



**ANNUAL**

**REVIEW**

**2016-17**

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# Welcome!

## Chairs Report

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This year has seen Merton CIL increase our local influence at a time when Deaf and Disabled People are bearing the brunt of austerity. We have been at the forefront of the campaign to demand a more realistic Adult Social Care budget in Merton, to support local social care users. At the same time, we have also raised the profile of issues around hate crime against Disabled People. Merton CIL is leading on ensuring that there is not only talk around what should be done to stop hate crime, but also that actions around implementing preventative measures are pursued.

While expanding our activities around policy work and hate crime, we also continue to provide an outstanding Advice and Advocacy service that has provided a record number of support sessions to Disabled People in Merton. None of this would have been possible without the dedication and commitment of our staff and our volunteers.

We are working hard to ensure that we can continue to maintain our current level of service provision going forward, and hope to grow our services to meet increased demand. We are of course indebted to all our funders, please see our special thank you on page 9. Lastly, but not least, I would like to thank my colleague trustees for their support and contribution throughout the year. Our friendly board are always happy to welcome people who are interested in joining us as a trustee, particularly if you have lived experience, so please do get in touch.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Roy Benjamin".

Roy Benjamin, Chair of Merton CIL



# Merton CIL Headlines for 2016-17





**Top topics for Advice and Advocacy:**

1. Benefits
2. Housing
3. Community Care & Independent Living
4. Debt & Low Income
5. Hate Crime
6. Health



**216 hours**

given by trustees - up from 100 hours last year



**96%**

Of service users agree that **Merton CIL is welcoming**<sup>3</sup>

"Amazing! Merton CIL have been a saviour. I can not sing their praises enough. They are a god send"<sup>7</sup>

**Build a network**



**232**  
Members of Merton CIL

**You Tube**

"The video that I made with Merton CIL speaking about independent living has helped my confidence. I watch it everyday. **I do not think the council will mess with me as much**"<sup>7</sup>

"Merton CIL are both kind and professional. I am certain their help made all the difference"<sup>7</sup>

**"very nice people doing nice work"**



**"Merton CIL is the crutch for disabled people who cant find anyone else to help"**<sup>7</sup>

We help people **SPEAK UP!**

**46** events, activities and consultations supporting local disabled people to speak up<sup>6</sup>

**"Merton CIL is a friendly service that I would recommend to any disabled person"**<sup>7</sup>



"It is a shame that Merton CIL cannot be expanded to help more people"<sup>7</sup>

**Footnotes**

1. Excluding people who only attended our events & groups and no other services
2. We conducted feedback with a random sample of service users who answered the question "Has there been any improvement for you in the following areas? Finances, Housing, Confidence, Health & Wellbeing, Speaking Up and Taking Control"
3. We conducted feedback with a random sample of service users who answered the question "When you got in touch with us, were we... welcoming? compassionate? listening? inclusive? supportive?"
4. Data based on 2016 annual survey "Merton CIL addresses the issues that are important to Disabled People in Merton"
5. Amount obtained directly for disabled people, social value, and net salaries of local disabled staff
6. These included My Voice Matters, EU Referendum debate, members groups, and outreach
7. Quotes gathered whilst carrying out in-depth feedback of service
8. We conducted feedback with a random sample of service users who answered the question "would you recommend this service to someone else?"



# About Merton CIL



## Our Vision

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL) is a rapidly growing local organisation run and controlled by Disabled people, for disabled people. Merton CIL was established in 2008, incorporated as a company in 2011 and registered as a charity in 2013. Our vision is to enable Deaf and Disabled people to take control over their lives and achieve full participation in Merton and wider society.

## Our Aims

We review our work towards our aims, objectives and activities each year. This year's review looks at what we have achieved and the outcomes of our work throughout 2016-17.

### At Merton CIL our aims are to:

1. Promote the independence and inclusion of Disabled and Deaf people in Merton
2. Identify and challenge discrimination faced by Disabled and Deaf people
3. Encourage Disabled and Deaf people and supporters to achieve change



# Our Values

In 2016 we worked with our members, trustees and staff to develop and define our values as an organisation



## Be Person-Centred

This means we will put you first and we will take an holistic, whole person approach. We will use active listening to find out what you want to do and we will try to support you to make the choices that you want.



## Be Welcoming

This means being friendly to you when you come to see us or call us. It means we will try to help you feel comfortable and we will be positive and do our best.



## Be Fair and Inclusive

We will be there for people across the full spectrum of disability, no matter who you are or where you are from, across all strands of diversity. This means that no one gets special treatment, and no one gets worse treatment because of who they are or who they know.

## Value people's lived experience

We are a user-led organisation. That means we are run by, and for, disabled people. We believe that our shared experience means we can support you better.



## Learn

We will always try our hardest to get things right, but no one is perfect. If things go wrong, we will try to learn from that and do things better next time. We will take an evidence-based approach to our work.



## Fight for justice

We are passionate about supporting you to stand up for your rights. We will challenge discrimination. We will support you to say what you want and need.

## Be Compassionate

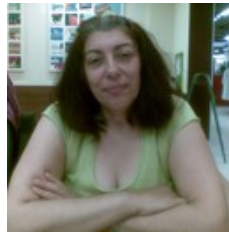
We will show empathy for what you are experiencing and we don't judge you. We don't do sympathy because it is judgemental. We work within the social model of disability, not the medical model.



# Meet Merton CIL's Trustees!



**Roy Benjamin, Chair** has worked in the social care field for longer than he can remember. For the last 30 years he has been a campaigner for equality



**Gina Vettese, Vice Chair** has been disabled since she was 13 years old and has been part of Merton CIL from when it was just a steering group. Gina is also a talented seamstress



**Fiona Ringwood, Treasurer** has 25 years experience in accounting / book keeping and has run her own company for 15 years. Her son has autism and she is a keen florist



**Charles Barraball** is a stroke survivor who has supported Merton CIL since 2012, and joined as a trustee in 2014



**Claire Benjamin** is a visually impaired mum of 2 disabled children who has lived in Merton for 17 years



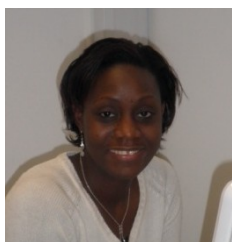
**Fitzroy Dawson** is CEO of Merton Community Transport and has family experience of disability and mental health.



**Slim Flegg** is extremely active locally having been a local councillor and Mayor of Merton (twice) in the past, and helped found both Go4M and Merton CIL



**Sarah Henley** lives in Merton and brings her sense of fun and adventure to every board meeting!



**Anita Jones** joined the trustees after using the service and helping out as a volunteer. She is a carer with a background in production and fashion



**Petra Jones** is a social worker with a hearing impairment. She enjoys being able to help make lives better where she can.



**Nick Pizey** has over 20 years of experience with national disability organisations and is involved with local healthcare organisations



# Thank You

We rely on the generosity of people and organisations and we are extremely grateful to everyone who supports us. A huge thank you to everyone who supported us financially in 2016 - 17. Your money helps us continue to support local Deaf and Disabled people.

Thank you to the following organisations:



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

**The London  
Community  
Foundation**



**M O P A C**

**MAYOR OF LONDON**  
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

**A special thank you to Tom Killick and the Adams family who made generous donations to Merton CIL throughout 2016 - 17**

**Also a big thank you to;** our hard-working staff, all of our enthusiastic volunteers who have supported us at events, consultations and on the front line; our committed trustees who have steered the organisation; our service users, members, supporters and partners. We appreciate you all! We are achieving our aims due to your continued support.

## **Please donate to Merton CIL**

Your donations will help us continue to grow and support Disabled People in Merton. You can donate online and find out other ways to donate on our website:

**<http://www.mertoncil.org.uk/about-us/donate-to-merton-cil/>**

# Services at Merton CIL

We offer a range of free, supportive services and opportunities for Deaf and Disabled people in Merton. These include Advice and Advocacy, disability hate crime prevention, volunteering, speaking up, and we run inclusive events throughout the year.

At Merton C.I.L.

... We offer



## Advice & Advocacy

At Merton CIL, we provide advice and advocacy support to Disabled people on a wide range of issues, such as benefits, housing, community care, low income and more. We can visit you at home if needed, and offer support to help you get your point across in a benefits tribunals, assessments, or other meetings.

## Disability Hate Crime Prevention

We support Disabled people to report and address hate crime. We also work with the Council, Police, Housing Associations and local organisations to support people to recognise hate crime against Disabled people and identify ways to tackle this.



## Supported Volunteering

Disabled People in Merton, who are interested in volunteering, are provided with free training and opportunities to work alongside our team. Areas of work range from supporting reception and welcoming people to our service, providing information and guidance where needed, helping make our events accessible, and being on our Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group.

We help  
people **SPEAK  
UP!**

## Policy and Strategy

This service aims to support Disabled people to speak up, be involved in decision making, and make change happen on a local level.



# My Voice Matters: My Future Matters!



Picture: Illustration of everything that was discussed at the event

Over 40 disabled people and supporters attended our annual “My Voice Matters” event on 8th December 2016. People came along and told us what issues they wanted us to focus on over the next few years. One attendee said:

“it was good to hear disabled people speak for themselves.”

Feedback from the event was really positive with people highlighting the importance of Merton CIL’s current services, as well as asking us to do even more going forward! We used this feedback to help shape our 2018-23 strategy, which you can read about on page 27.



# Case Study One: Housing and Benefit insecurity creating distress & anxiety

We initially worked with Arthur, who was referred to us by a local organisation, because of risk of homelessness. Arthur was being asked to move from his rented home while his private landlord renovated the property. He was worried about not being allowed to move back into his home following the renovations, and he thought he should refuse to move. This had led to his landlord issuing a section 21 eviction notice and although Arthur had accessed other advice services, he was not clear on what to do in his situation. He had been told by the Council that if he didn't accept the alternative accommodation offered by the landlord then he would be classed as intentionally homeless, however, Arthur felt that the alternatives being offered didn't meet his needs.



We supported Arthur to understand his lease and his rights in greater detail, and to address a number of questions such as his rights while he was in temporary accommodation and the status of his Assured Shorthold Tenancy. We explained the risk to Arthur that if the landlord decided to evict him because he wouldn't move on a temporary basis, then he may be deemed intentionally homeless and ineligible for Council support. We also supported Arthur to weigh up the landlord's likely

intentions – the Section 21 notice had been withdrawn and the landlord had given a number of guarantees which if he breached, would lead to a case of unlawful eviction. Following this support, Arthur did move into the temporary accommodation offered, avoiding homelessness, and subsequently moved back into his original home.

In the meantime, Arthur underwent a Work Capability Assessment for ESA (Employment Support Allowance) by himself and was found not to be eligible for ESA and his ESA was stopped. He had been awarded zero points on the assessment. This had a knock-on effect on





a range of other benefits such as Housing Benefit. Arthur came to us for support with his appeal. We were already fully booked on the day of the appeal with other appeals at the same tribunal, and we offered to refer Arthur elsewhere or to help him postpone the appeal hearing so we could support him. Arthur preferred to postpone the hearing so he would have more time to prepare himself. We provided three preparation sessions to help Arthur understand what to expect from the Tribunal, and what they would be asking of him.

Arthur was highly distressed by the preparation for the appeal and we were concerned about his wellbeing, which is why we provided more support sessions than we usually do. Initially the Tribunal declined to postpone the hearing, however, building on our existing relationship with the court our worker was able to get them to grant a postponement. We supported Arthur to gather additional evidence to make his case and helped him plan his journey to the Tribunal on the day of the hearing, including getting the court to send a taxi to collect him.



At the Tribunal, we assisted Arthur with managing the bundle of information being looked at, and we helped clarify some of the questions he was being asked. The Tribunal found that Arthur's appeal was allowed based on Regulation 29 of the ESA Regs 2008 whereby it was believed that there would be a risk to his mental health if found to have capability for work. Arthur was placed in the ESA Work Related Activity Group. Arthur said :

"When I won, I felt exhausted. It was all so stressful, I was so stressed out, I still feel unwell. The stress I was put through I can't even describe it. After the tribunal I still felt like it was not over, it's just one thing after another and the stress is still there. The tribunal took so long to happen that it's almost time for me to be reviewed again by DWP, so it is going to start all over again."

Sadly, shortly after his successful appeal, Arthur's landlord decided not to renew his lease and put the flat up for sale. We are currently supporting Arthur with his housing situation.

# Case Study Two: Offering Holistic Support to Settle in a New Home

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Livinia was referred to us by her housing association. She had been re-housed in a new area of Merton following a period of homelessness, and was struggling to settle in her new home, in addition to managing a range of impairments and a progressive health condition.

Livinia had already been supported by other organisations for specific issues, but there had been no holistic support to help her get her life on track in her new home. In fact, when Livinia was first referred to us, she initially turned us away, saying she didn't need any support. A few months later, her housing officer re-referred her to us as she was experiencing some difficulties at home, and this time, Livinia did accept our support.

We were initially asked to help Livinia apply for Attendance Allowance, which we did, and to help organise some of the practicalities of being in a new home, such as changing her registered address with a range of companies, as she was struggling to do this alone.

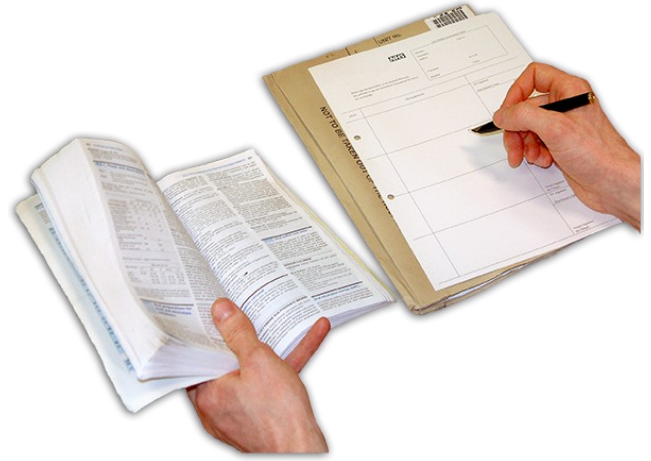
We initially discussed Livinia's needs with her and gave her the option of trying to get more support from Social Services or to access more community support. Livinia wanted more

community support so we signposted her to a range of local services, some of which she took up. During one of our visits with her, our caseworker observed that Livinia was very short of breath and asked about her health. It turned out that her asthma medication had run out and she was struggling to engage with her new GP surgery.





Livinia told us that she had been struck off the GP list at her previous surgery because she didn't attend appointments. In order to address the immediate problem, we supported her to get a repeat prescription sent to her nearest pharmacy. To deal with the issue in a more substantive way, we supported her to engage with her new GP surgery and agreed with them that because of her difficulties reading letters or texts, and because of her memory lapses, the surgery would telephone her to remind her of appointments a week in advance, and on the day of the appointment itself. This additional support meant that Livinia's barriers to accessing healthcare had been reduced.



In the course of her engagement with us, Livinia revealed her worries that she was falling into rent arrears, despite being in receipt of Housing Benefit. We supported her to get clarity on her rent arrears and Livinia chose to clear those immediately rather than implementing a payment plan. We then helped her to set up a regular direct debit to meet the small monthly shortfall between her Housing Benefit and her rent, service, and other charges. This gave her peace of mind as she no longer risked falling behind on her rent. Another area of support was working with Livinia to get her gas supplier to supply a gas meter with a bigger dial so she could read it, and we helped to ensure that she was put on the priority list for heating.



Finally, Livinia revealed that she was struggling to access some money she was entitled to because she couldn't get a copy of a death certificate – she was unable to access an online service which was the only method to request the certificate. We contacted the Council concerned and supported Livinia to persuade them to take a telephone request, which they eventually did.

# Case study Three: Our Supported Volunteering Programme Supporting Independent Living

We offer a supported volunteering programme for disabled people who want to volunteer with us. One of our supported volunteers was referred to us two years ago by a local organisation. When Joginder initially came to us, she was supported to attend meetings with us by the other organisation, and we discussed a range of possible accessible adaptations such as agreeing a safe space for Joginder to go if she became overwhelmed. However, she quickly built up a rapport with our staff and was able to attend our volunteer training programme without her support worker. We gave Joginder a lot of space to develop into her role and coached her on appropriate use of work resources such as the internet. Over time, Joginder built up a range of practical office administrative skills, at which she excelled, including tasks which really supported our team, such as using our database.



While volunteering with us, Joginder also accessed our Advice & Advocacy service. She had been overpaid by DWP but was unable to resolve the issue herself because her benefits were managed by an appointee. Joginder felt that she could manage her own affairs and with the support of her family and appointee, we helped her to end the appointeeship and take control over her own affairs. As she had been getting the Disability Living Allowance benefit, which had lapsed, we advised her to apply for Personal Independence Payment (the replacement for DLA).





Initially Joginder was very worried that this would lead to DWP realising that an overpayment had been made to her and that they would try to reclaim it back at once. We explained that claiming PIP would have no influence over how her overpayment would be treated, and based on her income and expenditure we advised that it should be possible to negotiate a payment plan it wouldn't be the lump sum which she was worried about. If she got the PIP benefit, she would be better off overall. Following this advice, Joginder did apply for PIP and we supported her with the application form, we supported her at the health assessment, we did the mandatory reconsideration when it was declined, and we supported her to appeal. This was an important process for Joginder because she felt that she didn't have a fair assessment and she wanted to appeal and go to Tribunal to address what she felt was unjust. She was awarded the benefit following her appeal.



In the meantime, Joginder has continued to volunteer with us and has blossomed into a much more confident person than she was two years ago. Joginder's goal is to find paid employment, and she is now confident enough to take the step of answering our phone, and hopes to be able to cover reception for us. For Joginder, the fact that we encourage, but don't pressure, has been important to her. She said that she would recommend us to others because we

"are understanding, no criticism, don't blame you for your problems and if you do not understand something they do not judge you."

When we work with people we check how they feel on a range of key measures through our journey together, and for Joginder, she is showing that she is more aware of her rights than a year ago, and more able to speak up. She also feels more confident about taking control in the future, however, she is still struggling with feeling optimistic and she sometimes feels that she isn't heard, so these are areas we can try to support Joginder with going forward.

# Case Study Four: The knock-on effect of changing from DLA to PIP

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Mo heard about Merton CIL through word of mouth and got in touch for support with a benefits Health Assessment for Personal Independence Payments (PIP). Mo was one of many people experiencing a review of his entitlement to benefits in the changeover from Disability Living Allowance to PIP.

In Merton, another 2,600 people are still waiting to undergo this change. Normally we offer people one or two sessions to prepare them for a Health Assessment so that they know what to expect, and we go along to the Health Assessment with them. When Mo got in touch with us before the assessment, we were fully booked. What we did

do was explain his right to ask for an assessment closer to home – he had been told to go to Barking – and we signposted him to some guidance, which we also posted to him. Mo said that the information “Confirmed some things I already knew and told me some things I didn’t know, both of which were helpful”.

Importantly, we stayed in touch with Mo. Following the Health Assessment, Mo let us know that he was awarded PIP but only for the Daily Living component and not for the Mobility component. He said the assessor hadn’t given him time to explain the impact of his different impairments properly, and had prevented his friend, who went with him, from making any notes. The decision was a real cause for concern for Mo because under DLA he had been entitled to the Mobility component and had used that money to lease an adapted car under the Motability scheme.



Mo's disability had not changed, but the benefit had. Now Mo was in a situation where he was no longer entitled to lease his adapted car, and was going to be forced to return it. He used that car to get to work, and Mo wasn't sure how he would get to work without it.

We supported Mo through the Mandatory Reconsideration process. This is the pre-appeal stage where you ask the DWP to reconsider their initial decision. The DWP decided to uphold their initial decision, so Mo went to appeal. This was a difficult

decision for Mo because at tribunal, there is always the possibility that the whole award will be looked at again, and there is the risk that the award will be reduced or refused altogether, as well as the possibility of getting a higher award, which Mo was asking for.

However, Mo felt that he had been unfairly assessed so he went ahead with the appeal. We supported Mo with a preparation session to go through what he could expect at the Tribunal, and we supported Mo to speak up at the Tribunal. The Tribunal found that Mo was eligible for the Mobility component at the standard rate. This outcome meant that Mo was not entitled to re-access the Motability scheme, but was able to access a range of other benefits such as Blue Badge and Freedom Pass, as well as seeing his award increase by £22 a week. Because of the long gap (about 7 months) between having his entitlement removed and it being reinstated, Mo had already had to leave the Motability scheme as there was a 7-week window in which you have to either hand back, or buy the leased car (this was extended to 26 weeks in April 2017).

Following our advice around the Motability Transfer package, Mo was able to buy the car outright, rather than losing it. Now Mo is sorting out his road tax liability, which had been affected by the loss and reinstatement of his benefit.





# Case Study Five: Edwina stands up for her rights

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Edwina knew Merton CIL from some of the group information sessions we had run in 2015 - 16 preparing people for the transfer from the Independent Living Fund to the local Council Adult Social Care team.

Edwina contacted us after her care package was cut by Merton Council following a review during the transfer period. Edwina had been living independently with trusted personal assistants coming in to support her on a daily basis. The Council were proposing to provide live-in carers instead, as this was a cheaper option. However, Edwina didn't want other people living in her home and she felt that the changes were motivated by cost rather than properly considering her wellbeing – the Council expected to save £400 a week with the changes. In addition, Edwina felt that the Council weren't taking on board her previous negative experiences with live-in care and how this had impacted her life. Edwina felt very scared and anxious about the proposed changes and went to see her GP about how she was feeling.

Edwina was initially so panicked at the proposed changes that she told the Council that she would agree to cut her assessed care hours by 10 hours a week in order to keep her current personal assistants. The Council were intending to accept this proposal but Edwina realised the impact this would have had on her quality of life and withdrew the offer. Edwina contacted us and we supported her to meet with her social worker and to explain why she felt that live-in care was not going to be a suitable option for her. Edwina said

"It was quite emotional. It was scary talking about taking away my workers. But little did they know who they were messing with!"

Two anxious months later, the Council finally agreed not to change her current care arrangements. Edwina said "I achieved what I wanted to".

We asked Edwina if she would be willing to make a video about her experience and to talk about what Independence means to her. We made a video together where Edwina talked about her experience and we are using the video as part of our Independent Living Roadshow in 2017. As part of our Roadshow we have been in to visit social workers at the Council and shown them Edwina's video. Edwina said "I watch the video every day, it has given me more confidence". You can watch Edwina's video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i82ZDRquec4>

# Our policy work looks at council budget setting

During the year, Merton Council announced a borough-wide consultation on whether to increase Council Tax and implement the Social Care Precept. We undertook substantial policy work in this area including raising concerns about the quality of the consultation, supporting members to respond to the consultation, highlighting ongoing cuts to services for Disabled and older people in Merton, and supporting members to speak up about the impact of cuts on their lives.

We were pleased to see that Merton Council added £9 million into the Adult Social Care budget, for 2017-18, however, we have continued to raise our concerns about further cuts planned over the next few years.

**Have your say on council tax and council spending**

This is the front page of the consultation. Supporting disabled people is a key duty for Merton. Why aren't there any photos of disabled people?

**council tax and council spending**

Nope, no pictures of disabled people on the inside either. Raising Council Tax would support services for disabled people. **Why are we invisible?**

**M-CIL**  
Merton Centre for Independent Living

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y the deadline of  
we want to hear what council taxpayers think so that the important decisions  
we make about your council tax and your services are based on what you want.

# Statement of Financial Activities for year ended March 31 2017

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2017<sup>2a</sup>

	Note	Un- restricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2017 £	Total Funds 2016 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>	2b				
Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities	3a		299,640	299,640	275,881
Voluntary income	3b	1,472	-	1,472	165
Fundraising Income	3c	13,615	-	13,615	5,181
Other Income	3d	328	-	328	7,040
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>		<b>15,415</b>	<b>299,640</b>	<b>315,055</b>	<b>288,267</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>	2c				
Charitable Activities		-	270,320	270,320	203,767
Cost of Fundraising		-	-	-	285
Governance Costs	4k	-	19,405	19,405	15,990
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>289,725</b>	<b>289,725</b>	<b>220,042</b>
<b>Net Incoming Resources</b>		<b>15,415</b>	<b>9,915</b>	<b>25,330</b>	<b>68,225</b>
Transfer between funds	3e	7,665	(7,665)		
Total Funds Brought Forward	3f	22,109	72,056	94,165	25,940
<b>Total Funds Carried Forward</b>	3g	<b>45,189</b>	<b>74,306</b>	<b>119,495</b>	<b>94,165</b>

There are no recognised gains and losses other than those in the statement of financial activities. Therefore no statement of total recognised gains and losses has been prepared. All the above amounts relate to continuing activities. The notes on pages 24-26 form part of these accounts.



# Statement of Financial Activities for year ended March 31 2017


## BALANCE SHEET AT MARCH 31 2017

	Note	2017 £	2016 £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS:</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand		150,665	100,171
Accrued Interest and prepayments	3n	960	83
		<b>151,625</b>	<b>100,254</b>
<b>LIABILITIES:</b>			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4h	32,130	6,089
		<b>119,495</b>	<b>94,165</b>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
		<b>119,495</b>	<b>94,165</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
		<b>119,495</b>	<b>94,165</b>
<b>RESERVES</b>			
Unrestricted Funds	5	45,189	22,109
Restricted Funds		74,306	72,056
		<b>119,495</b>	<b>94,165</b>

For the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. The director's acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. The financial statements were approved by the board on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2017 and signed on its behalf by:

 (Roy Benjamin, Chair)

 (Fiona Ringwood, Treasurer)

# Notes to the Financial Statements for year ended March 31 2017

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## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2017

1. These Notes form part of the financial statements.

### 2. Accounting Policies

2a Basis of Accounting: The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, and in compliance with 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102) ("the SORP").

2b Income: from grants, donations and contributions represents the amounts receivable in respect of the year.

2c Expenditure: is recognised in the year in which it is incurred.

2d Fixed Assets should be capitalised and written off over their useful lives on a straight line basis if their purchase value is over £1,000.

2e Voluntary Help: No amounts have been included in these financial statements to reflect the value of services provided free of charge to the charity by volunteers.

2f Pension Costs and other post-retirement benefits: The Company contributes to NEST on behalf of eligible employees.

### 3. Income

3a Incoming Resources from Charitable Activity means the grants and fees received on the understanding that they will be used to undertake activities to further the charity's objects.

3b Voluntary Income means donations, grants given with no expectation of a specific service in return.

3c Fundraising Income represents various fundraising activities such as the Merton Mayor's Charity, and sales of merchandise.

3d Other income is earned interest.

3e £7,665 has been transferred from restricted to unrestricted funds. This represents a management recharge on projects delivered.

3f Funds brought forward means funding kept from 2015-16 for use during 2016-17.

3g Funds carried forward means funding reserved for 2017-18

3h The organisation has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 from producing a cash flow statement on the grounds that it is an exempt entity.

# Notes to the Financial Statements for year ended March 31 2017 cont.

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2017 £
<b>Charitable Activities</b>				
Henry Smith Charity	3i	-	30,000	30,000
London Borough of Merton	3j	-	80,000	80,000
MOPAC / London Communities Fdn	3k	-	30,000	30,000
The Big Lottery	3l	-	156,975	156,975
Merton Partnership	3m	-	2,665	2,665
<b>Total Income from Charitable Activities</b>			<b>299,640</b>	<b>299,640</b>
Voluntary Income		1,472	-	1,472
Fundraising Income		13,615	-	13,615
Other Income		328	-	328
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>		<b>15,415</b>	<b>299,640</b>	<b>315,055</b>

3i Henry Smith Charity core funding support

3j London Borough of Merton Strategic Partnership funding for Advice and Advocacy, and for our Policy and Strategy work

3k MOPAC / London Communities Foundation grant for Hate Crime

3l The Big Lottery Reaching Communities funding including for Advice and Advocacy and Supported Volunteering projects

3m Merton Partnership funding in respect of a partnership activity project with Age UK Merton

3n Accrued interest relates to interest on cash held at bank for the year 2016/2017 and received April 2017. Prepayments relates to invoices paid in advance.

## 4. Expenditure

4a No trustee or any other person related to a trustee had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the Charity during the year.



# Notes to the Financial Statements

## for year ended March 31 2017 cont.

4b The Trustees have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charities Commission.

4c Salaries and associated costs of £218,274 includes: Salaries £173,430, Employers' NIC £12,862, Pensions £2,377, Seconded Staff £24,068, Other (DBS checks, HR costs) £5,537. The number of employees whose emoluments amounted to over £60,000 during the year was nil.

### Costs Allocated to Activities 2017

	Note	Restricted Funds £
<b>Cost of Charitable Activities</b>		
Advice and Advocacy	4d	161,878
Disability Hate Crime Prevention	4e	41,326
Inclusion, Engagement and Supported Volunteering	4f	61,855
Policy and Strategy	4g	24,666
<b>Total Cost of Charitable Activities</b>		<b><u>289,725</u></b>

4d Advice and advocacy supports disabled people to resolve issues around benefits, community care, health and housing.

4e Disability Hate Crime Prevention supports disabled people to report and deal with hate crime and includes preventative work around hate crime.

4f Inclusion, Engagement and supported volunteering includes our members' group events and consultations with disabled people, as well as a programme supporting disabled people into volunteering.

4g Policy and Strategy Programme supports local disabled people to have a voice on policy issues and uses evidence to influence policy and strategy improvements.

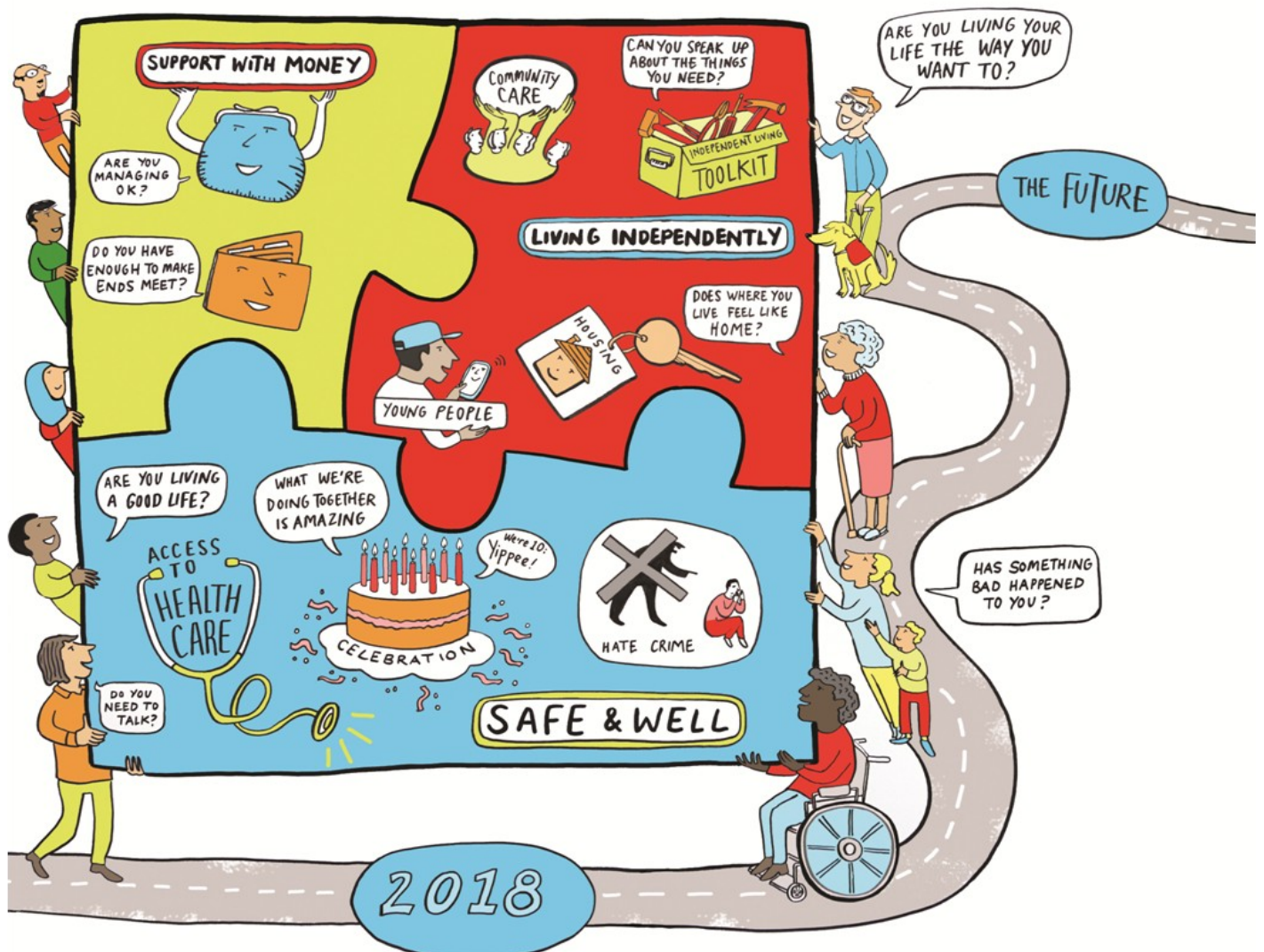
4h Liabilities on balance sheet relates to income received in advance, expenses accrued and accounting fees.

### 5. Reserves

These funds have been designated to cover future running costs in the event of lack of funding, in accordance with the reserves policy.

# The Years Ahead: 2018 Onwards...

For the year 2017-18 we will be delivering Advice and Advocacy services, Hate Crime Prevention, Supported Volunteering, and Policy work in line with our current strategy and business plan 2015-18. However, we have also looked ahead to future years, and with the support of our members, service users, staff, volunteers, trustees and supporters we have worked together to co-produce our new 2018-23 Strategy. This process started at our Annual General Meeting last year, and continued at our My Voice Matters event in December 2016. We're really proud of the new strategy and look forward to delivering it on behalf of our members.



These are the three key areas they would like us to focus upon and deliver for local Deaf and Disabled people:

- 1. Increased financial security and resilience**
- 2. Greater ability to live independently**
- 3. Being able to live safe and well**



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