

SUSSEX SYRIAN COMMUNITY CIO

England & Wales · Charity number 1196947

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2021-12-06

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 63 The Highway
Brighton
BN2 4GD

Phone 07460963163

Email sussexsyriancommunity@gmail.com

Website sussexsyriancommunity.co.uk

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE:(1) TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT BY WORKING WITH PEOPLE IN SUSSEX WHO ARE SOCIALLY EXCLUDED ON THE GROUNDS OF THEIR ETHNIC ORIGIN, RELIGION, BELIEF OR CREED (IN PARTICULAR, MEMBERS OF THE SYRIAN COMMUNITY) TO RELIEVE THE NEEDS OF SUCH PEOPLE AND ASSIST THEM TO INTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY, IN PARTICULAR BY PROVIDING: (A) EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND IN OTHER SKILLS AND SUBJECTS; (B) A LOCAL NETWORK GROUP THAT ENCOURAGES AND ENABLES MEMBERS OF THE SYRIAN COMMUNITY TO PARTICIPATE MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY; (C) SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND EVENTS INVOLVING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. (2) THE PROMOTION OF RACIAL HARMONY FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT BY:(A) PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE SYRIAN COMMUNITY AND ALL OTHER RACIAL GROUPS; (B) ADVANCING EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT THE SYRIAN COMMUNITY TO PROMOTE GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN PERSONS OF DIFFERENT RACIAL GROUPS; (C) RAISING AWARENESS OF SYRIAN CULTURE BY RUNNING CLASSES, HOLDING EVENTS AND SHARING INFORMATION.

Activities: The Sussex Syrian Community Group aims to empower Syrian refugees in Sussex to build integrated, stable and happy lives in the UK. We create spaces for Syrians to come together, often with others from the wider community in Brighton and Hove, to celebrate our history, culture and resilience. We run language courses, skills courses, and provide advice and help with accessing services.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Disability, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin

Geography

- Brighton And Hove
- East Sussex
- West Sussex

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£36,054	£26,749	-	-
2024-03-31	£18,309	£15,620	-	-
2023-03-31	£28,748	£28,509	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Ahmad Yabroudi	Chair	2021-07-12
Esam Albدين		2021-07-12
Fathi Khalil		2021-07-12
Jamal Alsakka		2021-07-12
Jean Massara		2021-07-12
Mohamad Khaled Morad		2021-07-12

Accounts

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

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

The trustees present their annual report and examined accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025.

Name of charity

Sussex Syrian Community CIO Registered Charity number
1196947

Address

St Mary Magdalens Community Centre, 55 Upper North Street, Brighton, BN1 3FH

Website address

sussexsyriancommunity.co.uk

Trustees

Ahmad Yabroudi (Chair)
Fathi Khalil
Mohamad Khaled Morad
Johnny Massara
Esam Albدين
Jamal Alsakka

Accounts Examiners

Resource Centre, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 0GY

Bank

Barclays Bank PLC, 8 Calverley Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2TB

Governing document

Sussex Syrian Community CIO is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission on 6th December 2021 under charity number 1196947. It is governed by the constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Association Model) with voting members other than its trustees

Organisational structure

The charity trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits.

The trustees meet together monthly and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running all the activities provided by the charity.

Appointment of trustees

Trustees are elected by the members of the Charity at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). At each AGM half of the existing Trustees retire. The membership then elects the trustees for the coming year, which can be new Trustees or those who have retired at the beginning of the meeting.

Induction and training of Trustees

Following appointment, new trustees are provided with a copy of the constitution and advised of their responsibilities as a charity trustee. They are provided with copies of all the charity's policies and advised to familiarise themselves with them. They are asked to sign the Charity Trustee declaration of eligibility and responsibility.

Risk management

The trustees discuss possible risks to the charity and how to mitigate them at our regular monthly meetings. We have identified the main risks faced by the charity as follows.

Insufficient funds to run our core activities

In 2022 we prepared a 5-year plan of activities and budget. This allows for inflationary increases in our costs as forecast by the Office for National Statistics. This is reviewed each year going forward. We prepared a fundraising plan based on this budget and secured five-year funding from The Lottery Communities Fund, starting in October 2023. This funding will not cover all of our activities and we will still need to apply to other funders. At the beginning of each year we review our budget and plan our fundraising applications accordingly. We review this throughout the year and adapt our activities depending on the level of funds we have been able to raise.

Provision of venues for our activities

The majority of our activities take place at Brighton College, Eastern Road, BN2 0AL and St. Mary Magdalens Community Centre, 55 Upper North Street, Brighton, BN1 3FH. We pay an hourly fee for the use of St Mary Magdalens, which we include in our budgeting. Brighton College very kindly provides us with space free of charge as an in-kind donation. We are aware that this may not always be available to us and so maintain regular contact with the college to ensure we will know in advance if there are any changes to this arrangement and will be able to adjust our funding or activities as necessary. We have allowed for this eventuality in our 5-year budget running 2023–28.

Risk of a serious incident or safeguarding incident

We have robust safeguarding procedures as set out in our Safeguarding policies for children and adults at risk and ensure that our designated safeguarding lead receives regular training.

Objectives and activities

Our objects, as set out in our charity constitution are:

- 1) To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by working with people in Sussex who are socially excluded on the grounds of their ethnic origin, religion, belief or creed (in particular, members of the Syrian community) to relieve the needs of such people and assist them to integrate into society, in particular by providing:
 - a) education and training in the English language and in other skills and subjects;
 - b) a local network group that encourages and enables members of the Syrian community to participate more effectively with the wider community;
 - c) social and recreational facilities and events involving the local community.
- 2) The promotion of racial harmony for the public benefit by:
 - a) promoting knowledge and mutual understanding between the Syrian community and all other racial groups;

- b) advancing education and raising awareness about the Syrian community to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups;
- c) raising awareness of Syrian culture by running classes, holding events and sharing information.

Activities and achievements

Public benefit

The trustees are mindful of our duty under section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Commission. We have referred to this guidance when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. We believe the summary of our activities, outlined below, demonstrates our commitment to creating public benefit in all our work.

Summary of activities

In 2024-25, we continued to run our core activities to make our community stronger and more cohesive, improve our members' mental and physical wellbeing, and support Syrians to access activities and services they need.

Over 600 adults and children attended our activities over the year. This includes those who were already living in the area prior to the war in Syria, those who have settled here since as refugees and those who are still arriving.

- 10-30 different people per week received support from our drop in service
- 25-35 people attended each of our fortnightly Breakfast Clubs
- 220 adults and children came to our Christmas party
- 200 adults and children attended our graduation celebration
- 100 children attended our Arabic language school
- 20 community members volunteered to support our activities

Our vibrant Children's Arabic School

100 children attended our Sunday Arabic School held at Brighton College. Due to the popularity of our Arabic School, we increased the number of weekly classes to 10 and the number of teachers went up to 15. We continued to run this free of charge in 2024-25 to make sure no one was excluded. This has helped children and young people from Arabic-speaking families to communicate with their parents and older relatives, to better connect with their heritage, to read literature and access written and spoken information from Syria, and to feel a sense of belonging in the Syrian community locally. In addition, our students who passed GCSE or A-levels in Arabic this year gained not only a great sense of achievement but also added a string to their bow when aiming for higher education and/or employment.

At our graduation event we thanked our teachers for all their hard work and care during the year and celebrated our children's achievements so they could understand how valued they are by all of our community.

We organised an educational and fun outing to the Sea Life Centre in Brighton for the children in June 2024, which was greatly enjoyed by our young people. Seeing wonderful marine life up close was a magical moment for them, and connected them to the wider world: their environment, wildlife and the planet.

Festivals and celebrations

Our celebrations bring our community together and enable us to build a bridge between our lives in Syria to our new lives in Brighton and Hove. Our Christmas Party in 2024 was a great success. Over 200 adults and children attended. We shared food and cake, and we organised a DJ and face-painting, and our very own Father Christmas handed out gifts to the children.

In December 2024, we also held celebrations to commemorate the end of the war in Syria. This was a very emotional and special day for all of us.

Our planned celebrations for Mother's Day and Eid al-Fitr 2025 were postponed this year as Mother's day (which we celebrate on 21st March every year) fell in the middle of Ramadan and many Syrian Christians were fasting for Easter.

Wednesday Advice Drop-in and Breakfast Club

Every Wednesday our team of volunteers provide a free advice service, which is available to everyone and accessed by many people beyond our own community. We help people to access the services they need, signpost them to specialist agencies – anything from housing, managing utility bills to communicating with medical professionals. We provide a listening ear, translation, accompany people to appointments, and continue to provide support until it is no longer needed. There has been an increase in the need for digital/technical support as many services have moved to online platforms and some of our members either don't have the digital skills/knowledge or access to the internet or smart devices.

Every two weeks we hold our Breakfast Club of traditional Syrian food, where everyone gathers and we invite representatives from the wider community to join us.

The value of long-term wrap-around support

We not only provide in-person support but we also share notices about other opportunities, training, skills, employment opportunities, job fairs, and cultural activities through our Facebook group.

Our committee has also been helping families and individuals outside of our Wednesday drop-ins to help them access services, to accompany people to appointments or helping with translation.

We have supported many members over the course of months and years, enabling them to build confidence and re-build their lives here in the UK. The long-term effects of this support are visible: we were proud to see our members gain employment, start their own small businesses and graduate from university this year.

Making our mark in the city

We connect with and support many other organisations in the city, by sharing our knowledge, experience and culture.

Over the year we have worked with organisations supporting refugees: in particular, Voices in Exile, Sanctuary on Sea, Worthing Refugee Action, Sussex Interpreting Services, Refugee Radio, Network of International Women, University of Sanctuary, EuroMernet, Best Foot Music, T4K, Jollof Café, Nam Yang, Migrant English Project. We receive referrals from these organisations and we also refer people to them.

We have continued our longstanding partnerships with Brighton College (who provide a free venue for our Sunday classes) and St Mary Magdalens Community Centre (where our weekly advice drop-in and Breakfast Club are held). We have received support from the Resource Centre, and our Chair is one of their Trustees.

We are part of the Functional Skills UK network and also signpost/refer people to support organisations, such as CAB, BHESCo, Money Advice Plus, Trust for Developing Communities, Bridging Change, Brighton and Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council, local churches, mosques, universities, and schools.

We also have networks with the local Sudanese, Egyptian, Lebanese, Libyan and Moroccan communities through the work we do.

Use of volunteers

Volunteers are an important resource to us in all our activities. They run the activities, prepare the food, provide transport, give advice and support, and help in too many ways to list. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without them. The majority of our volunteers are also members and beneficiaries. We aim for our volunteers to gain skills, knowledge and experience through their volunteering role that is also an asset to them in sustaining and improving the lives of themselves and their families. All our trustees also give their time freely.

Financial review

Funding sources

In 2024-25 we received grants of £1,930 from Brighton and Hove City Council, £5,240 from Sussex Community Foundation and £28,334 from The Lottery Communities Fund (Reaching Communities). We also received various donations, including £250 from the Co-op.

From October 2023 we have a 5-year grant from The Lottery Communities Fund, which will amount to £144,211 over the 5 years.

Reserves Policy

At 31st March 2025 we held £23,351, of which £5,664 was unrestricted funds.

We rely entirely on grant funding to run our activities and therefore have a very small level of free reserves. We have always had very limited funds and to date we have always been fortunate enough to receive sufficient funding to cover our costs. Over the years we have learned to manage our expectations and our budgets carefully to ensure we are consistent, sustainable and inclusive. As the year progresses we review our budget and make adjustments according to the success of our grant applications and the cost of activities.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and SORP (FRS 102).

The Trustees are required 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 statement, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which 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 Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees for the purposes of charity law who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1.

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by
Ahmad Yabroudi (Chair)

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ahmad Yabroudi', written over a horizontal line.

Date 24 / 10 / 2025

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Accounts year ended 31st March 2025

Registered charity: 1196947

Charity correspondent:

AHMAD YABROUDI
ST. MARY MAGDALENS COMMUNITY CENTRE
55 UPPER NORTH STREET
BRIGHTON
BN1 3FH

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis from information and explanations supplied by the charity.

Mireille Shimoda
Resource Centre
6 Tilbury Place
Brighton BN2 0GY
20th May 2025

These accounts have been approved by the Trustees of the charity.

Signed by one or two Trustees on behalf of all the Trustees

1. _____

2. _____

Date _____

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Statement of Financial Activities year ended 31st March 2025

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2025	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024
Receipts						
Donations & grants	35,504	550	36,054	18,309	-	18,309
Total Receipts	35,504	550	36,054	18,309	-	18,309
Payments						
Expenditure on charitable activities	26,749	-	26,749	15,620	100	15,720
Total Payments	26,749	-	26,749	15,620	100	15,720
Net receipts/payments for the year	8,755	550	9,305	2,689	(100)	2,589
Funds at 1st April 2024	10,787	3,259	14,046	8,110	3,347	11,457
Transfer of funds * see note	(1,855)	1,855	-	(12)	12	-
Balance of funds at 31st March 2025	17,687	5,664	23,351	10,787	3,259	14,046

NB some additions may vary by +/- £1 due to rounding

* Note: funds previously recorded as restricted, but were actually unrestricted.

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Receipts and Payments Account year ended 31st March 2025

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2025	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024
Receipts						
Donations & grants						
Reaching Communities - National Lottery	28,334	-	28,334	13,309	-	13,309
Brighton and Hove City Council	1,930	-	1,930	5,000	-	5,000
Sussex Community Foundation	5,240	-	5,240	-	-	-
Brighton College	-	-	-	-	-	-
Co-op	-	250	250	-	-	-
Donation	-	300	300	-	-	-
Total Receipts	35,504	550	36,054	18,309	-	18,309
Payments						
Expenditure on charitable activities						
Arabic School - teachers' fees	15,645	-	15,645	9,975	-	9,975
Arabic School - stationery, printing, supplies	2,377	-	2,377	123	-	123
Arabic School - refreshments	-	-	-	38	-	38
Arabic School - graduation party	1,141	-	1,141	306	-	306
Arabic School - volunteer expenses	625	-	625	-	-	-
Children's outings	555	-	555	-	-	-
Breakfast Club - food	469	-	469	347	-	347
Drop-in - room hire	1,440	-	1,440	1,080	-	1,080
Drop-in - refreshments	78	-	78	7	-	7
Drop-in - admin and supplies	-	-	-	52	-	52
Events - Mother's day & Easter	-	-	-	-	-	-
Events - Christmas & New Year	2,273	-	2,273	1,905	-	1,905
Events - Iftar	100	-	100	-	-	-
Events - Other	236	-	236	-	-	-
Events - Worthing Refugee Choir	-	-	-	100	-	100
English classes - travel	-	-	-	210	-	210
Driving theory classes (tutor fees)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Committee & volunteer expenses	1,690	-	1,690	1,425	-	1,425
Admin: stationery, printing etc	92	-	92	52	-	52
Miscellaneous	28	-	28	-	-	-
Emergency family support	-	-	-	-	100	100
Total Payments	26,749	-	26,749	15,620	100	15,720
Net receipts/payments for the year	8,755	550	9,305	2,689	(100)	2,589
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Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31st March 2025

Monetary Assets & Liabilities

Barclays current account	25,186
Minus uncleared cheques (126, 250-266)	(1,835)
Cash in hand	0
Balance of funds held at 31st March 2025	23,351

Non-Monetary Assets

None

Breakdown of funds at 31st March 2025

Restricted funds

Reaching Communities - National Lottery (Year 2)	10,857
Brighton and Hove City Council (Fairness Fund, 2024)	1,848
Sussex Community Foundation (2024)	5,140
<i>General funds</i>	5,506
	23,351

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Accounts year ended 31st March 2025

Registered charity: 1196947

Charity correspondent:

AHMAD YABROUDI
ST. MARY MAGDALENS COMMUNITY CENTRE
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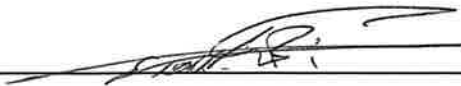
Mireille Shimoda

Resource Centre
6 Tilbury Place
Brighton BN2 0GY

20th May 2025

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Signed by one or two Trustees on behalf of all the Trustees

1. 

2. _____

Date 2.4/10/2025

Accounts

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

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

The trustees present their annual report and examined accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Name of charity

Sussex Syrian Community CIO Registered Charity number
1196947

Address

St. Mary Magdalens Community Centre, 55 Upper North Street, Brighton, BN1 3FH

Website address

sussexsyriancommunity.co.uk

Facebook page:

Trustees

Ahmad Yabroudi (Chair)

Fathi Khalil

Mohamad Khaled Morad

Johnny Massara

Esam Albدين

Jamal Alsakka

Accounts' Examiners

Resource Centre, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 0GY

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The trustees meet together monthly and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running all the activities provided by the charity.

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Trustees are elected by the members of the Charity at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). At each AGM half of the existing Trustees retire. The membership then elects the trustees for the coming year, which can be new Trustees or those who have retired at the beginning of the meeting.

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We have robust safeguarding procedures as set out in our Safeguarding policies for children and vulnerable adults, and ensure that our designated safeguarding lead receives regular training.

Objectives and activities

Our objects, as set out in our charity constitution are:

- 1) To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by working with people in Sussex who are socially excluded on the grounds of their ethnic origin, religion, belief or creed (in particular, members of the Syrian community) to relieve the needs of such people and assist them to integrate into society, in particular by providing:
 - a) education and training in the English language and in other skills and subjects;
 - b) a local network group that encourages and enables members of the Syrian community to participate more effectively with the wider community;
 - c) social and recreational facilities and events involving the local community.
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 - a) promoting knowledge and mutual understanding between the Syrian community and all other racial groups;

- b) advancing education and raising awareness about the Syrian community to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups;
- c) raising awareness of Syrian culture by running classes, holding events and sharing information.

Activities and achievements

Public benefit

The trustees are mindful of our duty under section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Commission. We have referred to this guidance when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. We believe the summary of our activities, outlined below, demonstrates our commitment to creating public benefit in all our work.

Summary of activities

In 2023-24 we have continued to expand our activities to make our community stronger and more cohesive, improve the mental and physical wellbeing of everyone, and support Syrians to access activities and services they need.

Over 600 adults and children have attended our activities over the year. This includes those who were already living in the area prior to the war in Syria, those who have settled here since as refugees and those who are still arriving.

- 240 people received support from our weekly drop in service
- 20 - 30 people attended each of our fortnightly Breakfast Clubs
- 60 adults attended our Sunday classes for English, Life in the UK and Driving Theory
- 125 adults and 90 children came to our Christmas and New Year party
- 35 adults and 60 children attended our graduation celebration
- 85 children attended our Arabic language school
- 20 community members regularly volunteered to support our activities

Our inclusive and vibrant Children's Arabic School

85 children attended our Sunday Arabic School held at Brighton College. We continued to run this free of charge in 2023-24 to make sure no one was excluded. This has helped children from Arabic-speaking families to continue to communicate with their older relatives, to better connect with their heritage, to read literature and access written and spoken information from Syria, and to feel a sense of belonging in the Syrian community locally.

At our graduation event in June 2023 we thanked our teachers for all their hard work and care during the year and celebrated our children's achievements so they could understand how valued they are by all of our community.

Building an integrated and intergenerational community

Every Sunday, alongside the Children's Arabic School, we provided language & skills training, social networking and social activities for adults. These helped established and newly arrived refugees to engage more actively in the wider community through paid work, volunteering and cultural activities.

We ran classes for 26 weeks in:

- English conversation. Giving people exposure and practice in spoken English in an informal environment.
- Driving theory. Run by a qualified driving instructor in English and Arabic.
- Life in the UK. Passing the Life in the UK test is an essential criterion for citizenship applications, so these classes help everyone to establish their life here.

In addition, we shared notices about other training, skills, employment opportunities, job fairs, and cultural activities through our Facebook group.

Festivals and celebrations

Our celebrations build a bridge between our lives in Syria to our new lives in Brighton and Hove. Our Christmas Party in 2023 was a great success. Our very own Father Christmas distributed presents to 90 children and 125 adults attended.

Our planned celebrations for Easter, Mother's Day and Eid al-Fitr were delayed this year as Mother's day (which we celebrate on 21st March every year) fell in the middle of Ramadan. We therefore plan to hold a large '3 in 1 mix and match' community celebration in July 2024. We will have presents for the mothers, activities for the children, and Syrian music so that everyone has a truly memorable day.

Wednesday Advice Drop-in and Breakfast Club

Every Wednesday our team of volunteers provide a free advice service, which is available to everyone and accessed by many people beyond our own community. We help people to access the services they need, signpost them to specialist agencies. We provide a listening ear, translation, accompany people to appointments, and continue to provide support until it is no longer needed.

Every two weeks we hold our Breakfast Club of traditional Syrian food, where everyone gathers and we invite representatives from the wider community to join us.

Making our mark in the city

We connect with and support many other organisations in the city, by sharing our knowledge, experience and culture. This year we were proud to see our esteemed professor of Arabic music, Jamal Al Sakka, travel to Algeria to give a keynote speech on the music and culture of Arabic and Andalucian peoples and receive an award for his work.

Closer to home, our member, Wadee Skaif, was honoured with an award from Brighton Table Tennis Club for the work he has done teaching young people at the club.

Over the year we have worked closely with organisations supporting refugees: in particular, Voices in Exile, Sanctuary on Sea, Music Action, Migrant English Project, Sussex Interpreting Services, University of Sanctuary, EuroMernet, Best Foot Music and T4K. We receive referrals from these organisations.

We have continued our longstanding partnerships with Brighton College (who provide a free venue for our Sunday classes and community celebrations) and St Mary Magdalens Community Centre (where our weekly advice drop-in and Breakfast Club are held). We have received support from the Resource Centre, and our Chair is one of their Trustees.

We are part of the Functional Skills UK network and also signpost/refer people to support organisations, such as CAB, BHESCo, Money Advice Plus, Brighton and Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council, local churches, mosques, universities, and schools.

Use of volunteers

Volunteers are an important resource to us in all our activities. They run the activities, prepare the food, provide transport, give advice and support, and help in too many ways to list. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without them. The majority of our volunteers are also members and beneficiaries. We aim for our volunteers to gain skills, knowledge and experience through their volunteering role that is also an asset to them in sustaining and improving the lives of themselves and their families. All our trustees also give their time freely.

Financial review

Funding sources

In 2023-24 we received grants of £5,000 from Brighton and Hove City Council and £13,309 from The Lottery Communities Fund (Reaching Communities). We carried forward £6,243 from The Lottery Communities Fund (Awards for All) and £1,966 from Brighton and Hove City Council for use during the year.

From October 2023 we have a 5-year grant from The National Lottery Communities Fund, which will amount to £144,211 over the 5 years.

Reserves Policy

At 31st March 2024 we held £14,046, of which £3,259 was unrestricted funds.

We rely entirely on grant funding to run our activities and therefore have a very small level of free reserves. We have always had very limited funds and to date we have always been fortunate enough to receive sufficient funding to cover our costs. Over the years we have learned to manage our expectations and our budgets carefully to ensure we are consistent, sustainable and inclusive. As the year progresses we review our budget and make adjustments according to the success of our grant applications and the cost of activities.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and SORP (FRS 102).

The Trustees are required 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 statement, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which 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 Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees for the purposes of charity law who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1.

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by

Ahmad Yabroudi (Chair)

Signature



Date 22 / 11 / 2024

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Accounts year ended 31st March 2024

Registered charity: 1196947

Charity correspondent:

AHMAD YABROUDI
ST. MARY MAGDALENS COMMUNITY CENTRE
55 UPPER NORTH STREET
BRIGHTON
BN1 3FH

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis from information and explanations supplied by the charity.



Mireille Shimoda

Resource Centre
6 Tilbury Place
Brighton BN2 0GY

19th June 2024

These accounts have been approved by the Trustees of the charity.

Signed by one or two Trustees on behalf of all the Trustees

1. 

2. 

Date 28.10.8/2024

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Statement of Financial Activities year ended 31st March 2024

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024	Restricted	Unrestricted	2023
Receipts						
Donations & grants	18,309	-	18,309	11,080	-	11,080
Other	-	-	-	668	-	668
Total Receipts	18,309	-	18,309	11,748	-	11,748
Payments						
Expenditure on charitable activities	15,620	100	15,720	24,120	-	24,120
Other	-	-	-	668	-	668
Total Payments	15,620	100	15,720	24,788	-	24,788
Net receipts/payments for the year	2,689	(100)	2,589	(13,040)	-	(13,040)
Funds at 1st April 2023	8,110	3,347	11,457	22,513	1,984	24,497
Transfer of funds	(12)	12	-	(1,363)	1,363	-
Balance of funds at 31st March 2024	10,787	3,259	14,046	8,110	3,347	11,457

NB some additions may vary by +/- £1 due to rounding

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Receipts and Payments Account year ended 31st March 2024

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024	Restricted	Unrestricted	2023
Receipts						
<i>Donations & grants</i>						
Reaching Communities - National Lottery	13,309	-	13,309	-	-	-
Brighton and Hove City Council	5,000	-	5,000	7,000	-	7,000
Sussex Community Foundation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brighton College	-	-	-	4,080	-	4,080
<i>Other</i>						
Earthquake emergency appeal	-	-	-	668	-	668
Total Receipts	18,309	-	18,309	11,748	-	11,748
Payments						
<i>Expenditure on charitable activities</i>						
Arabic School - teachers' fees	9,975	-	9,975	8,460	-	8,460
Arabic School - stationery, printing, supplies	123	-	123	535	-	535
Arabic School - refreshments	38	-	38	-	-	-
Arabic School - gifts to teachers	-	-	-	270	-	270
Arabic School - graduation party	306	-	306	1,271	-	1,271
Breakfast Club - food	347	-	347	121	-	121
Drop-in - room hire	1,080	-	1,080	1,200	-	1,200
Drop-in - refreshments	7	-	7	21	-	21
Drop-in - admin and supplies	52	-	52	49	-	49
Events - Mother's day & Easter	-	-	-	1,425	-	1,425
Events - Christmas & New Year	1,905	-	1,905	1,942	-	1,942
Events - Worthing Refugee Choir	100	-	100	-	-	-
English classes - travel	210	-	210	5,490	-	5,490
Driving theory classes (tutor fees)	-	-	-	190	-	190
Committee & volunteer expenses	1,425	-	1,425	1,610	-	1,610
Admin: stationery, printing etc	52	-	52	-	-	-
Emergency family support	-	100	100	1,536	-	1,536
<i>Other</i>						
Earthquake emergency appeal	-	-	-	668	-	668
Total Payments	15,620	100	15,720	24,788	-	24,788
Net receipts/payments for the year	2,689	(100)	2,589	(13,040)	-	(13,040)
Funds at 1st April 2023	8,110	3,347	11,457	22,513	1,984	24,497
Transfer of funds	(12)	12	-	(1,363)	1,363	-
Balance of funds at 31st March 2024	10,787	3,259	14,046	8,110	3,347	11,457

NB some additions may vary by +/- £1 due to rounding

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31st March 2024

Monetary Assets & Liabilities

Barclays current account	16,983
Minus uncleared cheques (108, 117, 118, 120, 185, 186, 195, 196, 197, 198)	(2,965)
Cash in hand	35
Owed to committee member	(7)
Balance of funds held at 31st March 2024	14,046

Non-Monetary Assets

None

Breakdown of funds at 31st March 2024

Restricted funds

Reaching Communities - National Lottery	8,382
Brighton and Hove City Council	2,405

General funds

14,046

Accounts

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

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

The trustees present their annual report and examined accounts for the year ended 31st March 2023.

Name of charity

Sussex Syrian Community CIO Registered Charity number
1196947

Address

St. Mary Magdalens Community Centre, 55 Upper North Street, Brighton, BN1 3FH

Website address

sussexsyriancommunity.co.uk

Facebook page:

Trustees

Ahmad Yabroudi (Chair)
Fathi Khalil
Mohamad Khaled Morad
Johnny Massara
Esam Albdin
Jamal Alsakka

Accounts' Examiners

Resource Centre, 6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 0GY

Bank

Barclays Bank PLC, 8 Calverley Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2TB

Governing document

Sussex Syrian Community CIO is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission on 6th December 2021 under charity number 1196947. It is governed by the constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Association Model) with voting members other than its trustees

Organisational structure

The charity trustees are responsible for the general control and management of the charity. The trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration or other financial benefits.

The trustees meet together monthly and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running all the activities provided by the charity.

Appointment of trustees

Trustees are elected by the members of the Charity at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). At each AGM half of the existing Trustees retire. The membership then elects the trustees for the coming year, which can be new Trustees or those who have retired at the beginning of the meeting.

Induction and training of Trustees

Following appointment, new trustees are provided with a copy of the constitution and advised of their responsibilities as a charity trustee. They are provided with copies of all the charity's policies and advised to familiarise themselves with them. They are asked to sign the Charity Trustee declaration of eligibility and responsibility.

Risk management

The trustees discuss possible risks to the charity and how to mitigate them at our regular monthly meetings. We have identified the main risks faced by the charity as follows.

Insufficient funds to run our core activities

In 2022 we prepared a 5 year plan of activities and budget. This allows for inflationary increases in our costs as forecast by the Office for National Statistics. This will be reviewed each year going forward. We have prepared a fundraising plan based on this budget and have secured five year funding from the National Lottery Communities Fund, starting in October 2023. This funding will not cover all of our activities and we will still need to apply to other funders. At the beginning of each year we review our budget and plan our fundraising applications accordingly. We review this throughout the year and adapt our activities depending on the level of funds we have been able to raise.

Provision of venues for our activities

The majority of our activities take place at Brighton College, Eastern Road, BN2 0AL and St. Mary Magdalens Community Centre, 55 Upper North Street, Brighton, BN1 3FH. We pay an hourly fee for the use of St Mary Magdalens, which we include in our budgeting. Brighton College very kindly provide us with space free of charge as an in-kind donation. We are aware that this may not always be available to us and so maintain regular contact with the college to ensure we will know in advance if there are any changes to this arrangement and so we will be able to adjust our funding or activities as necessary. We have allowed for this eventuality in our 5 year budget running 2023 – 2028.

Risk of a serious incident or safeguarding incident

We ensure that our insurance cover for public and Trustee Indemnity is reviewed and renewed annually. We have robust safeguarding procedures as set out in our Safeguarding policies for children and vulnerable adults, and ensure that our designated safeguarding lead receives regular training.

Objectives and activities

Our objects, as set out in our charity constitution are:

- 1) To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by working with people in Sussex who are socially excluded on the grounds of their ethnic origin, religion, belief or creed (in particular, members of the Syrian community) to relieve the needs of such people and assist them to integrate into society, in particular by providing:
 - a) education and training in the English language and in other skills and subjects;
 - b) a local network group that encourages and enables members of the Syrian community to participate more effectively with the wider community;
 - c) social and recreational facilities and events involving the local community.
- 2) The promotion of racial harmony for the public benefit by:

- a) promoting knowledge and mutual understanding between the Syrian community and all other racial groups;
- b) advancing education and raising awareness about the Syrian community to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups;
- c) raising awareness of Syrian culture by running classes, holding events and sharing information.

Activities and achievements

Public benefit

The trustees are mindful of our duty under section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Commission. We have referred to this guidance when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. We believe the summary of our activities, outlined below, demonstrates our commitment to creating public benefit in all our work.

Summary of activities

In 2022-23 we have continued to expand our activities to make our community stronger and more cohesive, improve the mental and physical wellbeing of everyone, and support Syrians to access activities and services they need.

Over 600 adults and children have attended our activities over the year. This includes those who were already living in the area prior to the war in Syria, those who have settled here since as refugees and those who are still arriving.

- 200 people have received support from our weekly drop-in service
- 140 people have attended our Breakfast Club
- 150 adults have attended English lessons
- 120 people came to our Easter and Mother's Day celebrations in April 2022
- 100 people came to our Christmas and New year party
- 150 people came to our summer BBQs
- 120 adults and children attended our graduation celebrations
- 65 children regularly attend our Arabic language school
- 13 adults attended Driving Theory classes
- 12 adults attended Life in the UK classes
- 50 adults and children came on our outings

Supporting newly arrived families

Many of our members remember what it was like to arrive in the UK as refugees. We know what it is like to have lost everything and arrive in a country that feels strange and unfamiliar. This means we have an understanding of the needs of those who are still arriving and a responsibility to give them the support that others gave to us when we arrived.

We invite everybody, without exception, to our Breakfast Club. As a smaller gathering this gives them the chance to get to know us, talk to others one-to-one, and feel at home in a space that replicates the extended weekend family breakfasts we used to have back in Syria. It also gives us chance to get to know them and what type of support they need.

We have supported families with emergency food parcels, which are often funded by individuals from our committee. Then we help them with many of the practical things they need to sort out. This can be housing, healthcare, benefits, education and dealing with utility companies. Sometimes this

can be a referral or a one-off bit of advice, at other times it can involve taking them to an appointment, staying with them and interpreting for them. There are times when we have taken someone to hospital and stayed with them in A&E or the maternity ward.

As people become a little more settled we help them to plan for their future lives, looking at what work they can do with the skills and qualifications they have, what training they need to make this possible, and learning English so they can better integrate into the wider community. We have referred many people to other ESOL classes to supplement their attend at our weekly English classes.

Building our children's future

We have expanded our children's Arabic School from 6 teachers when we started to 12 teachers in 2023. We now have 2 kindergarten classes, a GCSE class and an A Level class. We then have four classes in between. The children work in mixed age groups as they progress from basic Arabic to GCSE level. This depends on lots of factors, including their lived experience of speaking Arabic either at home or in Syria in their early years.

We are very proud that 7 of our students achieved an A* in their Arabic language A level in 2022, and 12 students passed their GCSE.

But our school is about a lot more than exams. We encourage our children to speak Arabic for all of the time that they are at the school, so it feels familiar to them and becomes an integral part of their lives. We also encourage the children to socialise and spend time together and to build friendships. More recently, we have noticed the older children spending time together after the school and meeting up to go to cafes, bowling, or other activities. This tells us that we are succeeding in giving our children peer support structures to help them navigate their lives.

We complement the school with all our family gatherings: our summer BBQ's, outings, Christmas and New Year party, Easter and Mother's Day parties, Eid celebrations and graduation celebrations. This gives the children a chance to enjoy spending time together with their parents and feel like they are part of one big extended family.

At our school we have several children who have physical disabilities, learning disabilities, emotional difficulties and mental health problems. Some of this comes from the trauma their families have lived through. Because we work on a small personal scale, we don't leave anyone feeling like they are an outsider. We involve them all in all our activities, focusing on their strengths and what they feel comfortable doing.

Making a difference: Building skills, reducing isolation and strengthening our community

All the adults in our community face layers of trauma that they are constantly struggling to overcome. Our experiences of having to leave our own country are always in our minds, but we are also struggling to move forward for ourselves and our children. The challenges of covid and the lockdown clearly exacerbated this and many are still trying to recover from it. In early 2023 we saw the devastating effects of the earthquakes in Syria and Turkey. Once again many of us have lost family and friends and this has brought back memories of the devastation of the war and our journeys to escape from it. We have been through the agony, again, of not knowing if our friends and family were alive or dead, and also hearing about the terrible conditions for those who have survived but lost their homes.

It has been a very tough year and we have survived by being together, by talking to each other and by supporting each other. Between us we have so much shared history and experience, which helps

us to understand each other. We don't always have to explain to each other how we feel, because we just know.

To keep our community strong, and maintain people's mental and physical well-being, we have to look forward and find something positive to keep us going. We celebrate every time someone passes a milestone in their life. We love to see someone break out of the trauma they are experiencing, to learn new skills, to pass their driving test or Life in the UK test. We love to see people becoming fluent in English or to get a job.

In our school we encourage the children to express their feelings about their lives and their hopes for the future through art and writing, in ways they can feel comfortable. We have informal and social time, where students bring their own art materials, toys or games from home to share with other students. We have seen how this supports the sense of community among students, especially when the older children arrange to meet and socialise together outside of the school.

Use of volunteers

Volunteers are an important resource to us in all our activities. They run the activities, prepare the food, provide transport, give advice and support, and help in too many ways to list. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without them. The majority of our volunteers are also members and beneficiaries. We aim for our volunteers to gain skills, knowledge and experience through their volunteering role that is also an asset to them in sustaining and improving the lives of themselves and their families. All our trustees also give their time freely.

Financial review

Funding sources

In 2022-23 we received grants of £7,000 from Brighton and Hove City Council and £4,080 from Brighton College. We carried forward £10,000 from The National Lottery Communities Fund and £5,000 from Sussex Community Foundation for use during the year.

From October 2023 we have a 5 year grant from The National Lottery Communities Fund, which will amount to £144,211 over the 5 years. In the current financial year we have received a grant of £5,000 from Brighton and Hove City Council and are awaiting the outcome of an application to Sussex Community Foundation (at 22/11/23).

Reserves Policy

At 31st March 2023 we held £11,457, of which £3,347 was unrestricted funds.

We rely entirely on grant funding to run our activities and therefore have a very small level of free reserves. We have always had very limited funds and to date we have always been fortunate enough to receive sufficient funding to cover our costs. Over the last 7 years we have learned to manage our expectations and our budgets carefully to ensure we are consistent, sustainable and inclusive. As the year progresses we review our budget, and make adjustments according to the success of our grant applications and the cost of activities.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and SORP (FRS 102).

The Trustees are required 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 statement, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis

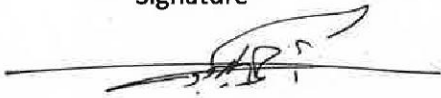
The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees for the purposes of charity law who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1.

Approved by the trustees and signed on its behalf by

Ahmad Yabroudi (Chair)

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ahmad Yabroudi', written over a horizontal line.

Date 23/11/2023

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Accounts year ended 31st March 2023

Registered charity: 1196947

Charity correspondent:

AHMAD YABROUDI
ST. MARY MAGDALENS COMMUNITY CENTRE
55 UPPER NORTH STREET
BRIGHTON
BN1 3FH

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis from information and explanations supplied by the charity.


Mireille Shimoda
Resource Centre
6 Tilbury Place
Brighton BN2 0GY
10th August 2023

These accounts have been approved by the Trustees of the charity.

Signed by one or two Trustees on behalf of all the Trustees

1. Ahmad Yabroudi 
2. Fathi Khalil 

Date 10th Sept. 2023

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Statement of Financial Activities year ended 31st March 2023

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2023	Restricted	Unrestricted	2022 *see note
Receipts						
Donations & grants	11,080	-	11,080	17,000	-	17,000
Other	668	-	668	-	-	-
Total Receipts	11,748	-	11,748	17,000	-	17,000
Payments						
Expenditure on charitable activities	24,120	-	24,120	3,721	-	3,721
Other	668	-	668	-	-	-
Total Payments	24,788	-	24,788	3,721	-	3,721
Net payments for the year	(13,040)	-	(13,040)	13,279	-	13,279
Funds at 1st April 2022	22,513	1,984	24,497	9,234	1,984	11,218
Transfer of funds (Phoenix funds 2020)	(1,363)	1,363	-	-	-	-
Balance of funds at 31st March 2023	8,110	3,347	11,457	22,513	1,984	24,497

NB some additions may vary by +/- £1 due to rounding

* NOTE: 2022 is a part year, only covering the period December 2021 to March 2022. December 2021 was when the organisation was formally registered as a CIO.

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Receipts and Payments Account year ended 31st March 2023

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2023	Restricted	Unrestricted	2022 ^{see note}
Receipts						
Donations & grants						
Awards for All	-	-	-	10,000	-	10,000
Brighton and Hove City Council	7,000	-	7,000	2,000	-	2,000
Sussex Community Foundation	-	-	-	5,000	-	5,000
Brighton College	4,080	-	4,080	-	-	-
Other						
Earthquake emergency appeal	668	-	668	-	-	-
Total Receipts	11,748	-	11,748	17,000	-	17,000
Payments						
Expenditure on charitable activities						
Arabic School - teachers' fees	8,460	-	8,460	2,465	-	2,465
Arabic School - stationery, printing, supplies	535	-	535	61	-	61
Arabic School - refreshments	-	-	-	51	-	51
Arabic School - gifts to teachers	270	-	270	-	-	-
Arabic School - graduation party	1,271	-	1,271	-	-	-
Breakfast Club - food	121	-	121	148	-	148
Drop-in - room hire	1,200	-	1,200	360	-	360
Drop-in - refreshments	21	-	21	-	-	-
Drop-in - admin and supplies	49	-	49	-	-	-
Events - Mother's day & Easter	1,425	-	1,425	412	-	412
Events - Christmas & New Year	1,942	-	1,942	-	-	-
English classes - travel	5,490	-	5,490	-	-	-
Driving theory classes (tutor fees)	190	-	190	-	-	-
Committee & volunteer expenses	1,610	-	1,610	225	-	225
Emergency family support	1,536	-	1,536	-	-	-
Other						
Earthquake emergency appeal	668	-	668	-	-	-
Total Payments	24,788	-	24,788	3,721	-	3,496
Net payments for the year	(13,040)	-	(13,040)	13,279	-	13,279
Funds at 1st April 2022	22,513	1,984	24,497	9,234	1,984	11,218
Transfer of funds (Phoenix funds 2020)	(1,363)	1,363	-	-	-	-
Balance of funds at 31st March 2023	8,110	3,347	11,457	22,513	1,984	24,497

NB some additions may vary by +/- £1 due to rounding

Sussex Syrian Community CIO

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31st March 2023

Monetary Assets

Barclays current account	10,826
Cash in hand (held for teachers' fees & transport costs for adults' classes)	630
Balance of funds held at 31st March 2022	11,456

Liabilities

The charity has no known liabilities.

Non-Monetary Assets

None

Breakdown of funds at 31st March 2023

Restricted funds

Awards for All	6,143
Brighton and Hove City Council	1,966

General funds

3,347

11,456