

Company No. 01913555
Charity No. 291890

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report & Financial Statements

31 March 2024

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered charity name	Voluntary Action Islington Limited
Charity registration number	291890
Company registration number	01913555
Registered Office	200a Pentonville Road London N1 9JP

Board of Trustees

The trustees who served the charity during the period and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Ali Jabeen – appointed 04.12.23
Colin Adams MBE – resigned 01.11.2023
Craig Burgess – appointed 04.12.23
Emma Victoria Hutchins – (appointed Chair 26.09.23)
Hussain Ahmed
Irene Victoria Winter – appointed 04.12.23
Joseph David Irvin OBE (Chair) – resigned 01.11.2023
Jorge Llorens (Treasurer)
Ken Hettiarachi
Kevin Turner
Madeleine Gascoigne
Philip John Kelly – resigned 01.11.2023
Santa Gascoigne

**Chief Executive Officer and
Company Secretary**

Navinder Kaur

Independent Examiners

Goldwins Chartered Accountants
75 Maygrove Road
West Hampstead
London
NW6 2EG

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc
9 Brindley Place
Birmingham
B1 2HB

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The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, have pleasure in presenting their report and the financial statements for the charity for the year ended 31st March 2024.

The trustees confirm that the financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice-Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Purpose and Aims

Our charity's purpose as set out in the objects contained in the Memorandum of Association is:

- a) To promote any charitable purpose primarily but not exclusively for the benefit of the community in the London Borough of Islington, hereinafter called "the area of benefit" and in particular the advancement of education, the furtherance of health and the relief of poverty, distress and sickness
- b) To promote and organise cooperation in achievement of the above purposes and to that end to bring together representatives of not-for-profit organisations and statutory authorities engaged in the furtherance of the above purposes within the area of benefit

In the past year the staff and trustees reviewed VAI's mission, vision, values and aims and this annual report reflects these strategic changes.

Our Vision

A thriving Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector in Islington; enriching people's lives and building stronger communities.

Our Mission

To strengthen Islington's VCFSE to deliver services effectively and sustainably to promote social justice.

Our Values

- **Collaborative:** building partnerships and co-designing solutions
- **Effective:** creative, energetic and responsive
- **Inclusive:** promoting the importance of equity, equality, diversity and inclusion
- **Positive:** tackling challenges by building on strengths
- **With Integrity:** honest, professional and respectful

Our Strategic Aims

1. To support the development, effectiveness and sustainability of Islington's Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector (VCFSE)
2. To enable and strengthen volunteering, social action and community resilience
3. To facilitate a stronger partnership working across the VCFSE to influence policy, decision-making and system growth
4. To run VAI responsibly, effectively and efficiently as a model of good practice

We are an accredited Living Wage Employer and aim to be an equal opportunities employer.

Public Benefit

During the year the trustees have considered section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 and Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. We have sought to ensure that the charity is fulfilling its charitable purpose to benefit the public by focussing on some of the most pressing social issues in the borough, including Inequality, Poverty, and Health and Wellbeing.

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The trustees review, on a quarterly basis, progress made in delivering services that we are implementing to achieve outcomes in our strategic plan. This review is undertaken at the same time as our quarterly financial review. In addition, regular reports are produced for each of our funders and evaluations are undertaken as projects come to an end.

The main beneficiaries of our services are VCFSE organisations providing services and activities in the London Borough of Islington and individuals interested in volunteering in the borough.

OUR CORE ACTIVITIES

Our core activities, undertaken in our capacity as a Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) are detailed below:

- Organise an annual conference for the local VCFSE sector on themes of particular relevance for the sector. This is an opportunity for our members to provide feedback and to inform future priorities
- Provide an email news service through which we bring to the attention of members relevant policy and funding initiatives. Members use this service to promote their local activities. Our website is an important source of information for news relevant to the sector including funding and good practice resources for organisations.
- Provide charities with desk spaces, affordable meeting and conference rooms and shared facilities through our Resource Centre.
- We promote community organisations and volunteering to the wider public and we achieve local press coverage for the Volunteer of the Year Awards, which is held together with our Annual General Meeting
- Deliver advice sessions where local residents and organisations can get initial advice about starting or developing a local community organisation
- We are proud to run the only nationally accredited Volunteer Centre for Islington - matching people interested in volunteering with local opportunities in the VCFSE sector. We have a small team of volunteers involved in this work which provides a drop-in twice a week and promote volunteering at local community events
- We provide a volunteering database that enables organisations to post their own volunteer opportunities, while at the same time allowing potential volunteers to create their profiles and search for suitable placements
- We have an arrangement with NCVO, providing our members with access to NCVO membership and services at a discounted rate.

VAI HIGHLIGHTS ACROSS THE YEAR

Capacity Building/Organisational Development

- We fielded 240 support diverse requests, supporting over 100 different groups on a wide range of issues. Positive feedback was received from many of these advice sessions.
- Three 1-2-1 surgeries with the National Lottery and two 'Meet the Funder' events with the Arts Council and Cloudsley were held and we produced two funding booklets and 42 funding updates.
- In the summer we held a Small Groups Roundtable to listen to their views with Islington Council representatives in attendance.
- A Monitoring and Evaluation workshop was held for ten community groups.

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Community Development

- 18 Local Wellbeing Network meetings were held across three Islington localities connecting the VCFSE, public sector and residents with 150 members in attendance throughout the year.
- We launched Listening and Social Action campaigns to understand what matters most to VCFSE organisations and local residents.
- We supported Octopus Community Network with Community Organising workshops at 4 different events in the summer and provided ongoing support to 7 Community Change Makers as part of the Local Wellbeing Networks programme.
- We continued to liaise with the LBI Borough Resilience Forum, working together on developing ideas for community resilience projects and engaging more residents with the Volunteer Centre.

Volunteer Centre Services

- 59 new Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) and 571 new volunteers were registered with 164 new volunteering opportunities promoted. We provided bespoke communications to these organisations and residents, assisted by our invaluable team of VAI volunteers.
- We hosted our annual Islington Volunteer of the Year Awards celebration at the Union Chapel with 190 in attendance, to recognise and champion the value of volunteering.
- 6 volunteering fairs were hosted to recruit volunteers, both online and in person.
- We increased our outreach in public places such as community centres, colleges, universities and Islington libraries to enable and raise awareness of volunteering in the broader community.
- We held one Volunteers' Managers Forum meeting with LBI, as well as working in partnership with the Big Alliance, Cripplegate, London Met University and many others.
- As the Islington Mayor's Charity of the Year 2023-24, we worked with Mayor Cllr Gary Heather to raise awareness of the value of volunteering.

Partnership Working

- We hosted 3 Community Conversations sessions, helping to set the agenda and co-chairing/co-facilitating on important topics.
- Working with Healthprom, we supported organisations preparing for the arrival and ongoing support of Ukrainians.
- With Islington Faiths Forum, we contributed to a Community Festival in July to celebrate Islington's diversity, promoting community cohesion and collaboration.
- In November we held an adult community learning session for 20+ organisations as well as a session on welfare benefits for 50+ organisations in conjunction with LBI.
- In March we partnered with LBI and London Met University for the Annual VCFSE Conference to see how we could work together more effectively to tackle inequality and create a fairer Islington with more than 125 delegates attending and contributing to round table discussions.
- Our CEO continued to work with our Advisory Group of local organisations and networks in the borough, facilitating meetings and workshops.
- The Advisory Group started work on refreshing the Islington Compact – the partnership agreement between Islington Council and the VCFSE sector.
- Our CEO continued to represent the VCFSE at a number of LBI partnership and North Central London boards.

Resource Centre and our Membership

- During the year our Resource Centre continued to generate funds to support the development of the local VCFSE as well as providing affordable desk and room hire facilities

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- During the year, we grew our membership to 590 local VCFSE organisations and circulated funding updates, job alerts and local community events via our messaging platforms, website and social media channels.

STRATEGIC AIM 1: TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT, EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF ISLINGTON'S VCFSE

1a. Advice, information and support

During this period, we received 240 requests for support and advice from local groups and residents, and responded to these requests via emails, phone calls, but mainly through one to one in-person and online meetings. We held 100 1:1 advice sessions and information sessions with over 100 different groups, with 21 setting up as new organisations. We worked with some groups on a short-term basis, whilst some groups were given longer term support.

We worked with a broad range of groups, with most working in health and wellbeing, children & young people, general purposes and women's groups who mainly focus on health and wellbeing issues. As in previous years, there was a high level of cross over, and more than half of the groups were Black and Global Majority led. As in previous years, the top 4 most requested areas for support were the same, and this is not surprising as these are the main areas which enable groups to get established and to approach funders and get started on their journey of working with the communities they serve.

The top areas of support requested:

- Funding and fundraising
- Registering as a charity or company limited by guarantee
- General organisational development (planning, governance, financial management)
- Starting-up an organisation

The feedback from the advice sessions has been very positive. Groups reported they received practical advice and information, and gained knowledge and skills that would help them to start, develop and run their organisations.

Quote 1: "I am sharing knowledge and skills gained on how to write funding applications and monitoring and evaluations, so that all our staff have the relevant skills to sustain the organisation and to be able to continue delivering vital services to our community".

Quote 2: "the advisor helped me a lot. In November 2023, I asked the advisor to comment on our funding application before submitting. The advisor kindly checked the application and made some correction. Our application was successful. In the past we attended training delivered by VAI and gained considerable skills in writing fundraising, developing our Business Plan and funding strategy. We are so grateful for all the help we received from VAI".

1b. National Lottery 1-to-1 surgeries – April, September, November 2023

Our work with the National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) is a partnership which enables local community groups to have 1-to-1 sessions with the local Lottery Officer. We have done more outreach this year, with sessions taking place in community centres such as Elizabeth House and Brickworks – in order to reach out to local groups and make the sessions more accessible. The sessions were held April, September and November and the Lottery Officer advised groups on how best to apply for Lottery funding. In total 11 groups received advice on their funding applications.

Evaluation feedback from sessions shows a high level of satisfaction with the advice provided.

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Quote1: "I have gained great insight into the lottery funding and different types of projects funders are seeking to support which is helpful for our organisation when considering the development of our current and new projects. I feel much more confident to take the next step to apply for an award with the lottery fund".

1c. Funding Booklet, funding updates and promoting Islington Funding Toolkit

This year we produced two funding booklets each having an average of 20 new entries and a total of at least 100 funding programmes in each booklet. The booklet was promoted on VAI's news group over 10 times, and it has a presence on our website. These were updated and disseminated in August 2023 & March 2024.

We also collated and disseminated over 42 funding updates throughout the year, with at least two per month. We have received positive feedback on how helpful these regular updates are to groups who are sourcing funding opportunities.

The Funding Toolkit was sent out on 10 separate occasions via VAI's Newsgroup, which is made up of a membership of 880 local groups and organisations and partners. A workshop was held on the 6th December 2023, with 30+ organisations attending. In total, there are 265 unique users that are registered to use the toolkit.

1d. Meet the Funder Events – 27th June and 2nd November 2023

VAI collaborates with various funders and organises 'Meet the Funder' events. This year we hosted 2 sessions. On 27th June, we hosted a session in which the Arts Council and Islington council show-cased their latest funding opportunities and advised attendees on how to access and best apply for funding. 40 people attended the session. On 2nd November, we held the second event with Cloudesley. The Cloudesley Health Programme Fund supports Islington residents who have physical or mental health issues and who are on low or no income. 32 people attended this session. Feedback from both sessions were very positive.

Quote1: "A really great presentation from the Arts Council. It gave me confidence to apply and in fact we may form a consortium with our community centres to make an application"

Quote2: "It was good to hear from the Arts Council. I liked the speaker and thought they added more than we could have found online"

Quote3: "The session was really useful, and I have gained further understanding of Cloudesley's priorities".

1e. Small Groups Roundtable – 27th July 2023 (online)

We held a Roundtable discussion with a range of small groups and organisations and wanted to check in with them as a group. We wanted to listen to the needs of hard-working grass roots groups in Islington and those that we have been working with over a long period of time. Nadeem Murtuja, LBI Corporate Director for Community Engagement and Wellbeing (Interim) and Executive Member Cllr Una O'Halloran were both in attendance. 12 groups attended and they fed back to us about their needs and concerns. Important questions were asked such as, what difficulties is your organisation having? What would help your organisation to develop and become more effective? What we heard was that most groups were struggling, and we responded by offering an enhanced package of support to all groups in attendance.

One group's feedback to us which reflected what others had also said "we have difficulties with workload, demand for our services have increased as we are receiving lots of requests. We

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lack funding, we have no venue to run our activities, and we struggle to pay sessional workers. We have difficulties generating income and achieving financial sustainability”.

1f. Monitoring and Evaluation workshop – 27th February 2024

In February, we delivered a tailored monitoring and evaluation workshop for organisations with 10 groups attending.

STRATEGIC AIM 2: TO ENABLE AND STRENGTHEN VOLUNTEERING, SOCIAL ACTION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2a. Local Wellbeing Networks – North, Central and South Localities

The Local Wellbeing Networks (LWNs) continued to be a major area of work over the year. We continued to strengthen our partnership with the Octopus Community Network to develop the mechanisms for promoting community voice, connecting the VCFSE, public sector and residents and using this partnership to co-deliver services. We continued to deliver bi-monthly meetings across the 3 localities and continued outreach to VCFSE, statutory partners and residents. We forged closer relationships with Evidence Islington (Public Health), LBI Better Lives Alliance, and the Borough's Resilience Forum.

We engaged 150+ members across all 3 Networks, a third of which are Islington residents. 18 Local Wellbeing Networks meetings were delivered across the 3 localities in settings accessible to residents and practitioners, with approx. 25-35 members attending each Local Wellbeing Network meeting.

We continued to listen to the priorities of the LWN members and launched the Listening and Social Action campaigns to understand what matters most to local residents. LWN members priorities included the following:

- Cost of living crisis (food, debt, fuel, and how can we support our most vulnerable residents more effectively. More residents are facing financial anxiety and stress and increasing mental health issues. The most pressing issue for those working in the North was children and young people, with the environment being the most pressing need for members working in the South – with members particularly expressing concern about the overdevelopment of EC1, decimation of open space and selling off community assets. A priority was to identify and map green spaces in the locality which are accessible to the public and spaces which have the potential to become green spaces the public can have access to.
- Employment issues - supporting residents to get into paid work. Addressing barriers such as childcare costs, need for cost-of-living support, language barriers, improving skills and low post pandemic employability.
- Mental Health and understanding of how it effects people differently; support needed for men especially, how to make services more accessible, using civic space to support health and wellbeing, supporting those who are struggling to connect with others, increased complex needs amongst service users, limitation of NHS mental health services and the role of community (psychosocial support) being key to wellbeing.

Launch of Listening and Social Action Campaign – 20 July 2023

- LWN summer event held at Whittington Park Community Association in July 2023 – with the launch of the Listening and Social Action Campaign, with 60+ organisations and local residents attending the round table event. The Listening and Social Action Campaigns focused on getting an understanding of what people love and are angry about, uncovering real problems and exploring possibilities for change. Listening through 'sofa talks' and 1:1

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conversations LWN members set about capturing powerful stories and enabling people to take leadership and make connections.

VAI and Octopus opened conversations with Help on Your Doorstep and Manor Gardens Welfare Trust to explore a partnership that would respond effectively to the cost-of-living crisis through a capacity building programme focusing upon the most vulnerable residents accessing crisis and emergency food provision. Partners actively participated in the LBI Cost-of Living Strategic Board presenting ideas and potential solutions to achieving systemic change. We worked collaboratively to develop a capacity building model and proposal to take forward the work.

2b. Community Organising and Community Change Makers

As part of the LWN initiative, we supported the second round of workshops that took place with Octopus Community Network (the borough's social action hub) delivering the training:

- 4th and 5th July with 12 people attending
- 13th July at St Luke's Community Centre, with 10 people attending
- 28th August with 15 people attending

We also provided ongoing support of 7 Change Makers – helping to deliver 2 major events

2c. Community Resilience

We continued to liaise with the LBI Borough Resilience Forum, with an ambition to work on:

- Community resilience projects delivered in partnership
- Developing a Community Resilience Toolkit
- Engaging more residents registered with the Volunteer Centre

VOLUNTEER CENTRE SERVICES

3a. Volunteer of the Year Awards – 1st November 2023

We hosted our annual Islington Volunteer of the Year Awards celebration on 1st November 2023 at the Union Chapel. We had over 250 people register for the event, with 190 attending. That helped us to create a more positive environment in which the value of volunteering was recognised with the biggest number of attendees ever.

Our Volunteer of the Year Awards were again sponsored by Doubletree by Hilton Islington, who provided the prizes, and we had local media coverage, raising the profile of volunteering locally. The awards were announced by the Mayor of Islington, Cllr Gary Heather. The winners were:

- Older Volunteer of the Year 60+: Jill Ellenby and Ben Griffith, Elizabeth House – Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust
- Volunteering Team of the Year: Union Chapel Asylum Seekers Project
- Volunteer of the Year 26-60: Zoe Coventry, Middle Eastern Women and Society Organisation (MEWSO) | Little Village | The People's Army | MerryGoRound & Lawrence Curtis, Healthy Minds Healthy Bodies
- Pat Haynes Memorial Trustee of the Year: Anne-Marie Ellis, Cripplegate Foundation
- Young Volunteer of the Year 16-25: Maryam Amia, Middle Eastern Women and Society Organisation (MEWSO)

3b. Volunteering Fairs and Outreach

VAI increased the number of volunteering fairs, hosting 6 fairs during the year with a number delivered in partnership with Volunteer Centre Camden, to support the recruitment of volunteers, both online and in person. In total 313 residents attended the volunteering fairs, with 57 VCFSE organisations attending across the 6 fairs.

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We also increased our outreach in public places like community centres, colleges, universities and Islington libraries to enable and raise awareness of volunteering in the broader community.

3c. Volunteer Managers Forum – 18 July 2023

We held one forum meeting in partnership with LBI.

3d. Volunteer Centre Partnership Work

- Contributed to the Islington Volunteering Partnership meetings – with representatives from LBI, Big Alliance, and Cripplegate
- Promoted London Met University Charities & Social Enterprise Clinics
- Strengthened links with the local LBI Employability Practitioners Network
- Represented VAI at the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum (GLA) and the London Volunteer Centre Network
- Successfully ran a pilot with Union Chapel to increase number of Asylum Seeker volunteers
- Peabody Community Participation Project
- Contributed to the GLA Community Resilience Project

3e. Islington Mayor's Charity of the Year 2023-24

We were extremely pleased to be chosen as the Mayor's Charity of the Year. We worked in partnership with Mayor Cllr Gary Heather and the Mayor's Team to raise awareness of the value of volunteering and increased the number of local people taking up volunteering roles across all part of Islington.

3f. Our Reach

We sent regular communications to organisations and residents registered at the Volunteer Centre with:

- 59 new Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) registered
- 164 new volunteering roles promoted, and 571 new volunteers registered

OUR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENT PLACEMENTS

In addition to our trustees, during the past year, VAI had a small team of volunteers assisting us in delivering some of our activities. The volunteers supported the customer service of VAI Resource Centre and assisted with our Volunteer Centre brokerage service. They arranged face to face meetings with potential volunteers, supported the online Volunteer Fairs and promoting volunteering opportunities across Islington. By volunteering for VAI, the volunteers gained valuable work experience which resulted in one volunteer gaining paid employment at VAI.

Our volunteers during this year included:

- Community Volunteering Advisors: Nisreen Abou Henda, Marlene Lall, Taina Zavora
- Communications: Daniel Belay Gessesse
- Resource Centre: Deborah Makonnen, Johnston Walker, Christian O'Brien
- Local Wellbeing Networks: James Wooldridge and Soumaiya Edoo

STRATEGIC AIM 3: TO FACILITATE STRONGER PARTNERSHIP WORKING ACROSS THE VCSE TO INFLUENCE LOCAL POLICY, DECISION-MAKING AND SYSTEM GROWTH

4a. Community Conversations

We continued to host Community Conversations, helping to set the agenda and co-chairing/co facilitating:

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- **Keeping your family healthy over the Winter period – 9th October 2023 (online)**

We worked with LBI colleagues to provide an overview of key infectious diseases of concern – measles, Covid-19 and flu; information and resources on how we can support local residents to stay safe and healthy and update on vaccine eligibility and availability.

- **Islington Population & Key Inequality Trends – 24th October 2023 (online)**

Over 70 organisations registered to attend this session highlighting changes to Islington's population and inequalities between the 2011 census and 2021 census.

- **Youth Safety – 4th December 2023 (in-person)**

We looked at the current picture, including local issues and Islington's Public Health approach to youth safety, Safe Havens and roll out of Bleed Control Kits and the review of Islington's youth safety strategy and violence against women and girls, with a focus on the role of VCFSE in keeping our young people safe with examples of local work and how the VCFSE can become more involved.

4b. Supporting Ukrainian Refugee Families – 10th May 2023 – (online)

We secured funding from NAVCA to support organisations which were preparing for the arrival of people from Ukraine and subsequent support for them as well as better co-ordination of activities within the VCFSE and Islington Council and to build capacity where it is needed. We teamed up with Healthprom who were commissioned by Islington Council to provide direct support to Ukrainian families arriving in Islington of which there were 270 mostly women and children as part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Our partnership started in March 2023, and continued over the next 6-months bringing together council and community service to raise awareness and co-ordinate support for Ukrainian families.

4c. Community Festival – 12th July 2023 – In person, Assembly Hall

With Islington Faiths Forum leading, we contributed with other partners to

- Celebrate Islington's rich diversity thereby promoting community cohesion and safety;
- Boost the morale of residents, workers, volunteers and cross-sector groups in Islington;
- Promote joint working between community networks and groups plus LBI and statutory organisations all with a view to serving the community optimally together in Islington.

4d. Adult Community Learning – 28th November 2023 (online)

This session was held to promote Islington's offer for residents in the borough and included focus on Family Learning; ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages); English and Maths; Digital Skills; Vocational and Employability Skills; Creative, Practical and Well-being. 20+ organisations attended this session.

4e. Overview of Welfare Benefits – 15 November 2023 (online)

This session was held to promote LBI's Imax and Resident Support Service and how it can help residents with the rise in the cost of living. 50+ organisations attended this session.

4f. VAI Annual Conference – 12th March 2024 (In person) Great Hall, London Met University

We partnered with LBI and London Met University to see how we could work together more effectively to tackle inequality and create a fairer Islington. Our aims were to

- share Islington's priorities in tackling inequality based on the most recent data and evidence and plans for future research.

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- share insight from the VCFSE on what they are seeing and experiencing on the ground through their interaction with communities and how they are responding in partnership with the statutory sector.
- explore how we can work together more effectively in the areas of employment support and improving the mental and physical health of communities who are experiencing the worst outcomes.
- highlight the challenges that the VCFSE are currently facing and to explore the opportunities for the VCFSE and how we can move toward more collaborative commissioning and grant funding arrangements.
- share our ambition to refresh the Islington Compact - the partnership agreement between the VCFSE and statutory sector, which includes developing best practice guides and toolkits.
- explore ways of increasing investment in the VCFSE to support its development, effectiveness and sustainability.

With over 100+ delegates, the feedback included:

Theme: What are VCFSE seeing on the ground
Residents presenting with increased complexities with vast amount of unmet need in the borough
People's lives are unnecessarily difficult when it comes to accessing services
Costs of travel, childcare are huge barriers
Digital exclusion, food insecurity and mental health amongst young people need to be addressed
Theme: Employment
Families need impactful employment
Young people are distrusted by employers
Charity and business sector struggling to fill roles
Culture needs to change with employer organisations
Volunteering not valued enough as a stepping stone
Theme: Services/Systems Growth
Lack of accountability when services are inaccessible
Disconnect between theory, vision and practice
How can we look at systems change rather than firefighting individual cases
Culture needs to change with employer organisations
Volunteering not valued enough as a stepping stone
Improve information sharing
Services need to go to where people are – to provide information and raise awareness of services
Statutory services need to go out to the community
Need to listen to residents, and get better at reaching them
Lots of services – issue is how to engage with those that need it
Model good practice for accessible services – need for this to be transferred to all services
Streamline referral processes
Need better understanding of the sector and residents
Need collective impact approach
Theme: Partnerships/Collaboration
Consult VCFS earlier not when decisions are made
Underdeveloped – resource challenges, takes a lot of time to build, need lead person
Use data to identify those not accessing services
Develop quality connections

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Bring groups together to apply for funding
Build connections with universities
Theme: VCFSE Issues/Needs
Expectations are too high
VCFS takes the slack where statutory sector services fail
Sector needs to be more assertive. Need call to action
Need to be better at collecting evidence, showing impact, data that shows success
Capacity/resource limitations affect the sectors' ability to do more – finding the balance between today's needs and looking future to the future
Explore opportunities for joint bids – sponsor VCFSE to bid for funding to find solutions
Sharing information/data
More opportunities to meet and share info on service offers
VCFSE to also do more to promote offer 'get message out there
More collaboration. Locally based events like fairer together approach
Public health events for VCFS
Events about specific themes
Theme: Investment in the VCFSE
More use of s106 – this needs to be on services not just infrastructure
Anchor institutions and businesses encouraged to work more with VCFSE
Needs resources, can't be just a gateway to the community
Funders to streamline applications/pool resources
Partnership applications – toolkits/agreements

4g. VAI's Advisory Group

Our CEO continued to work with our Advisory Group made up of the following organisations and networks in the borough and facilitated meetings and workshops: Age UK, Brickworks Community Centre, Copenhagen Youth Project, Cripplegate, Healthwatch Islington, Help on Your Doorstep, Islington CAB, Islington Faiths Forum, Islington Mind, Islington Refugee and Migrant Forum, Manor Gardens Welfare Trust, Octopus Community Network, St Lukes Community Centre, Stuart Low Trust, Talk for Health. We extended the invitation to Disability Action Islington, Cloudesley and The Peel Centre.

4h. Islington Compact – 11th October 2023 – (In person)

One of the significant areas of work that the Advisory Group started working on was the refresh of the Islington Compact – the partnership agreement between Islington Council and the VCFSE sector. We held an event in partnership with LBI in October. Following this, a small working group made up of Age UK Islington, Islington Mind, Islington Faiths Forum and Stuart Low Trust drafted a set of 12 Compact Principles. More work on the Compact will be done over 2024-25.

4i. Local Representation

Our CEO represented the VCFSE at the following LBI partnership boards including:

- Islington Borough Partnership
- Islington Together Cost of Living Summit
- Islington Cost of Living Board
- Fairer Together Partnerships Board
- Islington Community Safety Partnership Board
- Islington Borough Resilience Forum

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4j. North Central London (NCL) Representation

Our CEO represented Islington's VCFSE at the following NCL partnership boards:

- VCFSE Alliance – which includes CVSs and service providers from Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey
- NCL Integrated Care Board – People's Board, Population Health Board.
- NCL Research Network

STRATEGIC AIM 4: TO RUN VAI RESPONSIBLY, EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY AS A MODEL OF GOOD PRACTICE

5. Resource Centre Facilities

Our Resource Centre on Pentonville Road continues to generate funds to support the development of the local VCFSE and provides a model of co-location and efficient use of resources. During the year, we continued to provide desk and room hire facilities to charities and community groups, with activity increasing from the previous year.

Charities and community groups using our desk space facilities
ACTSA
Action for Empty Homes
Action for Race Equality (ARE)
ACTSA
ALAG
Al-Asharaf Community Welfare Association/ Somali Woman's Group
Action for Empty Homes
Action for Race Equality (ARE)
Betknowmore UK
British Institute of Human Rights (until Sept 2023)
Capacity London (until Sept 2023)
City Year UK
Community Empowerment Network (CEN)
Family in Harmony
First Step Action
Gendered Intelligence (until Sept 2023)
Head Held High
Headliners UK (until Oct 2023)
Healthprom
HEAR Network
Islington Refugee and Migrant Network
Lakwera Services
Migrant Voice
New Europeans
Respect
Say it Out Loud Club
SERA
The BEARR Trust
Universal Ease to Redress
Wipers CIC
Young Elite Management
Young Roots

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

6. MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNICATIONS

Membership Services

During the year, we grew our membership to 590 local VCFSE organisations. Going forward we will be reviewing our membership offer and will work on improving our services to our membership.

Regular Communications

We circulated funding updates, job alerts and local community events via all our messaging platforms:

Social Media

VAI and Volunteer Centre have 6,513 followers on Twitter with 3,800 following VAI and 2,713 following the Volunteer Centre. We have increased our Instagram followers to 1,017.

Newsgroup

The VAI Google Newsgroup increased from the previous year to over 880 local groups/organisations. This is a platform where the VCFSE shared local news about their services in Islington. Upon request, we also disseminated news and information from our council and public health colleagues. In 2023-24, 1,211 news emails were shared using this platform.

Website

Our website had over 40k visits from VCS groups/organisations accessing a range of capacity building and organisational development information/resources and events to support the VCS in the delivery of their services.

KEY PROJECTS AND HOW THESE WERE FUNDED

Our main sources of income are grants and donations from public authorities and charitable trusts and foundations, together with space rental income from our Resource Centre. The breakdown of our funding during this year:

- Islington Council core grant to continue our work in building capacity among local VCFS organisations and operating our Volunteer Centre brokerage service - £75,000.
- Islington Council - Local Wellbeing Networks - £30,000
- City Bridge Foundation via Camden Volunteer Centre – enabling and strengthening volunteering with the NHS - £9,300
- North Central London Integrated Care Board (NCL ICB) – to contribute to the NCL VCS Alliance £5,250
- National Lottery Community Fund – to strengthen our IT infrastructure £75,000 (with £73,870 carried forward into 24-25)
- GLA Community Resilience Fund – to increase community preparedness for emergencies - £5,000
- London Community Foundation - Peabody Trust – to engage more residents in volunteering - £15,000
- VAI Resource Centre generated income - £287,114

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Statement of Financial Activities shows annual net income, before gains on investments, of £2,162 (2023: £53,307). That surplus comprised net expenditure of £24,502 (2023: £37,825) on restricted funds and a £26,664 surplus (2023: £91,132) on unrestricted funds. The surplus on unrestricted funds was the effective operating surplus for the year.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

After incorporating the £4,862 loss incurred on investment values in the year (2023: £14,976) and a transfer of £3,542 to restricted funds (2023: £nil), the total net expenditure (the annual loss) is £2,700 (2023: £38,331 net surplus). The trustees consider that to be a satisfactory result for the year and consistent with their commitment to rebuild the charity reserves.

Income increased from £490,853 in 2022-23 to £495,263 for the current year. Voluntary Action Islington's Resource Centre generated the largest source of income, as it has done in recent years. The London Borough of Islington (LBI) continued to support VAI's core activities under the Strategic Borough-wide Partners and Strategic Volunteering Partners grants. Significant funding was also received from the National Lottery Community Fund through its Reaching Communities programme.

At the year end all funds totalled £356,376 (2023: £359,076) of which £307,452 (2023: £289,192) were unrestricted. General funds, which are considered to be the free reserves of the charity, totalled £203,145 (2023: £181,729).

Further to the decision made by trustees in September 2015, Voluntary Action Services, the subsidiary trading company established by Voluntary Action Islington in 2013 remains a dormant company.

Reserves

On 31 March 2024 Voluntary Action Islington held unrestricted funds totalling £307,452 (2023: £289,192).

The free reserves (those unrestricted funds that have not been designated for specific purposes) totalled £203,145 (2023: £181,729). The reserves policy requires a balance of free reserves equivalent to no less than 3 months (25%) of annual expenditure. The current balance of £203,145 is equivalent to 34% (2023: 36%) of annual budgeted expenditure and is therefore compliant with the policy.

Funds have been designated from reserves for specific purposes where costs are not incurred on an annual basis. At year end those funds totalled £104,307 (2023: £107,463), designations having been made to invest in building improvements and VAI's IT infrastructure and to support future relocation from the Resource Centre including managing the cost of dilapidations.

In addition to its unrestricted funds the charity held £48,924 of restricted funds (2023: £69,884), the use of which is restricted by funders to specific activities to support VAI's members and develop the voluntary sector in Islington.

Investment Policy and Performance

This year, Voluntary Action Islington implemented the investment policy as agreed in October 2022. The objectives of the policy are:

- To use free reserves to produce the best financial return within an acceptable level of risk
- When there are opportunities to do so to invest a proportion of our reserves in the development of new products and services where we assess that it is realistic that these will generate funds to sustain themselves or when, by investing in products and services delivered by our subsidiary trading company, we assess that this investment could produce a long-term income stream for Voluntary Action Islington
- When there are opportunities to do so we will seek investment opportunities that further our charitable objectives, whilst at the same time producing a financial return

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

VAI's listed investments continued to generate valuable income throughout the year in line with the investment policy. Investment values fell from £158,603 to £153,744 during the year resulting in annual unrealised losses of £4,862 (2023: £14,976). The investments continue to be held with the expectation that values will rise in the future, as they have done for the current year to date.

Going Concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about Voluntary Action Islington Limited's ability to continue as a going concern.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

Trustees adopt a risk appraisal and mitigation approach as part of future development. The VAI Risk Register is being comprehensively updated in 2024 and a Risk Sub Committee will prioritise and make plans to mitigate risks on a quarterly basis. Prioritised risks will be reviewed by the Board at each quarterly trustee meeting.

During 2023-24, the main factors likely to affect the financial performance of the Charity were a reduction in demand for our desk and room hire provision to VCFSE organisations, a loss of funding or insecurity in our Resource Centre lease. We plan to mitigate these risks by improving the facilities at the Resource Centre and enhancing our communications and marketing of the facilities. We plan to maintain our financial resources by careful financial management and by continuing to provide excellent public benefit in conjunction with our partners and seeking funding for our projects and charitable services to the local VCFSE. We also plan to ensure continuity in our Resource Centre provision by negotiating renewal of the lease in October 2024.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

We are committed to continuing as an independent organisation bringing together civil society in Islington and representing the interests of local VCFSE organisations to the main statutory agencies. We will continue to participate in partnership boards that influence how Islington Council including Islington's Borough Partnership, the North Central London Integrated Care System and Public Health make decisions that impact on communities, particularly at a local level. This includes multi-agency initiatives where we represent our membership.

We will continue to work with VCFSE organisations to help diversify funding and other support, including by engaging with private business. We will encourage collaboration and joint funding bids, which include smaller local organisations in service delivery. As part of this approach, we will continue to work with VCFSE by providing networking and partnership opportunities. We will continue to work with other local organisations that provide capacity building and organisational support to their membership and explore how our collective efforts can be made more strategic.

We plan to continue to support the effective management of volunteers and to support organisations through a mix of one-to-one support and training workshops.

We will continue to make applications for grants and to submit tenders for contracts, which are related to our core functions.

Our Resource Centre on Pentonville Road is an important community asset for local VCFSE organisations and will continue to be an important source of income supporting our core offer to local organisations. We reinvest all the income generated into the community through our services. We will continue to take account of our environmental impact in our management of this facility.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Our website and social media are well used resources, and we are committed to continuing to develop the use of these facilities over the coming period.

We look forward to launching our new 3-year strategy in October 2024.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The charity is constituted as a company limited by guarantee and is therefore governed by a memorandum and articles of association. This was last amended in November 2013. The provisions of the governing document have been complied with during the year under review.

The trustees serve on a Board of Trustees. They consist of at least three and not more than 12 individuals, all of whom must be authorised representatives of organisations or an individual member. Each Trustee shall retire from office at the end of three years commencing from the date of his or her appointment. A retiring Trustee may be reappointed but a Trustee who has served for nine years in total must take a break from office and may not be reappointed until the anniversary of the commencement of his or her break from office.

At the end of the year, there were 10 trustees with plans to recruit two further trustees. The trustees keep under review gaps in experience and expertise represented on the board, and a skills audit of current trustees will be carried out over the latter part of 2024. Induction meetings are organised for trustees to brief them about the work of the charity and trustees attend occasional conferences and courses to keep up to date about relevant developments.

The charity is organised through the Board of Trustees to whom the Chief Executive is answerable, through the Chair. The Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer are appointed from amongst the trustees at the first meeting after the AGM. These officers serve for a period of one year.

The Chief Executive is responsible for the management of staff in 3 core functions: Volunteer Centre, Resource Centre and capacity building and organisational development. The CEO and staff have responsibility for specific areas of work and reporting to funders. The Chief Executive is not legally a director for the purposes of company or charitable law. The Charity is a member of the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA), NCVO, and Children England. These memberships provide information and resources that help us to assist voluntary and community organisations serving the community in Islington.

The Charity has a subsidiary trading company, Voluntary Action Services Limited (VAS). This is a private company limited by share capital and wholly owned by Voluntary Action Islington. To date VAS has only traded in online learning courses. At its meeting on 9th September 2016 the trustees decided that this company should cease trading on 30th September 2016 and should be retained as a dormant company, for potential future trading. Hussain Ahmed remains a director of both companies. As VAS is currently dormant, there are no plans yet to appoint new Directors.

Several of the trustees of Voluntary Action Islington are employed by or trustees of local voluntary organisations that are members of Voluntary Action Islington. These voluntary organisations benefit from the services of Voluntary Action Islington. Going forward, a register of trustee interests will be maintained, and any potential conflict of interest will be declared at the beginning of each quarterly trustee board meeting.

The charity's staff, including management personnel, are paid on the national NJC pay scale. The pay of the Chief Executive is set by the trustees, who take account of the performance of the Chief Executive; the complexity, scale of responsibilities and expected level of external

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees' annual report has been approved by the trustees on 24 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Navinder Kaur', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Navinder Kaur
Company Secretary

Registered office:
200a Pentonville Road
London N1 9JP

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

influence of the Chief Executive role; an assessment of current Chief Executive pay levels within the charity sector; comparisons with the pay levels of other CVS Chief Executives in London; the salary range of an equivalent officer within the local authority; and the overall financial position of the organisation.

STATEMENT OF THE TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of Voluntary Action Islington Ltd for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statement
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation

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

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £10 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees on 31st March 2023 was 568. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

STATEMENT AS TO THE DISCLOSURE TO OUR INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's independent assessor is unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the independent assessor is aware of that information

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

Goldwins Ltd were re-appointed as the Independent Examiners of the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Independent examiner's report

To the members of Voluntary Action Islington Limited

For the year ended 31 March 2024

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

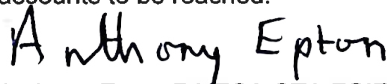
Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Anthony Epton BA FCA CTA FCIE
Goldwins
Chartered accountants
75 Maygrove Road
West Hampstead
London NW6 2EG

29 October 2024

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	-	77,670	77,670	1,000	75,000	76,000
Charitable activities	3						
Community Development		40,000	-	40,000	50,000	-	50,000
Member Services and Support		-	-	-	20,000	3,930	23,930
Sector Development and Volunteering		66,409	301,816	368,225	44,372	288,423	332,795
Investments		-	9,368	9,368	-	8,128	8,128
Total income		<u>106,409</u>	<u>388,854</u>	<u>495,263</u>	<u>115,372</u>	<u>375,481</u>	<u>490,853</u>
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities							
Community Development		67,216	-	67,216	45,273	-	45,273
Member Services and Support		5,167	47,832	52,999	30,488	51,606	82,094
Sector Development and Volunteering		58,528	314,358	372,886	77,436	232,743	310,179
Total expenditure	5	<u>130,911</u>	<u>362,190</u>	<u>493,101</u>	<u>153,197</u>	<u>284,349</u>	<u>437,546</u>
Net (expenditure) income before net gains (losses) on investments		(24,502)	26,664	2,162	(37,825)	91,132	53,307
Net gains (losses) on investments	10	-	(4,862)	(4,862)	-	(14,976)	(14,976)
Net (expenditure) income for the year	8	(24,502)	21,802	(2,700)	(37,825)	76,156	38,331
Transfers between funds		3,542	(3,542)	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		(20,960)	18,260	(2,700)	(37,825)	76,156	38,331
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		69,884	289,192	359,076	107,709	213,036	320,745
Total funds carried forward	15	<u>48,924</u>	<u>307,452</u>	<u>356,376</u>	<u>69,884</u>	<u>289,192</u>	<u>359,076</u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 15 to the financial statements.

The notes on pages 24 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited (Limited by guarantee)**Balance sheet**

Company No. 01913555

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	3,307	13,468
Investments	10	<u>153,744</u>	<u>158,603</u>
		157,051	172,071
Current assets			
Debtors	11	30,152	27,227
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>223,797</u>	<u>254,605</u>
		253,949	281,832
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(54,624)</u>	<u>(94,827)</u>
Net current assets		<u>199,325</u>	<u>187,005</u>
Net assets	14	<u>356,376</u>	<u>359,076</u>
Funds	15		
Restricted funds		48,924	69,884
Unrestricted funds:			
Designated funds		104,307	107,463
General funds		<u>203,145</u>	<u>181,729</u>
Total funds		<u>356,376</u>	<u>359,076</u>

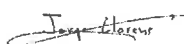
These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

For the year ended 31 March 2024 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

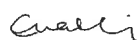
No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

Approved by the trustees on 24 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Jorge Llorens
Treasurer



Emma Hutchins
Chair

The notes on pages 24 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	16		(36,734)		70,405
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Dividends from investments		9,368		8,128	
Sale (purchase) of fixed assets		(3,439)		-	
Sale (purchase) of investments		-		-	
Cash provided by (used in) investing activities			5,929		8,128
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			(30,805)		78,533
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			255,360		176,827
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	17		224,555		255,360

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting policies

1a Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Voluntary Action Islington meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

1b Going Concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties regarding the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

No key judgements have been made by the charitable company which have a significant effect on the accounts.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

1c Income

Income, including income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Grants are credited to incoming resources when they are receivable as the charity's own money, unless they are for activities that relate to a specific future period, in which case they are deferred to that period.

Income received under contracts for services which cross over the year end are recognised in the financial statements in line with the percentage of completion of the contract at the year end.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

Distributions from listed investments are included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally the date on which the holding is first quoted ex dividend or the end date of the period for which it is accrued as notified by the fund manager.

1d Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1e Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprise of trading costs and the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of services and support to members and developing volunteering and the local voluntary sector undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

1f Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, where costs cannot be directly attributed, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with their use of resources.

Premises are allocated proportionate to floor space occupied by each activity as follows:

Community Development	2.0%
Member Services and Support	1.9%
Sector Development and Volunteering	95.1%
Support costs	0.9%
Governance costs	0.1%

Other costs of administration are allocated per capita VAI staff and other occupants of the Resource Centre as follows:

Community Development	4.7%
Member Services and Support	4.3%
Sector Development and Volunteering	88.6%
Support costs	2.3%
Governance costs	0.1%

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity:

Community Development	12.7%
Member Services and Support	12.0%
Sector Development and Volunteering	75.3%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

1g Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, where substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership remain with the lessor, are charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis over the length of the lease.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1h Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £2,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided on a straight-line basis at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment	4 years
Leasehold property	The lesser of 15 years or the remaining lease term

1i Listed investments

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. Any change in fair value will be recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1j Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1k Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1l Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
London Borough of Islington	-	75,000	75,000	76,000
Other grants and similar income, under £5,000 each	-	2,670	2,670	-
	-	77,670	77,670	76,000

Voluntary Action Islington benefit from a Section 106 Agreement that provides accommodation at a peppercorn rent. As it is not possible to put an accurate value to this, it has not been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

3 Income from charitable activities

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
London Borough of Islington Local Wellbeing Network	30,000	-	30,000	45,000
Greater London Authority, Community Resilience Fund Strengthening Community Resilience in Islington	5,000	-	5,000	-
Donations and similar income, under £10,000 each	5,000	-	5,000	5,000
Sub-total for Community Development	40,000	-	40,000	50,000
	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
Greater London Authority (via Hackney Council for Voluntary Service) Young Londoner's Fund Network	-	-	-	3,930
London Borough of Islington Young Islington Networks	-	-	-	20,000
Sub-total for Member Services and Support	-	-	-	23,930
	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
Community resource and other service income	-	287,114	287,114	272,006
London Borough of Islington Public Health	-	-	-	39,372
Peabody (via The London Community Foundation) South Islington volunteering opportunities	15,000	-	15,000	-
Greater London Authority, Community Resilience Fund Strengthening Community Resilience in Islington	5,000	-	5,000	-
The National Lottery Community Fund Strengthening Islington's Voluntary and Community Sector	45,000	-	45,000	-
Donations and similar income, under £10,000 each	1,409	14,702	16,111	21,417
Sub-total for Sector Development and Volunteering	66,409	301,816	368,225	332,795
Total income from charitable activities	106,409	301,816	408,225	406,725

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

5 Analysis of expenditure

5a Current year	Charitable activities			Governance costs	Support costs	2024 Total	2023 Total
	Community Development	Member Services and Support	Sector Development and Volunteering				
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs (note 6)	39,643	40,850	206,280	1,881	25,138	313,792	266,709
Agency staff	-	-	2,554	-	19,242	21,796	20,540
Other staff costs	555	467	3,098	13	221	4,354	4,265
Direct activity costs	13,261	-	9,270	-	615	23,146	23,801
Premises	1,180	1,121	56,178	35	555	59,069	59,077
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	13,600	13,600	14,054
Admin and ICT	3,028	1,546	38,757	46	1,023	44,400	40,910
Compliance	-	-	-	10,817	2,127	12,944	8,190
	57,667	43,984	316,137	12,792	62,521	493,101	437,546
Governance costs	1,995	1,882	8,915	(12,792)	-	-	-
Support Costs	7,554	7,133	47,834	-	(62,521)	-	-
Total expenditure 2024	67,216	52,999	372,886	-	-	493,101	437,546

5b Prior year

Direct expenditure	40,370	58,233	273,038	6,984	58,921	437,546
Support and governance costs allocated	4,903	23,861	37,141	(6,984)	(58,921)	-
Total expenditure 2023	45,273	82,094	310,179	-	-	437,546

Support and governance costs have been allocated on the basis of staff hours engaged in each activity (note 1f).
Of the total expenditure, £362,190 was unrestricted (2023: £284,349) and £130,911 was restricted (2023: £153,197).

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses and key management

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	275,438	234,372
Social security costs	23,386	18,886
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	14,968	13,451
	<u>313,792</u>	<u>266,709</u>
Agency costs	21,796	20,540
	<u>335,588</u>	<u>287,249</u>

No employee received employee benefits (excluding employer pension) exceeding £60,000 during the year (2023: No employee).

The total employee benefits including pension contributions and employer's national insurance of the key management personnel were £62,863 (2023: £78,026).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity in the year (2023: £nil) and no trustees were reimbursed expenses (2023: none).

Staff numbers:

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 8 (2023: 8).

The average number of employees (full time equivalent) during the year and by activity was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Community Development	0.9	0.6
Member Services and Support	0.9	1.2
Sector Development and Volunteering	4.2	4.3
Support and governance	0.5	0.5
	<u>6.5</u>	<u>6.6</u>

7 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

8 Net income (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation	13,600	14,054
Board of Trustees - indemnity insurance	584	505
Operating lease charges	13,457	8,613
Independent Examiner's remuneration:	3,150	3,000

9 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment £	Leasehold property £	2024 Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	96,118	133,950	230,068
Additions in year	3,439	-	3,439
Disposals in year	(690)	(771)	(1,461)
At 31 March 2024	<u>98,867</u>	<u>133,179</u>	<u>232,046</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	94,661	121,939	216,600
Charge for the year	1,589	12,011	13,600
Eliminated on disposal	(690)	(771)	(1,461)
At 31 March 2024	<u>95,560</u>	<u>133,179</u>	<u>228,739</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2024	<u>3,307</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,307</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>1,457</u>	<u>12,011</u>	<u>13,468</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

10 Fixed asset investments

	2024	2023
	£	£
Listed investments (note 10a)	153,743	158,602
Investment in subsidiary company (note 10b)	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>153,744</u>	<u>158,603</u>

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

10a Listed investments

	2024 £	2023 £
Analysis of movement of investments		
Market value at start of year	157,847	172,823
Disposals at market value	-	-
Realised gains / (losses)	-	-
Unrealised gains / (losses)	<u>(4,862)</u>	<u>(14,976)</u>
Market value at year end	152,985	157,847
Cash instruments and cash held for reinvestment	<u>758</u>	<u>755</u>
Fair value at year end	<u>153,743</u>	<u>158,602</u>
Historical cost	<u>158,595</u>	<u>158,595</u>

The investments comprise two UK unit trusts.

10b Investment in subsidiary company

VAI beneficially owns the entire share capital of Voluntary Action Services Limited (a company limited by share capital, company no. 8612449 (England and Wales)), through which VAI's commercial trading previously took place. In September 2016 the decision was taken to suspend trading through the company. The company remained dormant at 31 March 2024.

The share capital and reserves of the subsidiary are not material and therefore no consolidated accounts have been prepared. Disclosure is confined to this note to the accounts.

	2024 £	2023 £
Investment in Voluntary Action Services Ltd at cost	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

At 31 March 2023 VAI held one share of £1, being the entire share capital of the trading company.

10b Investment in subsidiary company (continued)

Relevant financial information regarding Voluntary Action Services Ltd is as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Assets	1	1
Liabilities	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total funds	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

Voluntary Action Islington Limited**Notes to the financial statements****For the year ended 31 March 2024****11 Debtors**

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	22,409	18,456
Other debtors	3,247	3,152
Prepayments	4,496	5,619
	<u>30,152</u>	<u>27,227</u>

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Tax and social security costs	7,044	6,488
Trade creditors	11,285	14,955
Other creditors	2,090	-
Accruals	33,445	73,214
Deferred income (note 12)	760	170
	<u>54,624</u>	<u>94,827</u>

Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at the beginning of the year	170	3,653
Amount released to income in the year	(170)	(3,653)
Amount deferred in the year	760	170
	<u>760</u>	<u>170</u>
Balance at the end of the year	760	170

Deferred income comprises resource centre income received in advance (2023: resource centre income received in advance).

13 Related party transactions

Colin Adams is a trustee of VAI and a trustee of Octopus Community Network.

VAI paid Octopus Community Network £9,493 towards costs incurred in supporting the Local Wellbeing Network programme in the year (2023: £8,149).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

14 Analysis of group net assets between funds

14a Current year

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	3,307	-	3,307
Investment assets	-	72,000	81,744	153,744
Net current assets	<u>48,924</u>	<u>29,000</u>	<u>121,401</u>	<u>199,325</u>
Net assets at 31 March 2024	<u>48,924</u>	<u>104,307</u>	<u>203,145</u>	<u>356,376</u>

14b Prior year

	Restricted £	Designated £	General £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	7,005	6,463	-	13,468
Investment assets	-	60,000	98,603	158,603
Net current assets	<u>62,879</u>	<u>41,000</u>	<u>83,126</u>	<u>187,005</u>
Net assets at 1 April 2023	<u>69,884</u>	<u>107,463</u>	<u>181,729</u>	<u>359,076</u>

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

15 Movements in funds

15a Current year

	At the start of the year £	Incoming and gains £	Outgoing and losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Forum	7,176	-	(5,167)	-	2,009
Conferences and events	-	1,409	(1,409)	-	-
Local Wellbeing Network	27,918	30,000	(51,721)	-	6,197
Public Health and Community Engagement	23,864	-	(23,864)	-	-
South Islington volunteering opportunities	-	15,000	(16,968)	1,968	-
Strengthening Community Resilience in Islington	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
Strengthening Islington's VCFSE sector	-	45,000	(4,282)	-	40,718
Ukraine Refugee Infrastructure Fund	3,921	5,000	(10,495)	1,574	-
Fixed assets	7,005	-	(7,005)	-	-
Total restricted funds	69,884	106,409	(130,911)	3,542	48,924
Unrestricted funds:					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Building improvements	-	-	-	25,000	25,000
ICT infrastructure development	4,000	-	-	-	4,000
Relocation	97,000	-	-	(25,000)	72,000
Fixed assets	6,463	-	(6,595)	3,439	3,307
<i>Total designated funds</i>	107,463	-	(6,595)	3,439	104,307
General funds	181,729	388,854	(360,457)	(6,981)	203,145
Total unrestricted funds	289,192	388,854	(367,052)	(3,542)	307,452
Total funds	359,076	495,263	(497,963)	-	356,376

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

15 Movements in funds (continued)

15b Prior year

	At the start of the year £	Incoming and gains £	Outgoing and losses £	Transfers £	At the end of the year £
Restricted funds:					
Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Forum	17,664	-	(10,488)	-	7,176
Cost of living	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Covid-19 Vaccination Programme	34,818	-	(34,818)	-	-
Local Wellbeing Network	27,112	45,000	(44,194)	-	27,918
Public Health and Community Engagement	-	39,372	(15,508)	-	23,864
South Islington volunteering opportunities	14,102	-	(14,102)	-	-
Ukraine Refugee Infrastructure Fund	-	5,000	(1,079)	-	3,921
VCFS Annual Conference	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Young Islington Networks	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
Fixed assets	14,013	-	(7,008)	-	7,005
Total restricted funds	107,709	115,372	(153,197)	-	69,884
Unrestricted funds:					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
ICT infrastructure development	4,000	-	-	-	4,000
Relocation	33,000	-	-	64,000	97,000
Fixed assets	13,509	-	(7,046)	-	6,463
<i>Total designated funds</i>	50,509	-	(7,046)	64,000	107,463
General funds	162,527	375,481	(292,279)	(64,000)	181,729
Total unrestricted funds	213,036	375,481	(299,325)	-	289,192
Total funds	320,745	490,853	(452,522)	-	359,076

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

15c Movements in funds (continued)

Purpose of restricted funds

Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Forum	Funds provided by the London Borough of Islington to support activities by the Children's Voluntary Sector Forum.
Conferences and events	Contributions from supporters towards the costs of the VCFSE conference held in partnership with London Met University and LBI and other smaller thematic events.
Cost of Living	NAVCA funding to facilitate the sharing of data and insight between VCFS and LBI. Includes facilitation and support for the LBI staff volunteering programme.
Covid-19 Vaccination Programme	Funded by NCL Clinical Commissioning Group and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the programme aimed to improve Covid-19 vaccination take up in areas and communities where it is low.
Local Wellbeing Network	As part of Islington Council's 'Fairer Together' initiative, VAI and Octopus Community Network have been funded to develop Local Wellbeing Networks in the North, Central and South localities to increase collaboration between local services and to provide a platform for community voice.
Public Health and Community Engagement	Funding to develop effective partnerships with Public Health and the local VCFS to promote Covid vaccination and other health and wellbeing offers.
South Islington volunteering opportunities	To provide outreach services to Peabody residents especially those located in the south of the borough.
Strengthening Community Resilience in Islington	To increase community preparedness for emergencies, funded by GLA and London Communities Emergencies Partnership. Funds distributed via London Plus.
Strengthening Islington's VCFSE sector	To improve VAI's internal infrastructure in order to collaborate with our local VCFSE sector more effectively. Funded by the National Lottery Communities Fund.
Ukraine Refugee Infrastructure Fund	To partner with Healthprom, and develop a network of organisations to provide more effective support to Ukrainian families hosted through the sponsorship programme.
VCFS Annual Conference	LBI funding towards catering costs for an event held at London Metropolitan University

Voluntary Action Islington Limited**Notes to the financial statements****For the year ended 31 March 2024****15c Movements in funds (continued)****Purpose of restricted funds (continued)**

Young Islington Networks To widen the engagement and participation of Islington's VCFS in the Young Islington Networks and the Universal Youth Work Offer.

Fixed assets To cover the future depreciation of Voluntary Action Islington's fixed assets originally paid for from restricted funding.

Purpose of designated funds

Building improvements A fund established by transfer from the Relocation Fund to improve VAI's Resource Centre so that it remains an up to date facility that is attractive and welcoming venue to local charities and community organisations.

ICT infrastructure development A fund to invest in essential improvements to the ICT infrastructure of the Resource Centre.

Relocation A fund built up over 10 years so that VAI is in a position to manage its liabilities at the end of the lease on the current premises in 13th October 2024, and to seek alternative premises if required. £25,000 was transferred from the fund to the Building Improvements Designated Fund in the year.

Fixed assets To cover the future depreciation of Voluntary Action Islington's fixed assets originally paid for from unrestricted funds.

16 Reconciliation of net income / (expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net movement in funds for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(2,700)	38,331
Depreciation	13,600	14,054
Interest, rent and dividends from investments	(9,368)	(8,128)
(Gains) / losses on investments	4,862	14,976
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	(2,925)	(10,048)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(40,203)	21,220
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	<u>(36,734)</u>	<u>70,405</u>

Voluntary Action Islington Limited

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

17 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 1 April 2023	Cash flows	Other changes £	At 31 March 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	254,605	(30,808)	-	223,797
Cash held by investment managers	<u>755</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>758</u>
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>255,360</u>	<u>(30,805)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>224,555</u>

18 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Equipment 2024 £	2023 £
Less than one year	18,616	8,610
One to five years	55,591	24,869
Over five years	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>74,207</u>	<u>33,479</u>

19 Contingent liability

Under the terms of the lease for its current premises Voluntary Action Islington is liable for the costs of restoring the property to its original condition, including removal of all fixtures and fittings, if so required by the landlord when yielding up the property at the end of the lease term. The current lease expires in October 2024 but is likely to be extended to October 2039. The extent of the works that will be required and the consequent cost cannot reasonably be estimated at this time and so no provision has been made for this in the accounts.

20 Company limited by guarantee

Voluntary Action Islington is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital.

Every member of the company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required not exceeding £10 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of its being wound up while he or she is a member, or within one year after he or she ceases to be a member.

