

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Head of Centre:

C. Priya Thamotheram

B.Sc (Hons) Soc., PGCE,

M.Sc.Soc (Econ)

Annual General Meeting:

Highfields Community Association, 5pm on Wednesday 24th February 2021

Hope you and your family are keeping safe and well and in these challenging times, you are warmly invited to HCA's 2020 Annual General Meeting which given the current pandemic linked lockdown, will be held via the following Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/93415547684?pwd=OUVVdnY3cFM3b2hyVVdTZWY2enNJZz09>

Meeting ID: 934 1554 7684

Passcode: 670106

1. Registration and Guidance for the conduct of the meeting
2. Apologies
3. Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of HCA held on 28/10/2019 (see attached copy) and any matters arising.
4. Consideration and adoption of an Annual Report for the (extended) period ending 31 December 2020 (copy to be circulated subsequently and also available at the AGM).
5. Consideration and adoption of the draft accounts of HCA for the year ending 31 March 2020 (copy to be circulated subsequently and also available at the AGM).
6. Appointment of auditors and fixing of their remuneration
The HCA Board (Governing Body) recommends that the current auditors (Watergates Ltd) be appointed for the forthcoming year.
7. Appointment of Individual Members' representatives
8. Appointment of Directors

This will conclude the formal business of the AGM.

There will then be a short presentation by Chris Shaw on our lottery funded Highfields Centre Development Project.

HIGHFIELDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 28th October 2019

Present: As per attendance list.

Welcome and Apologies: Iris opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance.

Apologies: - Baljinder Singh (HC Staff); Richard Evans (CAB); Marianne Pape (AAC); Suzanne Overton-Edwards (Ind); Liz Kendall (MP, Leicester West); Ian Richards (GFTU).

1. Minutes of last meeting (9/11/2018) – Agreed as an accurate record – T. Naute.

2. Matters arising: None

3. Consideration and adoption of Annual Staff Report – Priya welcomed all in attendance and stated that tonight's Guest speaker Vidhya Alakeson, Chief Executive, Power to Change, was delayed on route and should be joining the AGM at 6.30pm.

Priya spoke very briefly to the report and outlined the following items:- Centre's statistics, new tenants (TREC & Leicester Fitness Hub) and the increase in footfall, the newly appointed 'consultancy' staff (Tara Munroe & Chris Shaw) through the development fund, the dedication of the Centre's GB and staff team and thanked all staff for their contribution to this year's annual report.

Fatima Li (Senior Youth Worker) invited the four representatives from the Centre's youth clubs and serving on the GB to give a short presentation from their recent Residential weekend at Kingswood Outdoor Centre.

The full residential report is in the annual staff report and Priya encouraged everyone to take a copy and read the report at their leisure.

Iris recommended the report be approved – Report was accepted (T Naute).

4. Consideration and adoption of accounts – Priya took this item in the absence of the Treasurer. No questions were raised, and the report was agreed.

5. Appointment of Auditors – The HCA Board (Governing Body) recommends that the current auditors (Watergates Ltd) be appointed for a forthcoming year - agreed to continue with Watergates for next year.

6. Appointment of Individual Members- None received

7. Appointment of New Directors – Iris Lightfoote, Tirathpal Naute and Syl Jeffers stood down as required by HCA's Articles and Memorandums (3-year term) and re-submitted their documents to stand again with no further new applications received, all 3 Directors were approved for a further 3-year term.

Iris concluded the formal meeting by thanking Priya for the Annual Staff Report and introduced our guest speaker, Vidhya Alakeson, to make her presentation to the AGM on 'Community Businesses: Are we just filling in for the state?' – a fuller report on her speech is available via the Centre's office.

Questions following the presentation: -

How is Power to Change funded? What structures are in place post Brexit? What support is there for smaller community businesses?

Iris closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance, with a special thank you to Vidhya Alakeson, our distinguished guest for her presentation at the AGM.

HCA/HC Annual Report (2020) – Introduction & Welcome!

Hello and a special welcome to you all on our first ever ‘virtual’ AGM!

2020 has been a very different and challenging year, not only for us here at Highfields Centre but across the nation and indeed, globally. It’s been widely referred to as the lost year and/or, the veritable ‘annus horribilis’ and I’m sure you will have your own favourite word/phrase to describe it.

It has certainly been a very challenging year for us, with many activities being suspended for long periods due to the Covid19 related lockdowns, with Leicester being subjected to an almost continuous lockdown since late March 2020. However and given the Governing Body’s decision to ensure all staff were fully paid during their furloughed periods meant that many of our staff voluntarily provided the much-needed support for our vulnerable service users throughout the year by keeping in regular ‘virtual’ contact with them. In conjunction with TREC, we also provided a weekly food parcel collection service, with the latter originally intended to provide for about 30 clients but more than double that number were attending those weekly sessions.

Although we were unable to access the government’s business support schemes during the year as our rateable value exceeded the £51k cap set by the government, we were successful in some other funding bids which have greatly helped to ease the significant losses we incurred during the 2020/21 financial year.

In late June, we worked with both Leicester City Council and the UK Government (and their Covid-19 contracted team) about setting up the first indoor (walk-in) Covid-19 Test Centre here at HC. Matters progressed swiftly and that service has been provided continuously since then.

During September and October, we were able to reopen some of our group activities, albeit with reduced numbers to reflect the social distancing guidance but that was soon stopped in December with the imposition of the Tier 4 constraints, and continued in January with the reimposition of the national lockdown. The stop-start nature of these actions has not helped our service users, nor those of our ‘tenant’s service users but given the disproportionately high levels of Covid19 related infection, hospitalisation and deaths from within our communities, we’ve had to adhere to those constraints.

The current lockdown and the roll-out of the Covid19 vaccination programme seems finally to be making a significant and beneficial impact on the rates of infection, hospitalisation and deaths, so hopefully, we will be able to restart our much-needed services in the next few weeks. It will also enable us to make headway with our expanded youth, adult learning and arts programmes, as well some new programmes we’ve been working on over these last few months, including our new community health and sports activator work.

As in previous years, the Centre’s staff, users and the local communities have been particularly grateful for the dedicated support and commitment of its Governing Body and especially, its Chair. Again, as in previous years, we would express our enormous gratitude to Pat Gardner for her continued and invaluable role in being the central pivot of the staff team. We’d also like to thank the Premises Team for keeping the expanded building safe and clean and take this opportunity to thank all our other staff, users, colleagues and friends (from near and far) for their invaluable support and encouragement over the last year and we look forward to working with you all in the coming year to not only benefit our Centre users but also, the Greater Highfields community and indeed, the city and county wide residents.

There’s much to look forward to this year, including continuing with the hugely popular and successful Highfields Festival, with the latter presenting wonderful opportunities to celebrate our successes, not just as an independent Centre but also, as a growing and confident local community.

With all good wishes.
Priya Thamootheram,
Head of Centre.

HCA Interim Chair's Report 2020

The last year has been dogged by the changing environment due to the ravages of COVID19. Highfields Centre is not immune to these unrivalled challenges which have led to staff being furloughed, resulting in services being forced to discontinue until there is a lifting of the lockdown. It is unfortunate that Leicester has experienced a longer period of this lockdown than anywhere else in the country and this area is and remains the most impacted by these measures.

It is indeed that impact which prompted the creation of a much needed foodbank from the Centre. Here, Highfields Centre worked in partnership with The Race Equality Centre to regularly offer emergency provisions to those most in need. So, whilst the Centre remained closed in the main, it opened its doors every Monday morning for this service.

A further much needed service to this area was the requirement to test individuals for this tenacious virus so, following a request for use of part of the building, there was no hesitation in responding positively and thereby, seeing the first indoor testing centre in the country operating from these premises.

Also needed were appropriate and understandable messages to communities and services within the locality, of the national and local government guidelines. Two health workers were duly recruited by the Centre to undertake outreach work in this area armed with knowledge, literature and covid protection products.

In the knowledge that this current experience needs to be butted against an energised post covid era, the Centre has recruited workers to concentrate on the arts, alongside marketing & social media development to begin to create and bring the renewed space into revitalised use for the communities.

Again, and as is usual, I would like to thank the Governing Body and the staff for their investment over the last year, diligently engaging in the Centre's current and future developments plans.

Dr Iris Lightfoote,
HCA Interim Chair

Treasurer's Report

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2020. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and activities

Its mission is to help provide, develop and manage a family oriented community, sports and arts learning centre and to serve Leicester's (and now extended to Leicestershire's) population, with a particular emphasis as a community anchor organisation for the Highfields area wide communities. The charity continues to pursue these objectives by overseeing the working of Highfields Centre.

Consistent with these objectives, the charity has continued to provide a wide range of programmes related to lifelong learning and community development throughout the year. The programmes include the provision of services in arts, sports, early years, after school care, youth clubs, adult classes and advice work. During the last year and given the excellent platform provided by the EESE (Economic, Effective, Successional and Extendable) Measures we had previously implemented, we have continued to focus on developing the potential for boosting our self-generated income through the Power to Change funded New

Spaces building development programme. Stalwart elements of our services such as the youth work, adult education, sports and advice have also continued to be provided and enjoyed by our service users during 2019/20.

Public benefit

The trustees have referred to the information contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities, with all of the charity's expenditures being incurred in pursuit of its public benefit duties.

Evidence of this benefit is continued to be demonstrated by the uptake of the charity's services by nearly 60,000 users, with a substantial majority of those users from the local area. The range of services provided at Highfields Centre reflects the priority service needs for children, young people, elderly, adult learners, advice, arts, sports and community development, with these services provided over a seven day week and over an extended year.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities

The achievements and performance of the charity in the year in overseeing the working of Highfields Centre has been coterminous with discussions with other public and voluntary sector agencies about effecting new service delivery partnerships. The completion of the Power to Change funded remodelling building work in 2018 provided a much needed stimulus to achieving our objective of seeking economic independence through increasing our self-generated income.

There has also been an on-going and extensive consultation with its staff, users and governing body to maximise the newer service delivery opportunities that have arisen during the year and this is already beginning to bear fruit, as the range of venue and rental hire has significantly increased in 2019. However and entirely due to the onset of the pandemic, the start of a new and exciting arts, marketing and racial minority assembly work programme funded through a successful application to Power to Change has had to be postponed to September 2020 and we are planning on also starting a responsive Community health worker programme by September 2020 which has been funded by a smaller grant from the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF). The timeline for the completion of our equally exciting and rewarding NLCF funded Development Project has been extended to make up for the lost time over the Covid-19 related 'lockdown'.

Through our ESE Measures and in recognising that we weren't able to directly provide all of the services at this Centre, we have continued to pursue sub-letting parts of the Centre's facilities to other external agencies, with TREC taking up the first floor offices and Leicester Fitness Hub taking over the second floor fitness and aerobics studios.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Principal funding sources

The charity's main income had been through its three different contracts with Leicester City Council. The cumulative loss of over £500,000 in contracted income during 2014/2015 had adversely impacted the level of reserves as well as the Association's financial standing and the trustees have continued to carefully consider the necessary actions in relation to ensuring not only its continued viability but also its renewal and development.

The 2019/20 outturn is disappointing but the trustees recognise this is a result of some anticipated expenditures and other unpredicted losses during the year. In the former category was the Business Skills contract related work for which we had received funding during the 2018/19 year, as well as an ex-gratia payment to all staff for their support during the difficult years following the loss of over £0.5m Leicester City Council funding in 2014/15. Within the unpredicted losses were the Education and Skills Funding Agency's clawback of £24,000 of learner support monies which had not been utilised and the reduced rental and venue hire monies, with the latter resulting from the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020. The trustees' actions to rebuild HCA's reserves in the previous year has provided a degree of comfort as we negotiate our way forward and especially post the severe financial, organisational and programming challenges arising from the pandemic and the requirements for social distancing and rebuilding our service users confidence in returning to take up our services.

Reserves policy

In accordance with Association's reserves policy and taking account of the trading loss experienced during the 2019/20 year, the trustees have effected appropriate changes to Association's designated funds, including the Asset Replacement Fund, Programme Support Fund and Transforming Services Fund.

Going concern

After making enquiries, the Governing Body has a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. No material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the ability of the charitable company to continue as a going concern have been identified. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing these accounts.

FUTURE PLANS

The charity's plans for the future will be closely related to the fuller development of all the new services at the centre and to complete the replacement of the discontinued Leicester City Council services at this Centre, whilst at the same time providing the necessary infrastructure and systems to enable its smooth and effective operation and to manage the transition occasioned by the local authority's funding decisions. The charity's updated five-year Strategic Plan will be hopefully concluded by early October 2020 and will be the focus of our Annual Strategic Review Day in early November 2020.

Whilst the staff have been furloughed for the last few months, some have voluntarily offered their time (in conjunction with some TREC volunteers) to provide a much needed weekly food parcel collection service to both our and TREC's vulnerable service users.

With over 48 years existence, the charity has become well established, respected and trusted by not only its staff and service users but also a range of local, regional, national and international partners. The pace of this recognition has increased over the last decade and is reflected in the charity's increasingly recognised status as partner of first choice for many community development related service provision. The trustees are satisfied that the charity is very well placed to further enhance its provision of much needed services in the coming years through its already well-established role in accessing non-local authority external funding contracts as a member of several different service consortiums.

For these reasons, the trustees believe the charity is very definitely a 'going concern.'

Rafique Patel
HCA Treasurer.

Deputy Head of Centre (Community Services & Finance)

COMMUNITY SERVICES

On behalf of the Community Services Team, welcome to our 2020 Annual Report.

This year, we are celebrating our tenth year of Independence and what should have been an eventful and commemorative year of events and celebrations, and instead, we find ourselves looking back on a very reflective and non-eventful year, mostly due to the CV-19 virus and the issues and constraints that have been placed on the Centre and the premises staff.

Staffing – Unfortunately, and as a direct result of the loss of income generated through our venue hire, we have had to lay off Jeff Simon our part-time evening premises officer and Ayesha has moved on to full-time employment, we would like to take this opportunity of thanking both Jeff and Ayesha for their contribution and support for the Centre and wish them both the very best for their future.

Our current staff team comprises of Linda Castanha, Rafik Abdulla, Zarina Mangaria and Pat Gardner.

Almost all the Centre staff were furloughed from 1st April to 31st August 2020, a period of five months when the Centre was closed to the Public and therefore the report and the content therein is very different from previous years.

However, both Pat and Rafik from our premises team who were part-furloughed, have voluntarily ensured that the Centre continued to be maintained to the highest standard, with all annual servicing repairs and maintenance issues continually being updated throughout the closure period.

Building / Refurbishment This year, we have taken a considered look at where we can save both on reducing our energy supply to help with the environment and to save costs long term on our electricity bills.

The decision was made in early January to replace all our lights with energy efficient LED lights in all corridors, toilets, GYM /Fitness suite and most of the communal areas in the Centre. We have noticed that these lights are considerably brighter, but we will have to wait for at least 12 months to fully realise the savings.

HC's New Tenants – As reported last year, the Centre's 'new' tenants, i.e. TREC and Leicester Fitness Hub moved into the Centre and offered excellent and valuable services for the local community and beyond. These tenants were settling in and establishing themselves within their different areas of work when unfortunately, the Centre had to close in late March 2020 due to the Covid19 virus.

However, and in keeping with HCA's motto of the three E's, the HCA's Governing Body offered a substantive reduction to the rent throughout the Centre's Covid19 closure period for all our tenants which they greatly appreciated, especially as they weren't able to access any of the government's business support funding!

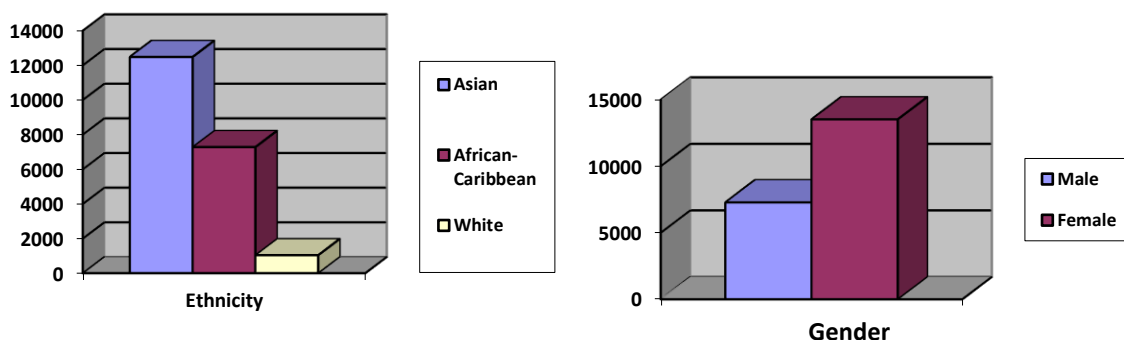
We believe that it is vital that the Highfields Centre can continue to offer much needed additional and excellent services on the doorstep for our local communities.

Affiliations – HCA's group membership currently has 9 organisations signed up and paid in full. This is an area that has been discussed at Governing Body meetings as to how to increase our group membership, as in the last few years the emphasis has been on getting our Individual membership increased.

Membership – The Centre's individual members is now standing at 630 (F) and 464 (M), 1094 in total.

Statistics – This year's statistics cover the period from January 1st to 31st December 2019.

Total Number of Community Services' Participants for the period of 1st January to 31st December 2019.



We are currently open from 8.30am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday inclusive, with a view to review these times in line with all Government Guidelines.

We would like to continue with opening 46 weeks throughout the year and offer any reasonable requests for any additional days (staff permitting) to these weeks.

In conclusion, we have had an extremely difficult and frustrating year in not being able to offer our excellent services and venue hire to our local community, but we must now look to the future and be positive in our outlook and hope for a productive year ahead in 2021.

All enquiries are welcomed through the main office from Monday to Friday inclusive.

May I take this opportunity of thanking all the staff, HCA Governing Body and especially all my own staff team who have continued to work through the challenges placed upon the Centre throughout the year and look forward to an exciting year ahead in 2021.

Pat Gardner

Deputy Head of Centre (Community Services & Finance)

Adult Learning and Advice Services

Our directly funded programme for the delivery of Adult Learning provision commenced in January 2018, initially for a period of three years. We were provided with an extension of a further year until July 2021. Looking beyond this period, we will be making a further funding application through the ESFA to enable us to consolidate and expand our provision to meet the learning and skills needs of the local population.

Since our last AGM, we have successfully planned and offered a range of learning opportunities primarily in the areas of ESOL, Functional Skills, Arts and Crafts, Information and Communications Technology and Employability courses. Unfortunately, as a result of Covid-19 and the government's decision to close education facilities and centres, our classes came to an end in March 2020, effectively meaning that we only offered a programme over two academic terms. On a voluntary basis, some of our tutors were able to provide online support and guidance to students who were able to study at home over the summer term, as well as check on their well-being .

In December 2019, we received a second monitoring visit from Ofsted over a period of two days. We were judged to have made reasonable progress since the previous visit on all the themes that were assessed. Themes covered included: progress in designing the curriculum, progress to show learners benefit from high quality adult education and prepares them well for their career and personal goals, programme leaders and managers have effective safeguarding arrangements in place. Our staff team have received training from a registered Inspector on key themes around inspection and these will be followed up in 2021.

The timely report provides a clear direction for us to meet the new Education Inspection Framework that has been introduced by Ofsted. The report recognises our efforts to reach out to disadvantaged communities and isolated members of the community to allow access to learning opportunities and to provide a pathway to employment. Building on our successful engagement of new learners and first rung learning opportunities, we are now offering accredited courses to allow learners to progress and achieve certifications.

Our aim is to offer a balanced curriculum of courses consisting of accredited and personal development courses to meet the learning needs of our local population. We are reviewing our courses and producing a pathways programme to ensure progression opportunities and entry to employment opportunities. We are working closely with our partners in the Further Education sector in mapping provision for the area and the local Job Centre Plus to identify local learning and training needs that will help individuals to gain meaningful employment and income for themselves and their families.

All our teaching and support staff have undertaken safeguarding and prevent training. As part of the induction process, all tutors cover safeguarding and prevent to raise student awareness and to explain our procedures and processes for reporting any concerns. We also inform students about online safety and use blended learning to ensure that key topic areas are covered during the course. We have appointed two new

Designated Safeguarding Leads following the departure of our former colleague Furzana. Fatima Li and Aiyub Zamakda are the new Designated Leads for the Centre. They have attended safeguarding courses but will be following the specifically designed course for Designated Leads through the NSPCC in 2021.

Information, Advice and Guidance

We have continued to offer limited information, advice and guidance sessions for clients to help them make informed choices around training and employment opportunities:

- Employment related information and support.
- Comprehensive initial assessment to ascertain skills and training needs.
- Support with CV writing, job applications and preparation for interviews.
- Help provided for clients to develop their literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills.

We are currently preparing for a Matrix accreditation that is planned for early 2021. To extend our service, the Centre will be supporting Youth Work colleagues to gain the L3 qualification in Information, Advice and Guidance. We will support young people who need help with developing their education, skills, training and support them with CV preparation and job search skills.

Centre wide Developments

Earlier this year, we have contributed to discussions around HCA's service plan over the next three years. We have also been engaged with the work being undertaken around social return on investment.

Currently, we are exploring a funding opportunity through Kick Start project to employ young people and to develop their skills and provide real work experience, so they can gain sustainable employment after their tenure with us or with local employers. We hope to be working with local businesses and will provide necessary linkages to ensure the scheme's successful operation.

Following appointments of new colleagues at the Centre, we will be working closely with website and social media developments that will offer us greater scope to market our activities and programmes. We will explore new arts activities at the Centre drawing on the knowledge of our new colleagues, team members and service users.

We have successfully supported a group of ten students to gain accreditation for the Level 2 Youth Work qualification in January 2020. A further group of ten students should shortly be completing their studies for the Level 3 Certificate in Youth Work

Working in partnership with LEAP studios, we have offered a short introduction to social media courses and plan to offer more in the coming months. This will help students to learn more about mobile phones, tablets, social media and learn about safety whilst using these forms of technology.

We are involved with Centre wide discussions around the textiles industry and low pay within the sector and how we can provide advice and support, including help to promote education on themes around employment rights and responsibilities.

Our priorities for the coming months are to consolidate and build on our provision, so that we can seek funding from the ESFA for another period of 3-4 years beyond July 2021. We will work closely with new colleagues to help ensure that we are able to make connections with people who do not currently access Highfields Centre's services.

Developments during 2020

Our course programme started on a firm footing since January 2020 and we successfully completed our courses just before the lockdown commenced in March 2020.

With our vulnerable clients and those on benefits we maintained regular phone contact and checked on their well-being. For those on benefits, we provided necessary one to one support over the phone and in person to ensure that they had the means to survive during this difficult period. In partnership with The Race Equality Centre, we were able to host a weekly Food Bank session on Mondays. Our clients who needed support were referred to this service, so they could access essential food items on a weekly basis from June to August 2020.

We have worked in partnership with Jon Ashworth's (MP) office to recommence the Food Bank hosted at Highfields Centre from October 2020. Unfortunately, the service is currently not running due to some issues being faced around delivery and staffing. TREC have continued to provide a foodbank service via our Sports hall and we're also referring clients to other Food Banks being run locally, so clients can access the necessary support. Thanks to our two Community Health Workers, Aisha and Taruna, we have compiled a flyer that has been distributed locally providing details of all the agencies that can help people if they are experiencing shortage of food.

During the close down period, our Management Team maintained regular contact and we kept abreast of the changes that were required for us to re-open and the measures that needed to be put in place for the safety of our learners and service users. As from the beginning of September 2020, we took the decision to re-open our Adult Learning classes adhering to the social distancing guidelines set out by the government. Many of our learners returned, however for some it was possible due to underlying health conditions or personal circumstances. We are endeavouring to provide a larger programme of courses, both accredited and personal development in the coming term. Our aim is to provide as many face to face courses as possible. However, given the current situation, our tutors are gearing up to deliver online support and courses where this will be needed, and to ensure that our learners do not miss out on learning if they are unable to attend courses for whatever reason.

We have been supporting learners to complete their Level 3 Youth Work course and our tutor has been providing online support to students. The course has now been completed and we will be submitting student folders for accreditation before the end of this term.

We are currently working on developing our course programme through more accredited courses, putting in place a framework that will support our re-accreditation for both the Matrix and Ofsted inspections.

Aiyub Zamakda
Senior Adult Services Worker

Children and Young People's Services

Children in Need

The last 12 months have been contrasting. The first half of the year started with the positive news that Children in Need, our grant provider would be extending its support through a bridging grant that has enabled our services to continue for a further 12 months rather than ending its support in April 2020.

We were offered the same amount of funding as we were awarded in the previous year and we have been able to offer the same delivery model as outlined in our original application to them.

This has enabled our services to continue providing 3 youth sessions a week to keep children and young people safe and positive by offering a variety of recreational and informal educational activities, and to

empower them to develop their social skills and provide the support they need to overcome the disadvantages they face, improve their confidence, and inspire them to reach their full potential in life.

We started the financial year by offering 10 young people the opportunity to complete a level 2 and 3 Aims qualifications in Youth Work Practice. These courses have been extremely popular with young people and are designed to give young people an effective baseline to gain the insight, knowledge and skills to undertake effective interventions when working with young people and gain an unique understanding on the wider socio economic factors effecting young people .

This has required our young people to voluntarily attend classroom-based, tutor led learning sessions which were delivered every Saturday at the Highfields Centre. Young people were required to undertake a voluntary placement for a set number of weeks and deliver high quality face to face youth sessions. Young people were further assessed in planning, delivering and evaluating a six-week issue-based youth programme and completing the course requirements for them to achieve a pass for these courses. This has led to improved outcomes for our young people as many have chosen to pursue further education and feel they have the increased confidence with being more job ready.

The second half of this year has been challenging due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), which has caused an impact on service delivery due to the challenges caused by the city facing an extended lockdown. We have, as an organisation, continued to provide limited services to support to the most vulnerable young people during this time. The management team have provided vital support and continued to do so by moving our services online or providing engagement through telephone interventions.

We have identified many of our young people have struggled with digital engagement, one of the many inequalities exposed by COVID-19, and many have found themselves to be digitally excluded as they have not had access to the internet or use of digital gadgets (laptops, PC's or tablets) which they feel has been a significant barrier. Young people have struggled with attending online lessons for school/madrassa/alternative provisions due to limited access, sharing smartphones within a household or accessing school/college work. This has left young people feeling frustrated and concerned as well as lowering their morale.

As the senior youth worker, I and Norman voluntarily supplied/loaned out tablets and basic phones to keep connected with vulnerable young people throughout these strange times. Furthermore, the youth team were conducting weekly welfare checks with around 15 young people identified as vulnerable to check on their wellbeing and mental health throughout the lockdown and extended lockdown periods.

We have been quick to adapt our services even within a limited and voluntary capacity. We have supported young people and families with the distribution of facemasks, care and hygiene packages, access to food parcels and referrals to our weekly foodbank.

During the lockdown period, we have partnered up with AAA (Antoin Akpom Achievements Foundation) and LCS (Leicester Community Services) who have supported young people with resources such as isolation workbooks, activity packs, and arts and craft sets to ensure young people remain engaged. We have undertaken rapid assessments to improve mental health and wellbeing, keeping safe and improving outcomes by supporting young people through signposting to agencies.

Some of the wider concerns we have identified with our partners when engaging with young people and their families are listed below and is related to the pandemic, and these will have a lasting impact on young people. It is now even more important to continue our essential work to deal with the long-term effects of Covid-19 which will have on our younger generations.

Key issues and challenges we are faced with:

1 increased mental health or wellbeing concerns

2. Increased loneliness and isolation
3. Lack of safe space – including not being able to access their youth club/ service and lack of safe spaces at home
4. Challenging family relationships
5. Lack of trusted relationships or someone to turn to
6. Increased social media or online pressure
7. Higher risk for engaging in gangs, substance misuse, carrying weapons or other harmful practices
8. Higher risk for sexual exploitation or grooming
9. Lack of educational and employment opportunities

During September to October, we reopened our face to face youth sessions following government and The National Youth Agency guidance. Our work areas have been risk assessed and we allowed 10 young people within each of our sessions to minimise risk and adhere to social distancing.

We opened Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings and further delivered and conducted outreach/street-based youth work every Wednesday. Our key focus this year is to offer young people the support around missed educational learning. To support this, we hope to offer a homework/study club which will assist young people to access computers, internet, access to online resources and printing services to catch up on their study since the lockdown period and more importantly get them re-engaged with learning again.

Our other face to face youth sessions will have a focus on improving young people's mental health and wellbeing in a fun and informal way, as well targeted work around tackling anti-social, nuisance behaviour and tackling knife crime as there have been multiple incidents in Highfields which has resulted in the loss of young lives.

We are awaiting key agencies such the VRN (Violent Reduction Network) to work with us and support us by recognising the prevention work we continuously undertake, as we still need support with resources and finance to work at grass roots level to understand young people's action and triggers. This can only be achieved by understanding serious violence and tackling its root causes. We will also provide the youth team with time for more training and development days to further understand young people's issues.

Young people will also have access to the sports hall to participate in weekly multi-sports to learn new skills, improve health and fitness. We are looking forward to work closely with our newly appointed arts development worker who will undertake arts delivery with our existing users, as well as help us to explore new and exciting Arts related projects to attract new users and particularly more focused work with young women and girls.

Last October, we received some further good news, with a bid to the Youth Futures Foundation and Children in Need being accepted. This means we can offer a further two sessions per week for the next 18 months to assist young people with navigating the labour market and developing their core skills to gain sustainable employment. This exciting project will be delivered by partnering up with five different agencies (LEAP Studios, Leicester Fitness Hub, TREC, KBiC and Pheonix Agenda). Both HCA and our partners will be supporting young people to improve learning and developing young people's technical and core work skills by engaging them in educational/training programmes.

The reintroduction of a further period of lockdown in December 2020 has meant that we have had to temporarily suspend all face-to-face delivery of our youth sessions. The senior youth worker has been providing virtual support to young people as well as online group discussions in partnership with AAA Antoin Akpom Achievements foundation to those who have needed the support during this period. Young people have been asked their views on completing a questionnaire for the Violent Reduction Network to help tackle knife crime and serious violence. This was mainly to determine what support youth services are able to offer young people and their families to change behaviour and thoughts. The engagement has been very successful from our young people, with 3 young people being nominated locally and being awarded with a certificates and trophies for their ongoing participation in our joint projects.

YES Media Project

The YES Project supports young people living in Leicester and Leicestershire aged 15-24 who currently aren't in any type of paid work, training or education – facing barriers such as serious mental health illness, low self-esteem, disabilities, being in care, and experiencing language and cultural barriers.

The YES team is a partnership of seven youth organisations and charities, offering one-to-one support to every participant on the Project. In December 2019, we were successful in becoming a service delivery partner for the YES Project

The support offered by the YES Project is adapted to meet the participants' individual needs. Across the partnership, we offer the following to young people furthest away from the labour market to enable them to find work, move into a job search or further education.

- education qualifications
- work placements
- employment skills
- mentoring
- Career and CV support
- personal development
- team building
- skills training
- specialist one-to-one intensive support

As part of this consortia, we are offering the YES Media Project (YMP) which is specific knowledge and training around using different forms of media and practical learning to improve chances of employment.

YMP helps participants through focused learning in all basic forms of Multimedia, including.

- Graphic Design
- Video Editing
- Online Marketing
- Photography
- Communication
- Music making, Instruments and Audio Interfaces
- Beginners guide for virtual working using different programmes and live streaming

We have successfully recruited 8 NEET participants to fully complete the 8 week YMP course. This was a great achievement, as all the participants we recruited were furthest away from the labour market and suffered from hidden health conditions.

During YMP's limited time so far, we have engaged with over 36 young people who are economically inactive and provided support through our outreach hours as well as offering support via virtual platforms. Our Information, Advice and Guidance sessions took place every Wednesday between 2.30pm and 5.30pm, and these mentoring sessions are open to young people aged 15 to 24 to offer help with making

informed choices around education, training and employment. Our experienced youth workers are able to offer a range of services with an informal environment and offer the following services.

- Build confidence and improve self-esteem (Group work, ice breakers)
- Drafting CV's, completing job applications
- Support with relevant training and identifying voluntary placements
- Improve confidence, communication and writing skills
- Create bespoke action plans, goal setting and identify training needs
- Training on use of social media and job vacancy sites to enhance digital engagement.
- Undertake role plays, mock interviews, and promote peer learning.
- Refer and signpost to service delivery partners to increase participation and chances of employment.

Fatimah Li
Senior Youth Worker

HIGHFIELDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/20 Total funds £	31/3/19 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	-	-	-	163,591
Charitable activities	4				
Incoming resources from charitable activities		217,516	115,252	332,768	714,959
Other trading activities	3	762	(2)	760	657
Total		218,278	115,250	333,528	879,207
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	5	235	-	235	953
Charitable activities	6				
Costs of charitable activities		340,313	100,639	440,952	526,140
Total		340,548	100,639	441,187	527,093
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(122,270)	14,611	(107,659)	352,114
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		355,118	334,267	689,385	337,271
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>232,848</u>	<u>348,878</u>	<u>581,726</u>	<u>689,385</u>

HIGHFIELDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
31ST MARCH 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/20 Total funds £	31/3/19 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	13	12,131	311,355	323,486	335,911
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	20,913	2,500	23,413	149,790
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>219,474</u>	<u>36,961</u>	<u>256,435</u>	<u>235,069</u>
		240,387	39,461	279,848	384,859
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	15	(19,670)	(1,938)	(21,608)	(31,385)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>220,717</u>	<u>37,523</u>	<u>258,240</u>	<u>353,474</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>232,848</u>	<u>348,878</u>	<u>581,726</u>	<u>689,385</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>232,848</u>	<u>348,878</u>	<u>581,726</u>	<u>689,385</u>
FUNDS	16				
Unrestricted funds				232,848	355,118
Restricted funds				<u>348,878</u>	<u>334,267</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>581,726</u>	<u>689,385</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31st March 2020.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2020 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

Highfields Centre – 2019 User & Staff Profile

The Centre's ethos of serving all sections of the local community is brilliantly supported by our 2018 user and staff statistics, with the key findings and 2018 comparator figures as follows:

- Users: Male = 49% Female = 51% (2018: Male=62% & Female=38%)
- Users: Asian = 68%; African/Caribbean = 24%; White = 5%; Other = 3% (2018: Asian = 76%; African/Caribbean = 19%; White = 4%; Other = 1%)
- Over 66,000 users have attended various activities and events at HC in 2019 (2018: over 57,000)
- HC Staff = 9 males & 16 females, with 76% Asian, 20% African/Caribbean & 4% White (2018: 13 males & 19 females, with 66% Asian, 31% African/Caribbean & 3% White)

		HCA Managed Services	External Managed Services	Total	%
Number of Sessions		2313	1353	3666	<i>Approximately 18 people per session</i>
Unique Beneficiaries*		13861	693	14554	<i>100</i>
Participant Number		57834	8813	66647	<i>100</i>
Participant Gender	Male	28665 (49.6%)	3876	32541	49
	Female	29169 (50.4%)	4937	34106	51
Participant Ethnicity	Asian	39116 (67%)	6530	45646	68
	African/AC	14471 (25%)	1717	16188	24
	White	2777 (5%)	304	3081	5
	Other	1470 (3%)	262	1732	3
Volunteer Number		24	1	25	<i>100</i>
Volunteer Gender	Male	10	0	10	40
	Female	14	1	15	60
Volunteer Ethnicity	Asian	23	1	24	96
	African/AC	1	0	1	4
	White	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	0	0	0
Staff Number	FT	0	5	5	100
	PT	25	14	39	
Staff Gender	Male	9	7	16	36
	Female	16	12	28	64
Staff Ethnicity	Asian	19 (76%)	6	25	57
	African/AC	5 (20%)	7	12	27
	White	1 (4%)	5	6	14
	Other	0	1	1	2

* *The new category of Unique Beneficiaries (UB) is the number of actual individuals who have attended the sessions, eg. If 10 people attend a class for 8 weeks, the UB will be 10 but the participant number will be 80.*