

Campaigns, communications and reports

Social media – We appointed a free-lance social media content manager. This work has made a huge difference on how we reach and engage with the various audiences who follow and take part in our work. This has been reflected in the growth of partnerships and collaborations, volunteers registering to be part of our work, donations and the huge reach of our campaigns. We are also able to reach national and international organisations doing the similar work.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
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Community Welcome Pledge: We worked with the local refugee community and our national partners Migrants Organise to put together a pledge to be put to the local authority to discuss and take on as its approach to Hastings being a Community of Sanctuary. We were delighted that this pledge was accepted as a motion passed unanimously, and that the Council has restated its commitment to people seeking refuge especially given the national context of the Nationality and Borders Bill. We look forward to continuing to work with the Council to improve and extend their services to ensure the three pledges are delivered effectively to all seeking refuge in our town”

<https://www.therefugeebuddyproject.org/blog/hastings-council-passes-pledge-for-hastings>

Education Report: Speaking and Listening: A report into the educational experiences of refugee families 2021

This year we have been conducting some research into the educational experiences of people seeking refuge in Hastings and the surrounding areas. In April we held a meeting for Buddies and supporters where we discussed the headline results of this report, which featured talks from the following people:

- Attiq Malik, Director of Liberty Law Solicitors and the solicitor for the family of Shukri Abdi;
- Vic Chechi, National Education Working Group on PREVENT;
- Nichelle Keheller, Hastings Rally Against Racism;
- Zo Oliver from Collective LDN
- Akram Salhab, Advocacy and Campaigns Officer at Migrants Organise.
-

We created Working Group of Buddies and supporters who are steering the Project as well as collaborating with other local organisations to design and deliver more CPD to local schools on how we can improve the educational outcomes for children of refugee backgrounds.

On Thursday 18th November we officially launched the report “Speaking and Listening: A report on the experiences of Refugee families in education”.

The result of months of work by our Operations and Campaigns Manager Alex Kempton, the report’s primary purpose is to raise the voices of project participants and their experiences in a way that may not be otherwise available to them. In doing this, our aim is to open a dialogue with local schools and educationalists about the experiences of those seeking refuge, and to find ways in which we can support the schools in improving these experiences.

The launch event was well attended with around 30 people attending and a mix of classroom teachers and members of Senior Leadership Teams, alongside educationalists from charities and consultancy organisations.

Since the launch of the report a collaboration has developed with Villiers Park Education Trust in which we are running a pilot project targeting six young people from the community we support to gain access to their Future Leaders programme which supports young people in Years 10 and 12 to reach their full potential through mentoring and coaching. We are applying for joint funding to expand this programme in the 23/24 school year.

We have also started a GCSE school for Year 10 and 11 pupils in the community we support, which is led by qualified teachers and educationalist in our volunteer network and supports the students with their GCSE homework providing general study skills and subject-specific support to raise the attainment levels of this cohort. This group has been meeting weekly since September 2022 and the feedback at the end of December 2022 was very positive from both the students and their families.

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The report is used as a resource by a Senior Lecturer in Childhood Education and Care at Canterbury Christ Church University and she has fed back the following: “This information about the Buddy Project, complete with case study examples was an excellent educational resource for me as I teach Early Years undergraduate students who examine the role of a 'children's champion'. The work you published was very useful as a teaching aid and it has helped consolidate concepts and policy for the students. The Working Together agenda (2018) makes a special point of inclusion for refugee children and also draws attention to the importance of safeguarding being everybody's business.”

Patients not Passports: In October 2021 we asked CCG to encourage all GP surgeries to sign up to the safe surgeries initiative which works to ensure that the most vulnerable and most marginalised groups in society such as refugees, undocumented migrants, the homeless population and victims of trafficking are given access to health care at the point of need. We received a very encouraging response stating that CCG’s already working with Doctors of the world and are aware of the issues.

#RefugeesWelcome: we continued to build on our social media campaign from 2021 by taking part in local project Paint the Prom in which we painted one of the key images from the campaign on the sea front in St Leonards on Sea. The mural was painted by the artist who designed it along with project participants, and has become a focal point for conversations around people seeking refuge in our town and a highly recognisable Charity image which is now used in various iterations.

Donations

The project continues to receive donations from the general public and local community. In 2021/22 we received a total of £16,526.23

Source	Amount
Fundraising sites	£ 2,132.72
Donations via charity website	£ 5,376.68
Direct Donations	£ 1,195.24
Donations from events	£ 2,908.59
Donations from partner organisations	£ 4,913.00
Total	£ 16,526.23

Donations come into to project through our ongoing website appeal and through activities organised by the local community. These bring in various amounts of money varying from £300 to £1000. The community activities also help to create awareness about our work.

Two key fundraising activities which took place in 21/22 are the Anthony Flaum opera at the Stables Theatre and a Charity Concert of classical music held at St Johns Church in St Leonards.

Summary

All of the activities in 2021/2022 have led to the has led to strengthening and embedding of the of the Refugee Buddy Project with our community. We are the first point of call for the communities we work with and are a trusted organisation to providing integration, advocacy and support for migrants and people seeking refuge.

In 22/23 The consolidation of an expert lead board of trustees has allowed us to make the structural changes needed to move forward. Rossana Leal and Alex Kempton stood down as trustees and are now CEO and Operations and Campaigns Director respectively.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
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Attracting additional funding has been secured to expand our work with the Homes for Ukraine scheme and we look forward to

Café Dove Café - we now run a very busy community café offering cheap affordable and free food for those who need it and continue to apply this support with dignity and respect.

Development of our psychosocial, unique approach to working with people seeking refuge in the Hastings, Rother & Wealden areas.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of period

The attached accounts cover a twelve month period whilst the comparative figures cover the period from the formation of the Charity in September 2020 to the end of March 2021 – a period of less than six months.

These accounts reflect the significant increase in the activity of the Project in the year with the total income increasing to £175,976 from £18,451 and the total expenditure increasing to £107,080 from £24,903.

The Charity has been successful in a number of grant applications in the year and this success has enabled it to significantly increase its level of activities as set out more fully in the Review of Activities and Achievements in this section of the report.

In addition the Charity has been successful in increasing its level of donations from the public to support its activities outside of those that are grant funded.

At the end of the year the Charity had sufficient funds and resources to enable it to complete the various activities it has received grants for.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have reviewed the reserves of the charity. Their policy is to hold enough funds to meet three months' operating costs .

Principal funding sources/plans for the future

The Charity continues to be funded from Reaching Communities National Lottery until July 2024, which funds three part-time roles - 2 Developmental posts and a Café Manager, as well as covering 1 year's rent for a social space.

The Together Project, an EU AMIF funded project delivered in collaboration with Groundwork South was delivered in 21/22 to December 2022 and has received a one-year extension from AMIF at a reduced rate for delivery until December 2023.

We have successfully applied to the Justice Together Fund in partnership with Migrants Organise and POMOC to fund a part-time Caseworker who will train to become OISC qualified in immigration casework. This funding runs April 2022 – April 2024.

We received funding to deliver support for people arriving on the Homes for Ukraine scheme from ESCC delivering from July 2022 – July 2023.

The core buddying and volunteering work is funded through two small charitable trusts.

The Charity continues to receive donations from the general public which are used to fund the work we do with people on No Recourse to Public Funds.

Investment policy and objectives

The charity has no long-term investments. Our cash reserves are held current bank accounts.

Conflicts of interest

Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the other trustees and, in accordance with the Trust's policy, withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2022 (continued)

Trustees remuneration.

The Trustees bring a wealth of experience of refugee and migrant rights, charitable and community projects, financial and project oversight and strategy and more. They generously volunteer their time to oversee the Charity and no Trustee receives remuneration for their role as Trustee. Details of transactions in the year between the Trustees and the Charity are set out in Note 4 to these accounts

Reference and administrative information

The names of the Trustees throughout the period and at the date of this report along with other key information is set out on Page 1.

Dr Mursheda Chowdhury, Chair
Christine Harmer-Brown – a long term Buddy
Rossana Leal (resigned 13th June 2022) – Founder and Director
Alexandra Kempton (resigned 13th June 2022) – Operations and Campaigns Manager
Martin Kempton
Yeser Mohammed (appointed 14th June 2021)– a long-term Buddy
Lisa Hickman (appointed 12th April 2022)
Chantal Refahi (appointed 7th September 2022)

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above

DR MURSHEDA CHOWDURY
Trustee and Chair

CHRISTINE HARMER-BROWN
Trustee

26th January 2023

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Project") for the year ended 31st March 2022, which are set out on pages 15 to 22

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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 Project's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act

Independent Examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

T. E. REYNOLDS FCA

23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

26th January 2023

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total funds September 2020 to March 2021 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Voluntary income	2(a)	16,929	4,100	21,029	928
Activities for generating funds	2(b)	-	-	-	70
Grants received	2(c)	5,000	149,948	154,948	17,453
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		21,929	154,048	175,977	18,451
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Costs of generating funds	3(a)	737	1,418	2,155	1,250
Charitable activities	3(b)	22,016	81,910	103,926	23,653
Governance costs	3(c)	1,500	-	1,500	
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		24,252	83,328	107,581	24,903
NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES		(2,324)	70,720	68,396	(6,452)
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS	10	13,541	(13,541)		
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		11,217	57,179	68,396	(6,452)
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	10	678	26,719	27,397	33,849
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	10	£11,895	£83,898	£95,793	£27,397

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 17 to 22 form part of these accounts

**THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2022**

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible	7	4,449	-
		<u>4,449</u>	<u>0</u>
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	8	1,073	-
Short term deposits			-
Cash at bank and in hand		92,193	27,397
		<u>93,266</u>	<u>27,397</u>
CREDITORS - amounts falling due within one year	9	(1,922)	-
		<u>91,344</u>	<u>27,397</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>91,344</u>	<u>27,397</u>
		<u>£95,793</u>	<u>£27,397</u>
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
Unrestricted	10	11,895	14,219
Restricted	10	83,898	13,179
		<u>£95,793</u>	<u>£27,397</u>

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:-

Dr MURSHEDA CHOWDURY
Trustee and Chair

26th January 2023

CHRISTINE HARMER-BROWN
Trustee

The notes on pages 17 to 22 form part of these accounts

1 Accounting policies

1 (a) Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

Charities registered in England and Wales that are not companies are allowed under Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 to prepare receipts and payments accounts provided the charity's gross income is less than £250,000. Whilst the accounts for the current year show a gross income of less than £250,000 the gross income for the year to 31st March 2023 is forecast to exceed £250,000. In view of this the Trustees have decided to prepare these accounts on an accruals basis. No adjustments necessary to convert the opening figures from a Receipts and Payments basis to an accruals basis.

These financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with FRS102(2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2019 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP(FRS102)).

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

1 (b) Funds structure

Unrestricted income funds comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the charitable objects. Unrestricted funds include designated funds where the trustees, at their discretion, have set aside resources for a specific purpose

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with the specific restrictions and terms imposed by the grant awarding organisation or by donors. Details of the funds are provided in Note 10 to the accounts.

1 (c) Incoming resources

Recognition

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:-

- the Charity becomes legally entitled to the benefit or use of the resources;
- and inflow of economic benefit is probable; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Grants

Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant

Grants where there are performance or service deliverables required by the terms of the grant, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to payment through its performance.

Events and trading activities

Funds raised from events and trading activities are reported gross - i.e. before any related costs have been deducted from the proceeds.

Gift Aid Tax claims

These and other tax claims are included in the accounts at the same time as the cash donations to which they relate.

Volunteer help

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services donated by volunteers has not been included in these accounts, except where the services provided are in the nature of professional services where a fee would otherwise be charged, in which case the donated service is valued at their chargeable rate

Investment income

Investment income is included when receivable.

Charitable trading activity

Incoming resources from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.

1 (d) Resources expended

Liability recognition.

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category

Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it was incurred

Costs of generating funds

Costs of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, or incurred in trading activities undertaken to raise funds.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both direct pay and non-pay costs and support costs relating to those activities.

Governance costs

These include the costs of the preparation and examination of statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings and cost of any legal advice to the trustees on governance or constitutional matters.

1 (e) Tangible fixed assets for use by the Charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £1,000. They are valued at cost or else, for gifts-in-kind, at a reasonable estimate of their open market value on receipt.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the capitalised cost of fixed assets less their currently anticipated residual fair value over their estimated useful lives as follows:-

- Furniture, fixtures and fittings 5 years
- Computing equipment 3 years

1 (f) Pensions

Employees of the Charity are entitled to join a defined contribution "money purchase" scheme. The Charity's contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in Note 6. There were no outstanding contributions at the year end

2 INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total funds September 2020 to March 2021 £
2 (a) Voluntary income				
- donations	£ 16,929	£ 4,100	£ 21,029	£ 928
2 (b) Activities for generating funds				
- events	-	-	-	-
- trading income	-	-	-	70
	-	-	-	£ 70
2 (c) Incoming resources from charitable activities				
- grants receivable	£ 5,000	£ 149,948	£ 154,948	£ 17,453

Grant income is treated as "Restricted" as it has been given to fund specific items of expenditure. If there is an underspend on a grant then any surplus will be, with the agreement of the granting body, transferred to Unrestricted Funds.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

3 EXPENDITURE

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total funds September 2020 to March 2021 £
3 (a) Costs of generating funds				
Premises costs				
- Equipment	5	48	53	
- Licences and fees	-	38	38	
- Rent	353	1,332	1,685	1,070
	<u>358</u>	<u>1,418</u>	<u>1,776</u>	<u>1,070</u>
- Trading expenses	-	-	-	-
- Fund raising costs	379	-	379	180
Total costs of generating funds	<u>£ 737</u>	<u>£ 1,418</u>	<u>£ 2,155</u>	<u>£ 1,250</u>
3 (b) Charitable activities				
General administration				
- Insurances	689	147	836	-
- Office rent	-	7,662	7,662	-
- Professional fees	1,940	862	2,802	-
- Phone and internet costs	15	10	25	-
- Equipment costs	21	1,786	1,807	-
- Stationery and office costs	1	117	117	776
	<u>2,665</u>	<u>10,583</u>	<u>13,248</u>	<u>776</u>
Project and activity costs				
-activities	1,339	-	1,339	-
- advertising and promotion	100	530	630	-
- event costs	140	6,458	6,598	-
- family expenses	7,192	1,475	8,667	-
- licences	1,300	928	2,228	5,118
	<u>10,071</u>	<u>9,392</u>	<u>19,463</u>	<u>5,118</u>
Staff and volunteer costs				
- staff salaries including pension and NIC	6,390	56,217	62,607	17,759
- staff expenses	-	297	297	-
- sub-contractors	2,890	3,853	6,743	-
- staff training	-	719	719	-
- volunteer costs and expenses	-	849	849	-
	<u>9,280</u>	<u>61,935</u>	<u>71,214</u>	<u>17,759</u>
Total cost of charitable activities	<u>£ 22,016</u>	<u>£ 81,910</u>	<u>£ 103,925</u>	<u>£ 23,653</u>
3 (c) Governance costs				
- Independent examiners fees	<u>£ 1,500</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ 1,500</u>	<u>£ -</u>

4 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS AND TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION

During the year payments were made to the following Trustees for specific grant funded part time roles independent of their roles as Trustees of the charity:-

- Alex Kempton £13,406 (2021 - £4,200) for her role as Operations and Campaigns Manager with responsibility for the administration of the charity
- Rossana Leal £14,396 (2021 - £5,320) for her role as Project Development Officer with responsibility for the development of the Project

These payments have been fully funded from grants made specifically for the purpose of funding these roles and so none of the Unrestricted Funds of the charity have been used for the purpose of making these payments.

Alex Kempton and Rossana Leal both resigned as Trustees on 13th June 2022 but continue to support the Charity in their administrative roles.

No payments have been made to these individuals or to any other Trustees for their roles as Trustees of the Charity.

5 CORPORATION TAX

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

6 STAFF COSTS

	2022	September 2020
	£	to March 2021
		£
Wages and salaries	57,259	17,759
Social security costs	3,578	
Pension costs	1,770	
	<u>£62,607</u>	<u>£17,759</u>

The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year was 4 (2021 - 2)

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

7 FIXED ASSETS

	Furniture & Fittings	Office Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
As at 1 April 2021	-	-	-
Additions in year	2,982	1,467	4,449
As at 31 March 2022	<u>2,982</u>	<u>1,467</u>	<u>4,449</u>
Depreciation			
As at 1 April 2021			
Charge for the year			
As at 31 March 2022	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net book value at 31 March 2021	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ -</u>
Net book value at 31 March 2022	<u>£ 2,982</u>	<u>£ 1,467</u>	<u>£ 4,449</u>

8 DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	2022 £	2021 £
Grants receivable	744	-
Sundry debtors	329	-
	<u>£1,073</u>	<u>£0</u>

9 CREDITORS - amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Unrestricted Funds		
Independent examiners fees	1,500	-
Sundry creditors	-	-
	<u>1,500</u>	<u>-</u>
Restricted Funds		
Sundry creditors	422	-
	<u>£1,922</u>	<u>£0</u>

10 SUMMARY OF FUND MOVEMENTS

	Balance at 01-Apr-21 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers In/(out) £	Balance at 31-Mar-22 £
Restricted funds					
AB Charitable Trust	10,000	-	-	(10,000)	-
National Lottery Fund:-					
- Awards for All	(6,441)	-	(1,192)	7,633	-
- Reaching Communities	-	68,550	(38,596)	-	29,954
East Sussex County Council	-	25,000	(9,860)	-	15,140
Respond and Adapt	(1,293)			1,293	
EU AMIF - Together	1,387	24,882	(22,157)	(1,387)	2,725
Vulnerable Persons	17,596	15,087	(9,701)	(10,327)	12,655
Resettlement Program					
Sundry grant funded projects	5,470	20,529	(1,824)	(751)	23,424
	<u>26,719</u>	<u>154,048</u>	<u>(83,328)</u>	<u>(13,541)</u>	<u>83,898</u>
Unrestricted funds	678	21,929	(24,252)	13,541	11,895
	<u>£27,397</u>	<u>£175,976</u>	<u>£(107,580)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>£95,793</u>

11 SUMMARY OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets		4,449	4,449	-
Current assets	13,589	79,677	93,266	27,397
Liabilities				
Amounts falling due in one year	(1,694)	(228)	(1,922)	
Amounts falling due after one year			-	
	<u>11,895</u>	<u>79,449</u>	<u>91,344</u>	<u>27,397</u>
	<u>£11,895</u>	<u>£83,898</u>	<u>£95,793</u>	<u>£27,397</u>

12 MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CHARITY AS A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

The Trustees confirm that:-

- the charity has not given any financial guarantees to another organisation
- there are no debts outstanding at the year-end that represent a charge on the assets of the charity.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

England & Wales - Charity number 1191436

Accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

(Registered Charity - Registration Number:- 1191436)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021

Reference and Administrative Information

Trustees

M. Chowdhury
C. Harmer-Brown
A. Kempton
M. Kempton
R. Leal
Y. Mohammad

Charity Correspondent and Principal Address

Alex Kempton
58 Middle Road
HASTINGS
East Sussex TN35 5DL

Bankers

NatWest Bank plc

Independent Examiner

T. E. Reynolds FCA
23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

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9	Independent Examiner's Report
10 & 11	Receipts and payments accounts
12	Notes to the accounts

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021

The Trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the period from the date of its registration on 23rd September 2020 to 31st March 2021.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings Rother and Wealden is constituted as a charitable incorporated organization whose only voting members are its Charity Trustees registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales in September 2020 under charity number 1191436. It is governed by a constitution last updated in September 2020.

Organisational structure

The Charity Trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity.

The trustees meet together as a body on a regular basis. Additionally the Trustees, in their various roles, are involved in the day to day activities of the Charity.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The existing Trustees are responsible for the recruitment of new trustees. Potential trustees are identified from the volunteers and other individuals involved with the Charity. They are invited to attend Trustees' meetings as observers and are given more details of the charity's aims and activities and, if all agree, they are then proposed as new trustees at a subsequent Trustees' meeting. This process allows due consideration of the person's eligibility, personal competence, specialist knowledge and skills.

Induction and training of trustees

Following appointment, new trustees are introduced to their new role and given copies of the trust deed and a guide to the policies and procedures adopted by our charity. A number of publications from the Charity Commission are also provided including the guidance on charities and public benefit and on the relief of hardship, promotion of social inclusion, preservation and protection of mental health and promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit. This ensures that new trustees are aware of the scope of their responsibilities under the Charities Act. Initially, new trustees work with an existing Trustee assisting on particular activities and projects run by the charity.

Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the risks the Charity faces and have drawn up a risk matrix which identifies the major risks by area of activity, the nature of those risks, the likelihood of the risks happening and the measures taken to manage them. The Trustees review this risk matrix regularly at their meetings. The Trustees are satisfied that systems are in place, or arrangements are in hand, to manage the risks that have been identified. In particular, insurance cover is in place and the finances of the Charity are kept under review. Appropriate Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks, supported by regularly reviewed policies, are made for all staff and volunteers within the Charity.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021 (continued)

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims and objectives

The objectives of the Charity are set out in the Charity's trust deed and are summarised as follows:-

- To relieve financial hardship to those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary by providing advice and guidance to enable them to become economically self-supporting on an ongoing basis
- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among people who are refugees and asylum seekers and are socially excluded on the grounds of their social and economic position
- To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of those granted refugee status or seeking sanctuary and their dependents.
- The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by promoting activities to foster understanding and social cohesion between people from different backgrounds.

Strategy and mission

The Buddy Project was set up by Rossana Leal in 2017 who initially worked with people arriving as part of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme (VPRP) (formally the Syrian Resettlement Programme), under which the UK committed to accepting 20,000 people escaping war in Syria. East Sussex committed to resettling around 200 people as part of this programme and the first families arrived in Hastings in 2016.

Working in partnership with the Local Authority Resettlement Programme Caseworkers, The Refugee Buddy Project built a network of volunteers made up of local people who wanted to help those arriving in their town. Providing orientation assistance, informal English conversations, and a sense of community welcome, the Project was designed to reflect the kind of community welcome Rossana and her family received when they arrived from Chile in the 1970s escaping the Pinochet regime.

The Refugee Buddy Project has quickly grown and expanded to support the families arriving in neighbouring Bexhill and then Wealden Boroughs, and currently supports over 30 families across these three areas of East Sussex who arrived via the VPRP.

As well as welcoming people via the VPRP, Hastings is also part of the Home Office Asylum Dispersal System for people seeking asylum in the UK, along with other Local Authorities across the UK. Under this scheme Hastings has up to 106 people seeking asylum in the Borough at any one time, all of whom are unable to work due to their Immigration Status, and who survive on around £39.50 per week per person. The Refugee Buddy Project increasingly works with this community as well, providing buddying, financial assistance and basic casework support.

From 2017 to date, the Charity has developed from connecting newly arriving people seeking refuge with local communities and individuals, to leading and campaigning around the issues encountered in the process of resettling and building a new life in the UK, in line with its charitable objects. This has included hearing the stories of the people we work with, our project participants, and putting these into reports for the decision makers. This has also involved developing partnerships and collaborative pledges with local arts and community organisations in order to ensure the voices of those seeking refuge are not only heard but can play a crucial role in leading the conversations on the issues relevant to their needs.

We provide support to explore their new town and begin a new life. We 'match' them with a Buddy to support people in getting to know their new community; to practice conversational English, Employment preparation support - computer skills, CV writing, and interview skills.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021 (continued)

The Charity offers space for ongoing facilitated conversation and reflective practice through regular training and support sessions for the buddies, thus building strong relationships in and across different communities. We act as a first point of call for the communities who are attached to our services and activities. We refer to existing specialist services, sometimes advocating on their behalf but mainly enabling people to access relevant support services. There is no other organisation working closely with the refugee, migrant and BAME communities in this area doing this type of work. We refer to specialist mental health services and during the COVID19 pandemic we have referred to the local mutual aid volunteer led organisations. Hastings is officially a town of Sanctuary as ratified by Hastings Borough Council.

The Charity has gone from being run on a purely voluntary basis to securing informal self-employed funding arrangements 2/3 days a week, to more sustainable funding which will be presented in the 2021-2022 reporting period.

Use of volunteers

At the time of writing this report, The Refugee Buddy Project has 45 active buddy relationships and supports over 150 people seeking refuge at various stages of their immigration cases. The Charity also has over 200 local people in a close network of volunteers who provide support and engage with the Project and its aims in a variety of ways from buddying people seeking refuge to helping with fundraising and events.

When volunteers sign up to join the Charity they are asked to complete a Confidentiality Agreement and to have a referee provide a Character Reference. Volunteers then go through an Induction led by the Founder and Director, the Chair of Trustees and a current volunteer Buddy. This induction is an opportunity for new volunteers to learn about the ethos and values of the Charity as well as hear the experiences of current volunteers. It is also a crucial chance to learn about the expectations of volunteers, including the boundaries around volunteering with vulnerable people. The section on boundaries is delivered by the Chair of Trustees, Dr Mursheda Chowdhury, who has had a long career in the medical and medical education field and is well placed to deliver this type of training.

The recruitment of new Buddies and matching is ongoing and this will include referrals to the Together programme mentioned in Principal Funding Sources

Activities and achievements

During the period the Charity engaged in a range of activities to provide assistance to individuals in support of its Aims and Objectives. This support directly benefited the recipients and provided a public benefit to the wider community as outlined in the Aims and Objectives.

The Charity has faced many one off and ongoing challenges. Buddies have often wanted to take on more than what is defined by the buddy role, for example teaching English instead of offering informal English conversation, or working with children as opposed to volunteering with the family unit. Observing the boundaries between being a volunteer buddy and the role of the paid case worker is crucial, and forms a central part of our volunteer Induction process.

Befriending

At the heart of the Charity is the befriending, or Buddying, which is coordinated by the Buddy Coordinator. This involves recruitment of local people to volunteer as Buddies. New recruits take part in an induction and are matched with a newly arrived person seeking refuge. The Buddy Coordinator provides ongoing support of the buddy relationships. The Buddies provide invaluable support to migrants and newly arrived people seeking refuge.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021 (continued)

People can volunteer to be Buddies and be matched with a family or an individual of migrant background or seeking refuge. We actively recruit people who have knowledge and understanding of Hastings/Rother/Wealden and the local area. Empathy and a willingness to learn and understand challenges faced by people seeking refuge is essential, and volunteers can commit to 1 to 7 hours a month volunteering.

This befriending benefits the wider community by ensuring the newly arriving refugees gain the knowledge and abilities they need to integrate into the community.

Reports:

Our aim is to raise the voices of migrants and people seeking refuge; to make visible peoples' experiences of trying to build new lives in the UK; to work with local services to ensure peoples' needs are being met with dignity and respect. Two reports produced by the Charity in the period were:-

Lost in Translation: The Need for Interpreting Services & Access to the NHS for Refugee Women.

Speaking and Listening: A report on the experiences of refugee families in education

These reports benefit the wider society by breaking down barriers to integration which exist and promoting communication between the refugee community and institutions.

Social Gatherings

The Refugee Buddy Project organises a variety of social gatherings, meet ups, pop up suppers and social activities. Most of which had to be put on hold or online during 2020.

Our social gatherings promote a feeling of welcome and inclusion between the newly arriving refugees and the volunteer community to help integration.

Impact of Lockdown

COVID 19 related Lockdown had a huge impact on the project making it impossible for us to continue doing our work in the same way. We left our community cafe/gallery and took the project online offering regular online 'check ins' and sewing workshop which became the Stitch for Change project which is ongoing. During this time the Charity continued with 3 team members making up one full time job. The emphasis on buddying was on people connecting online for 1hr online English conversation. Support from the Buddies was mainly around ensuring the families could access their school dinner vouchers a process made more difficult because of the of the complicated online access. We also supported the families with navigating schools online learning. We understand many of the children were not able to access online learning during Lockdown and have therefore significantly missed out on learning during this time. This gap in learning is significantly crucial for these children who, having recently arrived in the UK, were already trying to catch up.

Other than buddying and regular 'check ins', people who reached out to us, were given IT support, funds to cover the cost of telephone data, subsistence, clothing, food and fresh vegetable delivery.

In addition to this we used National Lottery Awards for All funding to support our online Stitch for Change, a successful sewing and textile project - a moving, community-driven project which captured life in the shadow of the pandemic through hand-stitched patchwork art. Ninety-five patchwork squares from local people, including those seeking refuge, volunteers, and Supported Education students from Hastings College, reveal tales of how we coped with Lockdown, change, togetherness, isolation, loss and home. The squares were sewn into 4 quilts and were displayed at an exhibition *All in The Same Storm* at the De La Warr Pavillion after Lockdown from July to September 2021.

This collaboration includes Lo Recordings who have composed music to recorded conversations about the project. 'I Feel You Like Home' is a composition by Simon James that was made to accompany the *All in the Same Storm* exhibition at the De La Warr Pavillion in East Sussex. The composition weaves interviews with refugees and founder of the Chairty Rosanna Leal, with music that is immersive and involving. The piece invites listeners to slow down and reflect on the stories told, and offers up "some calm in the storm".

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021 (continued)

Introducing organisational change

During Lockdown the Project Director carried out a series of one to one meetings and groups discussions to go through some of the proposed operational changes. Buddies were given time to think about the changes being introduced to the Charity and opt for staying or leaving the project. During this time, many of those who left also did so because of the impact of Lockdown on their personal lives. The Buddies were invited to one to one or group meetings to discuss the changes and options available to them.

The buddy journey now has a buddy agreement signed by both the project participant and the Buddy, time limited buddying 6 month reviews with an option to leave the Charity, continue as is or take on another buddy.

The Charity now offers mandatory Reflective Practice offered by an experienced psychotherapist. Buddies are expected to take part in this to get support with any challenges of buddying.

Wrap around support

The Charity also offers tailored employment preparation and access to higher education support. Led by the project participants, this involved liaising with colleges or professional employment support agencies, coordinating up to 6 volunteers with varying skills in interview preparation, filling in application forms and applying to university, exploring self-employment opportunities in catering and mentoring in the arts. Employment preparation and additional English language support will now be done through our partnership with Groundworks and the Together Programme who are funding the Buddy Coordinator roles for 3 days per week.

These activities help the newly arriving refugees to integrate into the host community by accessing education and employment options as well as gaining and improving their English language skills which improves their chances of thriving in the host community and is of benefit both to them and to the host community.

Before Lockdown the Charity had in place a 6 monthly feedback training and support sessions. This practice has been interrupted by Lockdown but will be re-introduced in 2022. This is crucial to the volunteer and project participant feedback which informs the ongoing updating of the Buddy Handbook which Buddies are asked to sign up before becoming a buddy. A live document, the Buddy Handbook is where the Buddies can find out about the project ethos, rules and approach to buddying.

Campaigns 2021

All of our campaigns are chosen by the Buddies and the project participants, overseen by the staff and Trustees to ensure that they are in line with our charitable objects. Our campaigns also feed into Charity reports which collate the stories of people seeking refuge which we in turn take to decision makers. This has resulted in *Lost in Translation The need for Interpreting Services & Access to the NHS for Refugee Women* and a report currently being put together about the experiences of refugee children in local schools. This report was launched in late 2021.

Partnerships and collaborations

This is a crucial area of work for The Refugee Buddy Project. Making connections through buddying is one aspect of the work we do to ensure people seeking refuge can make friends and form networks. Another layer of this work involves connecting with local community groups, art and cultural organisations via our events.

In 2021 we celebrated Refugee Week 2021 with our partners. The De La Warr Pavillion, Eggtooth and Women's Voice had a week of refuge related social media posts, also celebrating the work they do with us.

For the past two years we have worked with Eggtooth and the De la Warr Pavillion on various projects and we are now developing pledges and more sustainable partnership agreements.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021 (continued)

The work with Eggtooth is part of Community Welcome campaign. We are pledging to work together to fully represent and provide for the mental health needs of people seeking refuge.

The work being developed with the De La Warr Pavilion aims to establish a partnership agreement that embeds the work we have done together thus making it more sustainable but also enabling The Refugee Buddy Project to lead on the development of work which celebrates and educates on refugee and migrant histories and narratives in culture.

Part of this work feeds into who and how The Refugee Buddy Project works with local artists, the arts and cultural organisations. We welcome organisations who will work with us from ideas development stage. Listening to and working with the refugee and migrant communities.

Pea Pod free organic vegetables delivery is for people on No Recourse to Public Funds and those struggling to buy food. This happens between March and November. The rest of the year we are able to give one off food gifts to support with buying fresh foods.

Sanctuary Festival – The project takes part in this annual event. We promote the refugee Buddy Project and register new volunteers. This event is a great opportunity for us to promote all of our activities, deliver workshops and platform our refugee week activities which we prepare from January to June.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of period

The Project commenced formal operation in mid 2019 and formally became a charity in September 2020. The Financial Statements which form part of this report show separate financial statements for the following periods:-

- From July 2019 to 22nd September 2020
- From 23rd September 2020 to 31st March 2021

During Lockdown the project lost part of the informal funding it received from the VPRP. This element of funding had paid for 4 days and 7 days a month for the Operations and Campaigns and Buddy Coordinator respectively. This put an additional strain on the project during this time making fundraising a priority.

The Charity was able to secure a total of £20,000 to see us through Lockdown. This came from Refugee Action and AB Charitable Trust. This paid for the two part time roles of the Operations and Campaigns Manager and the Project Director. Through our discretionary funding, £3,000 of this money was distributed to the people we support on No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and allocated to emergency funding.

During the period small grants were made on an ad-hoc basis to many people with NRPF.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have reviewed the reserves of the charity. Their policy is to hold enough funds to meet three months' operating costs .

Principal funding sources/plans for the future

In addition to the funding sources mentioned above the Charity has secured development funding from Reaching Communities lottery for the next 3 years which will fund three part-time roles - 2 Developmental posts and a Café Manager, as well as cover 1 year's rent for a social space. This funding will commence in August 2021. The Cafe Manager is working on a business plan and looking to secure suitable premises.

Through the Together Project, an EU AMIF funded project delivered in collaboration with Groundwork South we will offer employment preparation support from April 2021. This offers basic IT skills, additional English language support and a chance to explore different type of skills needed to find employment. This project funds the role of the Buddy Coordinator on a part-time basis.

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2021 (continued)

Investment policy and objectives

The charity has no long-term investments. Our cash reserves are held current bank accounts.

Conflicts of interest

Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and register them with the other trustees and, in accordance with the Trust's policy, withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises

Trustees remuneration.

The Trustees bring a wealth of experience of refugee and migrant rights, charitable and community projects, financial and project oversight and strategy and more. They generously volunteer their time to oversee the Charity and no Trustee receives remuneration for their role as Trustee. Details of transactions in the year between the Trustees and the Charity are set out in Note 3 to these accounts

Reference and administrative information

The names of the Trustees throughout the period and at the date of this report along with other key information is set out on Page 1.

Dr Mursheda Chowdhury, Chair
Olivia Cavanagh (resigned 18th November 2020)
Christine Harmer-Brown – a long term Buddy
Rossana Leal – Founder and Director
Alexandra Kempton – Operations and Campaigns Manager
Martin Kempton
Yeser Mohammed (appointed 14th June 2021)– a long-term Buddy

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above

Dr MURSHEDA CHOWDHURY
Trustee and Chair

ROSSANA LEAL
Trustee

ALEXANDRA KEMPTON
Trustee

31st January 2020

THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE
REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021**

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Refugee Buddy Project Hastings and Rother and Wealden for the period ended 31st March 2021, which are set out on pages 10 to 12.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Trustee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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 Trust as required by section 130 of the Act;
or
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.

T. E. REYNOLDS FCA

23 Gillham Wood Road
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
East Sussex TN39 3BN

31st January 2022

**THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE PERIOD FROM 23 SEPTEMBER 2020 to 31 MARCH 2021**

	Project operating as a charity			Pre charity operations
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2020-21 £	TOTAL 2019-2021 £
RECEIPTS				
Donations	928	-	928	2,755
Activities	-	-	-	1,582
Grants received	-	17,453	17,453	61,206
Trading income	70	-	70	5,271
TOTAL RECEIPTS	998	17,453	18,451	70,813
PAYMENTS				
Fund raising costs	180	0	180	-
Trading expenses	-	-	-	795
General administration	1	738	739	2,861
Premises costs	422	648	1,070	10,216
Activity costs	1,860	3,258	5,118	7,841
Staff costs	-	17,759	17,759	14,885
Volunteer expenses	-	37	37	367
TOTAL PAYMENTS	2,463	22,440	24,903	36,965
NET RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)	(1,464)	(4,987)	(6,452)	33,849
CASH FUNDS AT START OF PERIOD	2,142	31,706	33,849	-
CASH FUNDS AT END OF PERIOD.	£678	£26,719	£27,397	£33,849
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT THE END OF THE PERIOD				
Cash funds				
- NatWest Bank	678	26,719	27,397	33,849
	£678	£26,719	£27,397	£33,849

Dr MURSHEDA CHOWDHURY
Trustee and Chair

ROSSANA LEAL
Trustee

ALEXANDRA KEMPTON
Trustee

31st January 2022

The notes on page 12 form part of these accounts

**THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE PERIOD FROM 23 SEPTEMBER 2020 to 31 MARCH 2021**

Prior to the formation of the charity

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2019-21 £
RECEIPTS			
Donations	2,755	-	2,755
Activities	1,582	-	1,582
Grants received	-	61,206	61,206
Trading income	5,271	-	5,271
	-	-	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	<u>9,608</u>	<u>61,206</u>	<u>70,813</u>
PAYMENTS			
Trading expenses	795	-	795
General administration	1,593	1,269	2,861
Premises costs	2,800	7,416	10,216
Activity costs	1,954	5,887	7,841
Staff costs	-	14,885	14,885
Volunteer expenses	324	43	367
TOTAL PAYMENTS	<u>7,465</u>	<u>29,499</u>	<u>36,965</u>
NET RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)	2,142	31,706	33,849
CASH FUNDS AT START OF PERIOD	-	-	
CASH FUNDS AT END OF PERIOD.	<u>£2,142</u>	<u>£31,706</u>	<u>£33,849</u>

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT THE END OF THE PERIOD

Cash funds			
- NatWest Bank	2,142	31,706	33,849
	<u>£2,142</u>	<u>£31,706</u>	<u>£33,849</u>

The notes on page 12 form part of these accounts

**THE REFUGEE BUDDY PROJECT HASTINGS ROTHER AND WEALDEN
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD FROM 23 SEPTEMBER 2020 to 31 MARCH 2021**

1 BASIS OF PREPARATION

Charities registered in England and Wales that are not companies are allowed under Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 to prepare receipts and payments accounts provided the charity's gross income is less than £250,000. As the gross income of the Charity is less than £250,000 the Trustees have decided to prepare these accounts on a Receipts and Payments basis.

The Buddy Project was incorporated as a charity on the 23rd September but had been in operation since mid 2019. These accounts contain two Receipts and Payments statements. One for the period up until the formation of the Charity and a second one for the period from 23rd September to 31st March 2021 covering the period when the Project was a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation

2 GRANT INCOME RECEIVED IN THE PERIOD

During the period covered by the two Receipts and Payments statements the Charity has received grants from various organisations/programs where the expenditure has taken place prior to or will take place after the 31st March 2021. Significant grants that fall into this category are:-

- the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Program via Hastings Brough Council. This grant is received in arrears and £1,643 was received after 31st March 2021 for expenditure prior to this date.
- AB Charitable Trust. £10,000 was received prior to 31st March 2021 but was spent from April 2021 onwards
- £12,000 was received prior to September 2020 from Hastings Borough Council to provide funding for premises for the Project to operate from when Covid restrictions are lifted in the future.

Grant income is treated as "Restricted" as it has been given to fund specific items of expenditure. If there is an underspend on a grant then any surplus will be, with the agreement of the granting body, transferred to Unrestricted Funds.

3 RELATED PARTIES

From December to March payments were made to the following Trustees for specific grant funded part time roles independent of their roles as Trustees of the charity:-

- Alex Kempton £4,200 for her role as Operations and Campaigns Manager with responsibility for the administration of the charity
- Rossana Leal £5,320 for her role as Project Development Officer with responsibility for the development of the Project

Prior to December payments were made to these two individuals direct by the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Program and so no expenditure was recorded in the Project's books for these payments. Post December these payments have been fully funded from grants made specifically for the purpose of funding these roles and so none of the Unrestricted Funds of the charity have been used for the purpose of making these payments.

No payments have been made to these individuals or to any other Trustees for their roles as Trustees of the Charity.

4 MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CHARITY AS A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

The Trustees confirm that:-

- the charity has not given any financial guarantees to another organisation
- there are no debts outstanding at the year-end that represent a charge on the assets of the charity.