

## HILDA LANE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Trustees held on 4 September 2023 at 7pm at St Hugh's Community Centre

#### 1. Present

Alix Bushnell (Chair & Treasurer)  
Neisha Ebanks (Vice Chair)  
Margaret Quarry  
Steph Gray (Secretary, minutes)  
Shelley, local resident

Attending: Emma West, Centre Manager

#### 2. Apologies for absence

Linda Huggins

#### 3. Finance Report

Alix reported the latest account balances:

Current Account: £2,755 – a similar level to last year  
Savings: £6,051  
Reserves (NS&I): just over £10,000

£10,000 from reserves were drawn down to current account funds last year to get the centre through the COVID-19/lockdown period. We are hoping to replace this draw down, but it is not a high priority currently.

The 2022 draft accounts are with the accountant currently, and show for the year to 31 December 2022:

Income: £50,729.58  
Expenditure: £71,424.90  
Net loss: £20,996.66

The deficit was discussed, and Alix said that in her view the causes of this in 2022 had been addressed. We are anticipating a deficit for 2023, but a smaller one.

We are now down to one member of staff, the Centre Manager. The Youth Worker role is now split with two partners, Play Place and Anerley Town Hall/CPCT. Hall hire income is currently more than enough to cover centre manager's wages, and we have been able to increase our hire charges to reflect rising costs without losing hirers.

The Association needs to find £10-20k/yr of grant funding, of which £10k so far has been found this year. The grant funding landscape is tough at the moment, and we don't have the kind of special projects many are looking to fund.

#### **4. Centre Management**

We are intending to apply to Children in Need for a core costs grant of around £15k, and are currently at the Expression of Interest stage.

The Jack Petchey Foundation are coming to visit the centre. £600 is remaining from the original grant, and we are considering using this to fund a theatre trip with Youth Club members in October half term.

Our regular hirer on Monday daytimes has cancelled, so we are looking to fill the slot. We are talking to a possible church group interested in hiring on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Party hires have gone a bit quiet, but we are hoping more will come back in the autumn. Three new local caretakers have been recruited from Youth Club parents to help with opening up and closing the centre for weekend bookings.

United Living has completed the hall painting, and might fund another project this year.

Free yoga sessions funded by Clarion's Warm Space programme have been popular. They will be a source for case studies and also social media content.

Rubbish disposal from bins by the MUGA are a bit of a problem – the area needs some better bins. The estate caretaker doesn't seem to have been dealing with this effectively, but Emma has contact with the Estate Manager and will raise the matter.

#### **5. Youth Club**

Numbers are up, with more children coming in – around 25 at a typical session. Richard, the new Youth Worker, is currently on probation which has been extended to provide more time to assess and address performance issues observed.

The Youth Club staff team had a meal over the summer to thank helpers. Our special thanks are recorded to volunteer Amanda who manages the kitchen and washing up.

Youth Club has not run during the school holidays, but the hall was hired out by Streetwise who ran their activities here.

We are developing a plan to deal with challenging behaviour in a more systematic way following a recent incident. We are communicating with families about how suspensions from Youth Club will be handled.

#### **6. Social Media**

We have been putting the new social media strategy into action since June: using social media purposefully to promote our projects, support our hirers, get new hirers:

- making our social media accounts consistent as StHughsCentre on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, and creating a location profile on NextDoor
- creating video content with Emma and Richard to promote Youth Club, party hire for the hall, and yoga with the yoga teacher, Summer

- tried promoting Hall party hire in a couple of local Facebook groups. There have been a few views but not much immediate response in terms of enquiries
- been experimenting with how and when we share on the various channels. That has not been much response on Twitter but great engagement on Instagram, and a bit on Facebook to our own content
- interacting with hirers e.g. It Takes A Village and Summer (yoga teacher) to like and share their content, and likewise NHS, police, local community groups, we're getting mentioned a bit more in their posts now especially on Instagram

The next steps are:

- revamp the hlca.org.uk website including more content for local residents
- keep using some of the 'evergreen' videos and content, alongside new posts on our social channels
- keep experimenting posting in community groups
- follow up on our objectives to support residents with advice and signposting, and to demonstrate our impact to funders and stakeholders

Steph has been setting things up so far, but will train and hand over more to Emma as Centre Manager.

## **7. Plans for 2023/24**

Alix reported that in the coming year, we intend to:

- look for more sources of grant funding for our core costs
- enhance our visibility and support for residents via social media and a revamped website
- look at subsidising places for local residents within some of the paid-for classes with capacity (e.g. It Takes A Village, Taekwondo), now the Centre is on a more stable footing financially
- revisit youth provision for older children 13-18+, picking up the St Hugh's Youth Network work which faded during the Covid and lockdown period. The idea is to find something to engage this older group to involve them in the centre/community. A Youth Forum will be created to involve older young people in discussions with police, manage microgrants etc.
- recruit more trustees

## **8. Election of Officers**

- Chair: Alix Bushnell - seconded by Neisha
- Vice Chair: Neisha Ebanks - Alix seconded
- Company Secretary: Steph Gray - Margaret seconded
- Treasurer: Vacant (Alix will continue to fulfil this role)

## **9. AOB**

Linda had sent a report to the meeting noting that she is on a scrutiny panel for Clarion. There is a focus on 'ghost charges' to residents for services not performed. An estate flat was being sub-let causing a nuisance – this has now been addressed and is up for sale.

The Trustees thanked Linda for offering to put posters in noticeboards around the estate.

It was confirmed there has been no update received on plans to redevelop the MUGA area adjacent to the Centre.

A residents' drop-in session is being hosted in the hall on 14 September to discuss estate issues. Police drop-ins recently have been at awkward times and were no well-advertised, so were not well-attended.

The Trustees recorded their thanks to Leigh for his work this year and stepping in to cover Emma's leave.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.