

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Head of Centre:

C. Priya Thamotheram

B.Sc (Hons) Soc., PGCE,

M.Sc.Soc (Econ)

Annual General Meeting:

Highfields Community Association, 6pm on Wednesday 17th November 2021

Agenda:

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 24/02/2021 (see attached copy) and any matters arising.
4. Consideration and adoption of an Annual Report for the period ending 30th September 2021 (copy to be circulated subsequently and also available at the AGM).
5. Consideration and adoption of the accounts of HCA for the year ending 31 March 2021 (copy to be circulated subsequently and also available at the AGM).
6. Appointment of auditors and fixing of their remuneration
7. Appointment of Individual Members' representatives (see below)
8. Appointment of Directors (see below)

This will conclude the formal business of the AGM.

The keynote speech will then be made by Professor Gus John (Academic, Activist & International Consultant) on 'Harnessing Our Power to Confront the Threats We Face' and this will be followed by a Questions and Answers session.

A hot buffet dinner will then be provided.

HIGHFIELDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 24th February 2021

Present: The meeting was hosted (via Zoom) with Priya Thamotheram, Tirathpal Naute, Aiyub Zamakda, Fatima Li, Pat Gardner (Note taker) present at the Highfields Centre (Youth Wing), with all other attendees on zoom; Rafique Patel, Taruna Mistry, Anna Maria Garcia, Cheddi Gore, Nijah Paul, Maariyah Siddiqui Khan, Val Kindred, Mark Mizzen, Houda Alijate, Alistair Burns, Monica Hingorani, Aisha Daud, Aamir Ibrahim and Chris Shaw (Guest Speaker).

1.Registration and Guidance for the conduct of the meeting: Tirathpal Naute opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance and handed over to Priya to briefly go through the technical guidance for this the first AGM held through a social media app.

2Apologies: - Iris Lightfoote (Interim Chair HCA), Baljinder Singh (HC Staff), Zahraa Ali (HC Staff), Jatinder Mahil (Bridge Junior School), Marianne Pape (Attenborough Arts Centre).

3.Minutes of last meeting (28/10/2019) – Agreed as an accurate record – Proposed by T. Naute and seconded Rafique Patel.

4.Matters arising: None

5.Consideration and adoption of Annual Staff Report – Priya spoke to the full Report and outlined the salient points in the Report, and made particular reference to the new and exciting developments, either on

the cusp of starting or in the very near future. (Chris Shaw to make a presentation at the end of the formal business on the Highfields Centre Development Project).

These exciting and new developments are really remarkable given the challenges that we have all gone through in some form or another as a result of the Covid Virus over the last 12 months. The report was agreed and Priya and the staff were thanked for the excellent report.

6.Consideration and adoption of accounts – Rafique Patel, (HCA Treasurer) spoke to this Report. No questions were raised, and the report was unanimously approved.

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

8.Appointment of Individual Members- None received

9.Appointment of New Directors – Alistair Burns and Monica Hingorani have both served for 12 months as co-opted members on the GB and have both completed the paperwork and subsequently nominated by the interim Chair (IL) to serve as full Directors of the GB. Accepted unanimously.

There were no questions raised and Tirathpal thanked Priya and all the Centre Staff and Governing Body for the excellent services throughout the last 12/15 months and closed the formal business of the AGM.

Chris Shaw, tonight's guest speaker, gave a presentation on the summary of HCA's Development Project and it's outcomes. Chris was thanked for his work which will be further considered at the Centre's forthcoming Strategic Review Day..

Meeting was closed at 6.30pm.

HCA/HC Annual Report (2021) – Introduction & Welcome!

Hello and a special welcome to you all on our first ever 'blended' AGM!

2021 has been a very different and challenging year, not only for us here at Highfields Centre but across the nation and indeed, globally. The ravages wrought on us by the pandemic and the brutal 'televised' murder **of George Floyd have highlighted the gross inequalities within our global societies, and exposed the sheer inadequacies and hypocrisy of governmental responses, both here and abroad.**

It has certainly been a very challenging year for us, as Leicester was subjected to an almost continuous lockdown since late March 2020. With the lifting of that lockdown in April 2021, we have returned to providing an almost full programme of our community educational and developmental activities, with perhaps the return of the Highfields Festival in August 2021 being this year's highlight. However, it's not as though we were shut during the lockdown period, as amongst other services, we continued to provide the first indoor (walk-in) Covid-19 Test Centre here at HC and which has continued to-date.

With no regular core funding being provided by either national or local government, we have continued to seek alternative funding through grants and contracts, as well as through our own venue hire and service delivery arrangements, and as our Treasurer will be reporting shortly, our financial resilience has been strengthened. However, it's a sorry state of affairs when the removal of over £3.5m funding over the last seven years for vital adult learning, advice, under 5's, children and young people's services from this neighbourhood has not merited serious exposure and scrutiny!

The roll-out of the Covid19 vaccination and booster programme seems to be making a significant and beneficial impact on the rates of hospitalisation and deaths, but with the infection rate being still quite high as we go into the winter months, it's to be hoped we can continue providing our much-needed services over the next few months. It will also enable us to make headway with our 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. Whilst welcoming our new Chair Monica Hingorani, we'd like to say a special thank you to Dr Iris Lightfoote who took on the Interim Chair role some 6 years ago and is still involved with us as the new Vice 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, and whilst she is now working a reduced hours' role, it's still a critical part of our service. Partly in response to Pat's reduced hours but also linked to the long awaited and much appreciated upgrading of posts, we have set up a new Core staff team who have taken on added responsibilities and duties, and in that context, we'd like to congratulate Linda Castanha on becoming the new Office Manager.

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, as well as embarking on our newest venture of the Leicester Garment Workers Advice and Support Project (L-GWASP), with the former 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 Thamotheram,
Head of Centre.

Highlights 2021



Arts Playscheme July 2021



Elders Group May 2021



Summer Activities July 2021



Youth Work course 2021



YES Media Project 2021



L-GWASP launch @ Highfields Festival 2021



Highfields Festival - August 2021



HCA Strategic Review Day (May 2021)

HCA Chair's Report 2021

There's no Plan B - the poorest communities are on the frontline of COVID-19.

There's no Plan(et) B - the poorest communities are on the frontline of climate violence.

There's a pattern. It's sometimes hard to know what to do in the face of massive global problems like the climate crisis or poverty.

This is what some of us did...

One sunny Sunday afternoon members of HCA Governing Body, staff, and volunteers from Friends of the Earth worked together to clear the patch of ground behind Highfields Centre and create a community garden. What difference did this make? We chatted, did a bit of gentle exercise and worked together towards a common goal of improving the neighbourhood. It was a small step forward. If this sounds like something you'd like to get involved with, please get in touch! We are lucky at Highfields Centre to have staff and volunteers who have been making a difference in the community every day for the past 20, 30 or 40+ years. Priya Thamotheram and Pat Gardner have both been here for around 40 years! We benefit hugely from the knowledge and experience of all - both established and new - and in these turbulent times we are pleased to see everyone pulling together. We extend thanks from the Governing Body to all.

Long established members of the Governing Body also lend their wisdom. In recent months, we've also encouraged several new members to join us, with close connections to Highfields and/or a variety of skills, experience and above all the passion to collaborate to make a difference.

Far from lying dormant in Lockdown, we've been adapting services and submitting bids – for example to Arts Council England and the Green Recovery Challenge Fund to extend the help available. What's clear is that it will be a long haul to *Build Back Fairer*.

I'm reminded of the poem "They tried to bury us, They didn't know we were seeds!"

Another world is possible when we pull together and put people and the planet first.

Monica Hingorani
HCA 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 2021. 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. 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 and sports have also continued to be provided and enjoyed by our service users during 2020/21. However, the onset of the pandemic and the resultant lockdown of our group and trading activities (including venue hire) resulted in us having to take various measures to ensure a projected significant deficit was converted into a fair surplus over the last year.

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 over 66,000 users (in 2019), 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 and early 2020. 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 was postponed to September 2020 and we also started a responsive Community health worker programme in 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 was also 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, and the mutual benefits of these agencies relocation to Highfields Centre has been positive for both them and us.

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 2020/21 outturn, given the onset of the pandemic and the related lockdown has been remarkably good, especially as the trustees had envisaged a significant loss being incurred during that year, and had taken action to reduce our operational costs by £50,000. This situation was also considerably aided by our successful funding applications towards the end of 2020 which provided us with a degree of financial comfort. The trustees' actions has ensured we are well placed to 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 surplus experienced during the 2020/21 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

The Governing Body has considered the impact of COVID-19 in relation to their assessment of going concern and in their opinion they have taken all reasonable steps to mitigate these factors. As at the point of authorising the accounts, and for the foreseeable future, the Governing Body considers the going concern assumption to still be appropriate. They acknowledge that given the currently rapidly changing social environment including regular identification of new variants of COVID-19, there are likely to be significant unknown factors which may present themselves. Such factors are considered by the Governing Body to represent a general inherent level of risk in relation to the going concern assumption albeit not quantifiable at this time.

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 Strategic Plan has been successfully updated and it was the a key element for consideration at the last Strategic Review Day when the Trustees met with the Centre's staff to consider key priorities and developments for the forthcoming year. The staff who had been fully or partly furloughed for most of the year, have now returned to work to provide the much needed services to both our and tenants' service users. With over 49 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.

Community Services

On behalf of the Community Services Team, welcome to our 2021 Annual Report.

This year, we are celebrating our eleventh year of Independence and as outlined in last year's report, it's been another difficult year, not least as we continue to have some constraints around our venue hire and not being able to access our Main Hall, Kitchen and Bena Balunda Lounge as this continues to be used as a Covid Test Centre.

However, we are pleased to report that we have continued to hire out our sports hall with/without the marquee at the weekends, this has proven to be very successful for events, such as weddings, parties, film premieres, etc. where the organisations have hired outside caterers to provide all the catering etc. This space can hold 300 plus and is extremely versatile - all enquiries for venue hire can be made through the main telephone line on 0116 253 1053 Monday to Friday.

Staffing – Our current staff team comprises of Linda Castanha, Rafik Abdulla, Jeff Simon, Zarina Mangaria and Pat Gardner, with Zainab Shaikh as the newest team member.

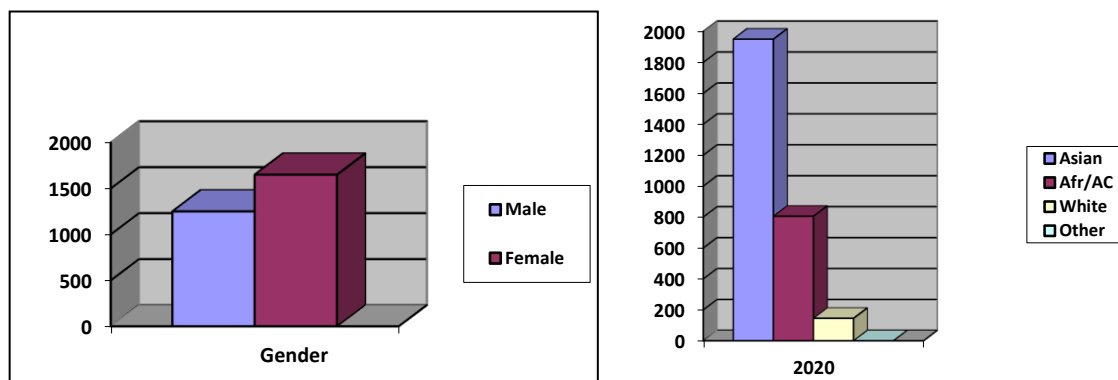
Building Repairs & Maintenance - This year, we have continued with our plan to look at savings on our energy consumption and economic costs throughout the Centre. We have now completed phase 3 of the replacement of all fluorescent lights with LED fittings in all offices and classrooms across the Centre. We will continue to monitor usage of energy and look at appropriate ways of savings throughout the Centre.

Affiliations – HCA's group membership currently has 12 organisations signed up and paid in full.

Membership – The Centre is currently working to set up a new Membership system which should provide more up to date statistics and communication system moving forward into the New Year.

Statistics – This year's statistics cover the period from January 1st to 31st December 2020.

Total Number of Community Services' Participants for the period of 1st January to 31st December 2020.



We continue opening Monday to Friday for most of our programme of activities and we are currently looking to extend our provision to include Saturday mornings (tbc). We remain open for 46 weeks throughout the year and offer any reasonable requests for any additional days (staff permitting) to these weeks.

In conclusion, we have had some challenges this year in line with lots of other service providers, but we have managed to continue to provide and offer our excellent services and venue hire to our local community.

May I take this opportunity of thanking all the staff and HCA Governing Body for their continued support throughout the many challenges and look forward to a productive and peaceful year ahead.

Pat Gardner

Deputy Head of Centre (Finance& HR)

Adult Learning and Advice Services

Our directly funded Adult Learning programme was approved in 2017 following our successful application to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This was initially for three years, and we were provided with a further year's extension until July 2021. However, at the start of January 2021 we were informed that all providers funded under this scheme had to make a fresh application to seek funding and were required to demonstrate how they would be able to provide accredited qualifications at Level 2 and at Level 3 for students in areas that have been prioritised by the government and fully funded, so students incur no charge.

We spent a good number of weeks at the start of the year to prepare a sound application involving our partner Digital Marketing Mentor who agreed to be involved in the delivery of courses particularly accredited provision at Level 2 and 3 in the areas of Digital Media, Computing, Social Media, and Computing. We provided a wide-ranging course offer to include both accredited and non-accredited provision using both face to face and online platforms.

Unfortunately, our application was not approved, and it has become clear that the ESFA has only funded 88 providers, significantly cutting back on the number of providers who were previously on the register. Very few of the successful awardees are from the voluntary sector organisations and from the midlands area.

We have however contacted our local Further Education College and three successful awardees to see if there are partnership opportunities. These avenues will be pursued so that we can offer a credible Adult Education programme in the area.

More recently, we have been working on an application that has become available through the Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Partnership. The application is around addressing digital poverty and access issues being face by young people and adults in the locality. We have submitted our application which seeks funding for eighteen months and would add a substantial element to our programme if successful. We should be hearing about the outcome of our application soon.

Covid-19 Support

As a result of the pandemic, our face-to-face provision of learning did not take place in the spring term starting from January '21 – April 21. However, our tutors were supporting those learners who needed help with learning over the phone, online and by providing handouts and learning materials.

We also provided help to our vulnerable clients and clients from our Work Club sessions who needed help to access their Universal Credit accounts or were faced with other difficulties. Our Community Health Workers made weekly well being calls to our clients and provided relevant advice, support, and a listening ear for those who were facing isolation or other issues. Those clients who could not venture out of the house were referred to agencies who provided regular food parcels at the doorstep.

We also managed to access support for two families who needed urgent help with purchasing large essential kitchen equipment with a grant of £500 to each family.

Accreditation

As a registered and accredited Centre though the Aim Awards, we were required to go through a quality review and monitoring process this year. It required us to review all our policies relevant for accreditation and to satisfy the Monitoring Officer that we have the facilities in place to offer qualifications ensuring that standards and the integrity of all assessments are maintained. We successfully satisfied all quality assurance issues that were raised in the monitoring meeting and our accreditation with Aim Awards remain in place.

We also applied for accreditation through a nationally recognised awarding body the British Computer Society that specialises in providing accreditation for computer and digital skills qualifications. The process was long, and we had to satisfy key requirements before we were accredited as a registered provider. It means, we can offer qualifications from entry level all the way up to Level 3 for a range of qualifications offered by the body.

Level 3 Youth Work Course

We have successfully supported a group of nine students to gain accreditation for the Level 3 Youth Work qualification accredited through Aim Awards. Certificates were presented in person to those who were able to attend the Highfields Centre Festival by Claudia Webbe MP.

Adult Learning Classes

From 12th April onwards, we have been able to offer face to face learning opportunities to our students in ESOL, Computing, Functional Skills and Arts and Crafts. We put measures in place to ensure we could offer classes in a safe environment and in line with government guidelines around Covid safety measures being in place.

Our Autumn term classes have been running well although they are not funded by any external source. Through a subsidy provided by the HCA and students making payment for course fees, we have maintained

some of our provision. We see this as an interim measure and are actively seeking funding opportunities to be able to secure our Adult Learning provision and to put it on a firm footing.

Our Work Club sessions are ongoing, and we provide employment related support to our clients in their journey back to work. We provide help with CV writing, job applications, preparing for interviews and help with accessing Universal Credit accounts.

Safeguarding Training

Two colleagues from the Centre attended the Designated Safeguarding Course in May and they are the nominated Safeguarding Leads for the Centre. Aiyub and Fatimah are the two Safeguarding leads with the former taking responsibility for adults and the latter for youth. Any of the two colleagues can be approached if anyone has concerns about any safeguarding matter or concern. We provided information about safeguarding at the last Strategic Review Day and will be providing regular information to colleagues and service users.

Leicester Garment Workers Advice and Support Project (L-GWASP)

The Steering Group has met on several occasions this year and I have attended some meetings as an observer. Through my interest and involvement, I have developed my understanding of some of the major issues being faced by workers and the steps needed to support workers with advice on pay, terms and conditions, benefits, training, or related matters. The project is backed by major brands who are keen to work with local employers to ensure that minimum wages are provided to all workers and that terms and conditions are established which are reasonably expected from all employers. Priya has successfully been leading on this project and through his work it has been possible for the Centre to employ two Development Workers who will be starting work shortly at the Centre.

The VCSE Health & Well Being Alliance Steering Group

Locality in leading on this group and I was fortunate that my application was accepted to serve on the national Steering Group that aims to connect the VCSE sector with the health and care system to provide a voice and to help shape national policies that will benefit all communities. The group is keen to ensure that policies around health and care systems reflect the needs and issues affecting racially minoritised communities and the policies that are shaped by the health service take account of the issues that are identified.

In summary, it has been a difficult year due to the interruptions faced by us all over the pandemic and the funding issues that we have been faced with because of decision taken by the ESFA on funding Adult Learning provision. We are, however, keen to re-establish our Adult Learning offer and are actively seeking opportunities and funding at the current time to ensure that we can offer a viable and vibrant learning programme for local people in our community.

Aiyub Zamakda
Senior Worker (Adult Services)

Children and Young People's Services

Children in Need and Highfields Youth Inspiring Futures

We are open Monday and Friday evenings and further deliver and conduct outreach/street-based youth work every Wednesday. Our priorities over the year has been to offer young people the support around missed educational learning. To support this, we offered a homework/study club on Monday evenings which assisted young people to access computers, internet, access to online resources and printing services to catch up on their study post lockdown and get them re-engaged with learning.

Our other face to face youth sessions have a focus on improving young people's mental health and wellbeing in a fun and informal way as well as 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.

In October last year, we received some good news, a bid we put together to the Youth Futures Foundation and Children in Need had been accepted. This has enabled us to offer 2 further sessions per week for the next 18 months to assist young people with navigating the labour market and develop their core skills to gain sustainable employment. This exciting project will be delivered by partnering up with five different agencies (LEAP, Leicester Fitness Hub, TREC, KBiC and Pheonix Agenda). Both HCA and our partners will be supporting young people to improve learning/ developing young people's technical and core work skills by engaging them in educational or training programmes.

Due to a further period of lockdown in November 2020 we had to temporarily suspend all face-to-face delivery of our youth sessions up until April 2021. The youth team were 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, and 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 certificates and trophies for their ongoing participation in our joint projects.

Since April 2021, we have been able to offer 3 face to face sessions per week- two evening sessions which focus on young people's development of core skills. These aim to work on building young people's confidence and skills, with some examples listed below:

Leadership-Young People can make decisions and take the lead

Teamwork

Communication

Problem Solving

Work Ethic

Be Flexible and learn to adapt in new or unknown situations

Develop interpersonal skills

We have offered a youth employability drop-in session to re-engage young people back in to accessing training, employment and learning opportunities by working with different providers within Leicester City.

The youth workers have prepared well to make the youth club covid safe and prioritise face to face delivery to those deemed most vulnerable and at risk. Therefore, as an organisation we chose to work with smaller groups and identify youth from the same schools or households to form bubbles like how schools were operating to minimise the spread of covid, maintain social distancing and the use of face coverings where appropriate.

We have had to prioritise support and have offered this, mainly using digital platforms, outdoor and street-based youth work and supplementary 1-2-1 provision to the most at-risk young people whilst the restrictions continued to lift over the last year.

By offering a blended programme- we have tried to engage a larger number of young people to spark their interests in our varied programme by accessing our different delivery partners.

Our original project plan was to offer youth development sessions to groups of 30 young people for a period of 12 weeks, so that in weeks 1-4, a young person could attend our open access youth development sessions and make a positive choice on which partner project they would like to work with for a further 8-10 weeks. Due to the pandemic and the apprehension and the psychological impact of the extended periods of lockdown, many of our young people struggled with regularly attending the activities and engaging with all our partners. Out of the 45 young people we have signed up to on the project during April and May 2021, only 34 Young People actively engaged with our partners who were delivering their activities.

Young people are still widely affected by the lockdown and restrictions previously placed on them, therefore the youth workers have prioritised addressing their mental health issues and wellbeing rather than forcing young people in to engage with our partners until they are fully ready to make choices about which specific partner they would like work with, This is what we will focus on in the coming months to ensure young people feel safe to access our provision and delivery partners in full confidence and because of them choosing to get the support from us by voluntary participation rather than it being forced. Our Youth workers continue with the groundwork in identifying the most at-risk young people by weekly street-based interventions and we are hopeful to achieve the outcomes we originally intended using a more flexible approach to suit young people's needs.

Out of our 5 delivery partners, our Media & Music provider LEAP studios sadly had to close their business due to the covid disruptions and resultant financial losses. Two of our other partners were utilising the government furlough scheme and will be moving in to provide face to face delivery as of October 2021.

We are in the process of identifying alternative partners in the community to deliver more creative and flexible programmes for young people to access in the coming months.

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 language and cultural barriers.

The YES team is a partnership of seven youth organisations and charities, offering one-on-one support to every participant on the Project. In December last year, 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 which is specific knowledge and training around using different forms of media and practical learning to improve chances of employment.

YES Media helps participants through focused learning in all basic forms of Multimedia these include.

- 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

Since our delivery of YES Media, we have successfully recruited 13 NEET participants to fully complete the 5 week course and this is a great achievement, as all the participants we recruited were furthest away from the labour market and suffered from hidden health conditions.

In total, 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 currently take place every Wednesday between 2.30pm and 5.30pm. 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 can 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.

Summer Playscheme 2021

This year's Summer Playscheme ran from 12 July to 9 August 2021 between the hours of 10.30am and 2.30pm and we were able to offer a four- week programme of fun and engaging activities for young people for the first four weeks of the summer holidays.

Aims & Activities

Our youth team developed a four-week sports programme themed around improving health and wellbeing in young people. The main aims were to ensure young people were encouraged to participate in a variety of sports and arts activities and to increase their physical activity over the summer period. By offering daily sports activities, our young people were able to stay more active and acquire new skills which resulted in an improvement to their physical health & wellbeing.

During our daily sessions, we were able to offer two separate sports activities (am/pm) in our sports hall, young people then had a choice in which sports they wanted to participate in. These sports sessions have had a positive impact amongst young people and has led to improvements in their hand-eye coordination, agility, strengthening muscles and keeping fit.

We arranged our annual sports day at the local park to promote personal and social development and promote team building within the group. Young people have developed, communication, problem solving and leadership skills. Young people were encouraged to work in small groups/teams and support their peers by completing challenges in competitive sports activities. By working in small teams, young people

were able to express themselves better and worked towards achieving their goal of winning tournaments and games. It was positive to see young people interacting with each other with energy and enthusiasm, working towards a common goal and resulting in young people having high levels of motivation and success from the sports day.

Our newly appointed Arts worker took a lead on developing a series of creative arts workshops to promote young people to engage in new activities such as dance, drama, music & arts, and crafts.

This has enabled us to host a variety of group activities to broaden young people's thinking and creativity.

Our end of scheme party was very popular as young people were confident with dancing on their roller skates (dance, skate & shake)

We arranged a local artist to attend one of our youth sessions who was able to teach young people how to make rhythms and beats- write their own lyrics and perform these to the wider group and learn how to play the guitar. This was a fun activity where young people were given the opportunity to show their talents and performances.

This has been the first time our playscheme sessions had a regular focus on delivering Dance, Drama, and Creative arts , and it has been an enjoyable experience for staff, volunteers, and young people to have had such a positive engagement from all. Some of our young people that have been attending were initially very reluctant but felt more confident over the weeks and were able to express themselves better through a creative medium.

This has also highlighted to the staff the need that our young people are very much interested in learning more around creative arts and accessing further sessions throughout the whole year rather than just over the holiday period.

Many young people & families had also expressed an interest for more out-door trips and visits. So as part of this year's summer programme, we arranged a trip to the cinema to watch Space Jam 2- We took 70 young people including 8 staff and volunteers on this and young people had a great time.

We further arranged a minibus to take 15 young people and 2 staff to Drayton Manor Theme Park on Friday 30 July 2021.

We arranged 2 Coaches with the help & funding from Leicestershire Cares to take 110 people staff, volunteers children and parents of (HAF) for a day trip to Skegness. This took place on Saturday 7th August 2021. This day trip was a great experience for those who have struggled to take their families out during the extended covid lockdown period. This trip has helped families experience a day out and make happy memories with their children on the beach.

Creating opportunities

Alongside the youth team, we had 5 young adults aged between 15-18 who expressed an interest in gaining work experience from our summer programme. They wanted to use this as an opportunity to improve their chances of gaining employability skills and hands on work experience through volunteering in the playscheme. This opportunity has allowed individuals to acquire numerous skills from teamwork, leading, communicating and delivering activities within each session. They have now been invited to undertake a level 2 youth work qualification as part of their development of skills and knowledge to move closer to gaining employment.

Holiday Activities Food Programme

We partnered up with the Holiday Food Programme arranged through Reaching People (Leicester) and arranged our pack lunches with Christly King Leicester.

They have been providing us with healthy nutritious snacks and lunches for all our young people who have attended over the first four weeks of the summer period to help tackle the issue of hunger, poor diets, and social isolation amongst young people.

The holiday food programme has provided children accessing our playscheme the opportunity to enjoy foods and snacks that they have not tasted before. We have now learnt that food and snacks bring children of diverse backgrounds together in having fun, holding weird and wonderful conversations, develop socially and have reduced the feelings of hunger and overcome the fear of trying new things. It has also helped with raising children's aspirations and reduce the stresses on parents and families on limited budgets to feed their children during the school holidays, and the lunch club has been able to assist struggling families to overcome the food poverty crisis and reduce some of their financial burdens towards their children during this summer period.

Holiday Activities Food (HAF) Programme - Case studies & feedback

Person A – A has attended the summer playscheme for the whole 4 weeks, A has told staff she has enjoyed all the varying activities that take place each day. She has particularly enjoyed the football and sports session as she is very competitive and likes winning most times. A also loved all the drama workshops and she liked dressing up using props and wigs. A has made lots of new friends during her time at Highfields Centre and wishes she could come to the sessions for an extended period. A has also stated she liked it particularly at lunch times as there were different sandwiches and smoothies on offer, and she said she will miss the staff and her new friends dearly and is looking forward to returning at the next holiday programme.

Person Z - Z has particularly enjoyed all the trips that have been offsite, and she thinks the staff are very funny and entertaining. She enjoyed the Skegness Trip and the cinema trip. Z loves face painting and arts and crafts, and she wants to volunteer with staff in the future to deliver some of the activities as she has creative skills. Z liked the pasta and falafel pots that were served at lunch time. Z found the lunches were very healthy and nutritious but limited halal options.

Playscheme Photo Gallery



Fatimah Li
Senior Youth Worker (Children and Young People Services)

HIGHFIELDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/21 Total funds £	31/3/20 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	98,966	-	98,966	-
Charitable activities	4				
Incoming resources from charitable activities		102,715	365,695	468,410	332,768
Other trading activities	3	-	-	-	760
Total		201,681	365,695	567,376	333,528
 EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	5	-	-	-	235
Charitable activities	6				
Costs of charitable activities		145,524	203,795	349,319	440,952
Total		145,524	203,795	349,319	441,187
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		56,157	161,900	218,057	(107,659)
Transfers between funds	16	286,827	(286,827)	-	-
Net movement in funds		342,984	(124,927)	218,057	(107,659)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		232,848	348,878	581,726	689,385
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>575,832</u>	<u>223,951</u>	<u>799,783</u>	<u>581,726</u>

The notes on page 0 form part of these financial statements

HIGHFIELDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
31ST MARCH 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/21 Total funds £	31/3/20 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	13	304,887	48,395	353,282	323,486
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	14	45,152	31,426	76,578	23,413
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>274,613</u>	<u>200,770</u>	<u>475,383</u>	<u>256,435</u>
		319,765	232,196	551,961	279,848
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	15	(48,819)	(56,641)	(105,460)	(21,608)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>270,946</u>	<u>175,555</u>	<u>446,501</u>	<u>258,240</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>575,833</u>	<u>223,950</u>	<u>799,783</u>	<u>581,726</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>575,833</u>	<u>223,950</u>	<u>799,783</u>	<u>581,726</u>
FUNDS	16				
Unrestricted funds				575,833	232,848
Restricted funds				<u>223,950</u>	<u>348,878</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>799,783</u>	<u>581,726</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31st March 2021.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2021 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.

The notes on page 0 form part of these financial statements

Highfields Centre – 2020 User & Staff Profile

The Centre's ethos of serving all sections of the local community is brilliantly supported by our 2020 user and staff statistics, with the key findings and 2019 comparator figures (in brackets) as follows:

- Unique Beneficiaries = 3453 (2019 = 14554 (**76% reduction resulting from C19 'lockdown'**))
- Users: Male = 53% Female = 47% (2019: Male=49% & Female=51%)
- Users: Asian = 68%; African/Caribbean = 25%; White = 4%; Other = 3% (2019: Asian = 68%; African/Caribbean = 24%; White = 5%; Other = 3%)
- Nearly 25000 users have attended various activities and events at HC in 2020 (2019: over 66000)
- HC Staff = 8 males & 12 females, with 55% Asian, 25% African/Caribbean, 15% White & 5% Other (2019: 9 males & 16 females, with 76% Asian, 20% African/Caribbean & 4% White)

		HCA Managed Services	External Managed Services	Total	%
Number of Sessions		695	1353	2058	Approximately 12 people per session
Unique Beneficiaries*		2803	693	3453	100
Participant Number		16747	8813	24740	100
Participant Gender	Male	8797 (52%)	3876	13023	53
	Female	7950 (48%)	4937	11717	47
Participant Ethnicity	Asian	12625 (75%)	6530	16965	68
	Afr/AC	3063 (18%)	1717	6160	25
	White	602 (4%)	304	896	4
	Other	457 (3%)	262	719	3
Volunteer Number		12	1	13	100
Volunteer Gender	Male	5	0	6	46
	Female	7	1	7	54
Volunteer Ethnicity	Asian	9	1	10	76
	Afr/AC	1	0	1	8
	White	1	0	1	8
	Other	1	0	1	8
Staff Number	FT	1 (5%)	5	3	100
	PT	19 (95%)	14	36	
Staff Gender	Male	8 (40%)	7	15	38
	Female	12 (60%)	12	24	62
Staff Ethnicity	Asian	11 (55%)	6	15	38
	Afr/AC	5 (25%)	7	12	31
	White	3 (15%)	5	10	26
	Other	1 (5%)	1	2	5

* **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.