

St John's CENTRE

enriching lives in our community



Trustees Annual Report 2021

1. Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisers

The Charity name is: St John's Centre, Charity Number: 1146058, Company number: 7597525,

Registered office:

St John's Centre,
St John's Road
Old Trafford,
Manchester M16 7GX

Trustees:

Appointed October 2012: - Revd. John D Hughes, Miss Evelyn Cosham (Treasurer), Mrs Louise Dunn, Mrs Glynis Craig (Chair), Mr Mark Nesbitt:

Appointed Nov 2017: Mr Richard Taylor

Appointed 2019: Mr Mathew Tanner

Trustee Resigned: Mr Ralph Rudden 2019

Co-optees Mr Dave Nunns, Mrs Laura Gilchrist

Additional information:

Senior staff member in charge of day-to-day management of the charity: Revd. Christine Aspinall

Independent examiner of accounts: Mr Alastair Gillian, 53 Burnedge Fold Road, Grasscroft, Oldham OL4 4EE.

Bankers:

Barclays Bank
587, Wilbraham Road,
Chorlton-Cum-Hardy,
Manchester,
M21 9AL

2. Structure, Governance and Management

St John's Centre is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity; it is constituted by Articles of Association, adopted March 2011.

Trustees are appointed in accordance with our governing document: 4 Parochial Church Council (PCC) nominated representatives, who are appointed by the PCC at the meeting prior to St John's Centre's AGM, plus 3 members from the local community and 2 spaces for co-opted members onto the board from affiliated groups. Trustees are formally elected at the Annual General Meeting. When trustees have been recruited they are asked to attend an interview, and given an induction pack with information on the charitable company, background information, reports from the last two meetings, a business plan, relevant policies and a code of conduct. We also provide a trustees' handbook. Ongoing training is arranged for trustees, with opportunities provided for specific training as and when needed.

Decisions are made by trustees sitting as a board at 6 meetings per annum. Specific work is carried out by standing sub groups. Subgroups are set up as and when needed, time limited and specific. The board retains all liability for decision making around financial issues. Day to day management of the project is the responsibility of the Centre Manager, at present Christine Aspinall.

3. Financial review:

Reserves policy; It is the policy of the board to have 3 months running costs in reserve.
Explanation of any Deficit See second part of this report for examined accounts for the year 2020/21

4. Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

NONE

5. Charitable Aims, Objectives, Public Benefit statement

The charity's objects ("Objects") are specifically restricted to the following:

1. *To further, or benefit, the residents of Old Trafford, Manchester and the neighbourhood, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation, leisure time, occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents.*
2. *To promote such other purposes as are charitable according to the laws of England and Wales for the benefit of the public as may from time to time be determined.*

6. This Annual Report contains all aspects of public benefit of the charity.

Board Members 2020/21



John
Hughes



Louise
Dunn



Ric Taylor



Glynis
Craig
(Chair)



Mark
Nesbitt



Evelyn
Cosha

Mission Statement:

Through education and recreation, we seek to promote good relationships within our diverse community; give individuals the opportunity to realise their full potential; meet the needs of the present and create a sustainable resource for the future.

Centre Staff

Christine Aspinall – Manager, **Diane Browne** – Administrator **Elaine Eland** – Volunteer Coordinator
Prem Kaur Creche Supervisor. **Lizzie Quinn** - Crèche worker, **Rose Thompson** – Finance , **Emma Wilton** - Learning Coordinator

The Chair's Comments: Glynis Craig



Once again I am immensely proud to be providing the introduction to such a comprehensive report detailing the work of the St John's Centre. This report covers a successful year in which the Centre has continued to serve the people of Old Trafford and welcome new friends to our community. I wholeheartedly thank the staff and volunteers for their hard work in making this possible. I also wish to thank my fellow boards members who volunteer their time to ensure that the Centre has good governance. As you read on you will see that the Centre has had much to celebrate over the last 12 months but also faces a reduction in funding. Although we have been successful in the past in obtaining funding from bodies such as the council, church and grant organisations; we are now looking at a much reduced income for 2019-2020 and a real possibility of staff redundancies. The board are determined to work to ensure that the centre will survive these challenges. In times of financial restraint we are aware that the people most disadvantaged can be the people who need the centre most. I know that we can rely on the goodwill and help of all our users and friends to support St John's Centre going forward.

Centre Manager: Christine Aspinall

St John's Centre has now been serving the community of Old Trafford for 39 years. And we are looking forward to our 40th anniversary celebrations next year.

We have had an excellent year, and though we have been hit hard financially with the pandemic, through the hard work of our Board, staff and volunteers, we are pulling ourselves back, recovering and starting to flourish once again.

We are delighted to say that we are continuing to meet ever-changing needs and addressing inequalities within the community that we serve. Our Centre reflects the diversity of our community, at all levels and we are able to reach out to those who are marginalised.

Development of the Centre has been underway this last year as we employed a Development Worker to look at how we might become more sustainable. This is ongoing for a further 12 months and we are optimistic about our future.

We have been involved with the DWP's Kickstart Scheme and had a young man on placement with us for 6 months gaining experience with Social media and promotion. We hope to have two more placements this coming year as we like to give opportunities to young people as and when we are able.

Since April 2019 (19 months) we have been a Covid-19 Emergency response hub and have continued with that support up to present. We have positively impacted on the lives of the



many hundreds that have come to us for help in that time. The work is ongoing and some of the issues facing people now are very complex as we emerge from emergency to recovery.

We have been busy building wider relationships through our work as a Hub and now with the Trafford Community Collective. St John's Centre are now the VCFSE lead partners for the Old Trafford Area. Relationships with other Hub leaders across Trafford are strong and we meet together regularly, sharing experiences and good practice.

I'm very proud of what we have been able to do and are still doing throughout this pandemic and of our staff who are giving above and beyond they are truly inspirational. A heartfelt thanks to them.

Volunteering

Volunteering is still very much a part of St John's Centre partly helping people towards employment as they gain confidence, skills and experience but also for those who want to give back or are feeling socially isolated. at present we have 46 volunteers on our books. The volunteering roles are many and varied.

The Garden Gang- as seen on BBC's 'Songs of Praise' who look after the grounds around the church & Centre; Childcare, Bread and Butter Project; Hub support, admin and reception, ESOL, Computing. Virgin Media did some Corporate Social responsibility volunteering with us earlier in the year, helping some of our more mature members to learn social media.

We also have volunteers supporting a health and well-being project for those who have been referred by the Social Prescribers. Those that help with fundraising activities.

Elaine Eland our volunteer coordinator of 8 years left this September to take a full-time post with Caritas. A big thanks to Elaine who brought her many skills, qualities and creativity to the post.

We are lucky enough to have since recruited a new volunteer coordinator Phil Johnson and are very much looking forward to welcoming him as part of our staff team.



A Massive thanks to all our volunteers who give their time freely and cheerfully.

Learning and Activities – Emma Wilton



It's been a bit of a Stop Start year as you can imagine where learning and activities are concerned. According to our calendar, most of our courses started in September, stopped again in November, began again in December, stopped again in January, and then finally started again with the first lifting of restrictions in May.

Learning

Of course, this meant a steep reduction in the number of learners we were able to register over the last year - ??, compared to our usual 400 or so. Even when classes were on, the loss of one of our classrooms to the COVID Hub has reduced our learning capacity but we are looking at how we can house the hub work in another space.

Since September, we have had a full timetable of classes and activities running, and people are keener than ever to join them.

We continue to work with Trafford College, who are offering Functional Skills Maths and English, basic Digital Skills, and the ever-popular Art classes.

ESOL: The WEA is offering a Pre-entry/Entry Level ESOL class for the first time in many years, which is fulfilling a major demand and stretching the limits of how many students we can fit in our upstairs classroom safely. These students will be able to progress, hopefully to an accredited Entry 1 course, by the end of the year.

We are working with the WEA to try and arrange a course for complete beginners. While we welcome them to our open access sessions, they are not served by any current formal provision.

The other WEA course here is ESOL for Care Work, which they developed at the request of the DWP. This will enable people to move towards the qualifications needed to work in care by improving their English.

At the same time, many of the learners who started Entry Level 3 courses with us before the pandemic have progressed to Level 1 and Level 2 through online study with the WEA. This has helped to reduce the impact of the closure of the creche, especially for those who had babies during lockdown.

We are also lucky to have some excellent volunteers who are providing childcare for our Wednesday "Family ESOL" class, meaning that parents with pre-school children can continue to learn with us.

The fact that this, and our other volunteer-led ESOL classes, have been able to continue while we are between Volunteer Coordinators demonstrates the value of the work that Elaine was able to do to set up and consolidate these classes, as well as the quality of our volunteers.





Both Trafford Council's Outreach Skills Information Officer (a former St John's Centre volunteer), and Trafford's ESOL Coordinator, are holding regular drop-in sessions at the Centre, which means that our learners can get help to progress to further study and be referred for employment support if needed.

As well as working with our established learning partners, we are as ever ready to grab any chance to provide extra learning opportunities. In response to a request from a local resident, in June and July we were able to borrow several members of Virgin Media staff to provide social media training to local older people – we are planning to start this again before the end of the year.

Wellbeing activities

It's impossible to overestimate the impact of lockdown and COVID restrictions on people's wellbeing and mental health, and we are delighted to now be hosting so many different wellbeing activities. With the lifting of restrictions over the summer, many of our regular activities returned, and were supplemented with new ones – especially fitness classes, of which we now have 12 each week. Even our singing groups, including the Alzheimer's Society's "Singing for the Brain", have been able to return in recent weeks.

As well as providing space for other organisations' activities, we have been able to secure funding for several of our own. In particular, we have been working with Stretford Public Hall on the Thriving Communities project, providing activities for the local Social Prescribing Link Workers to refer people to. The Centre has been the venue for two of these – a fitness training activity for over 40s, and cookery sessions.

We have received three different grants from Ambition for Ageing to offer social activities for older local residents – with a choice of gardening, gentle exercise (followed by tea and cake!), or social cycling. We are also hosting another Ambition for Ageing session run by Stitched Up. We are currently looking at other funding, from TMBC's Inclusive Neighbourhoods and the GM Wellbeing Fund, to keep some of these projects going beyond their original three months.

We are in a positive place at the moment, helping local people to get out, meet, and join in with our activities. However, with Trafford currently suffering from the highest levels of COVID cases in the country, it is still hard to feel secure about the next 12 months, as we work to maintain a balance between providing the activities people want, and keeping them safe.

Development work – Alex Sporidou

Funding and fundraising

Income and Expenditure - where our money has come from and where it goes.

Income

Expenditure

HUB



Working in partnership with:

- **Friends of Stretford Public Halls**
 - **Feed My City**
 - **Asalaam Charity**
 - **Spices of Kashmir**
 - **Bottle Tops**
- **The Bread and Butter Thing**
 - **THT**
 - **TMBC**
 - **Limelight Cafe**
- **The Trafford Collective**
- **Kal & the Allotment gang**
 - **Virgin Media**
- **Our Community Funders**
- **Trafford Community Collective**
 - **Trafford Council**
 - **St John's Church**

FOREVER MANCHESTER BIRTHDAY PARTY 2022

**Outstanding Community Contribution Award
Shortlist**

**Abraham Moss Warriors at the Heart of the Community
Jigsaw Bury
St John's Centre, Trafford
United Estates of Wythenshawe
Warm Hut UK
Willow Project**

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