

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)



**MERTON CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
(MERTON CIL)**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023**

Registered Charity Number 1152825
Registered Company Number 7645926

CONTENTS OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023

	Page
Legal and administrative information	3
Report of the Board of Trustees	4
Independent Examiner's Report	10
Statement of financial activities	12
Balance sheet	13
Notes to the financial statements	15

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Constitution

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL) is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its memorandum and articles of association.

Charity number 1152825 - Company number 7645926

Directors and Trustees

The directors of the charitable company are its trustees for the purposes of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the trustees. As set out in the Articles of Association the Management Board comprises the Chair, the Vice Chair and the Treasurer supported by up to nine trustees. At each Annual General Meeting one-third of the directors must retire from office and may be re-elected at the recommendation of the board. The trustees serving during the year and since the year-end are as follows:

Co-Chair: Giovanna Vettese & Amanda Edwards

Vice Chair: Estifanos Habtesellasi

Trustees Claire Benjamin, Sarah Henley, Raheema Olajide, Chris Bull, Roy Benjamin (Until Dec 2022)

Senior Management

Joint CEO's: Charlet Wilson & David Jenkins

Senior Managers: Stuart Butler & Michael Turner (Until Nov 2022)

Registered Office and Principal Office

Vestry Hall, 336 London Road, Mitcham, CR4 3UD

Independent Examiner

Lesley Cornwell FCCA, Cornwell & Cornwell, 194 Stanley Road, Teddington, TW11 8UE

Principal Bankers

HSBC Bank, 5 Wimbledon Hill Rd, Wimbledon, London, SW19 7NF

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR YEAR END 31 MARCH 2023

The Board presents the report and financial statements of Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL) for the year ended 31 March 2023. The statements appear in the format required by the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting and Reporting by Charities (revised March 2005). The report and statements comply with Companies Act 2006.

Structure, Governance and Management

History

The organisation was originally started as a steering group in 2008, it was incorporated as a company in 2011 and registered as a charity in 2013.

Governing Document

Merton CIL is a company limited by guarantee, having no share capital, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated June 2013 and Special Resolution dated October 2016. The liability of the Trustees is limited to £1 in the event of the charity winding up.

Appointment of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is made up of not less than three and no more than twelve people. Trustees are elected from the membership at the AGM or co-opted during the year by agreement of the Board and confirmed at the AGM. Trustees must be aged 16 years or older. At least 75% of trustees must be Deaf or Disabled. All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no financial benefits from the organisation. New trustees are given induction on their roles and responsibilities and are offered additional training where necessary.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees administers the charity. The Board meets quarterly. The Joint CEO is appointed to manage the day-to-day operations of the organisation. To facilitate effective operations, the Joint CEO has delegated authority, within the terms of the delegation approved by the Trustees, for operational matters including finance, employment, and operations.

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

Risk Management

The Directors have reviewed the risks to which the charity is exposed and maintain a risk register. Risks are ameliorated by the implementation of procedures and policies, with a regular review of these to ensure current good practice.

Objectives and Activities

A summary of the objects as set out in the charity's Governing document:

"To relieve the needs of Disabled persons in Merton and the surrounding areas by providing support and services to enable them to live as full and equal citizens in all aspects of life."

Our Vision: To enable Deaf and Disabled people to take control over their lives and achieve full participation in Merton and wider society.

Our Aims:

- To promote the independence and inclusion of Deaf and Disabled people in Merton.
- To identify and challenge discrimination faced by Deaf and Disabled people in Merton.
- To encourage Deaf and Disabled people and supporters to achieve change locally.

Key Activities:

- Independence and Inclusion: An AQS accredited Information & Advice service supporting issues relating to welfare benefits, debt and low income, social care, concessionary travel, grant applications, health, and housing. We are also running an advocacy pilot supporting to access health care and services.
- Challenging Discrimination: Social Policy work speaking up about the issues faced by the Deaf and Disabled community. Disability Hate Crime partnership work with DDPOs across London and local Hate Crime awareness and prevention work.
- Achieving Change Locally: Voice Activity including monthly Craftivism & Chat sessions, events, debates, and member led policy work on key issues raised by local Deaf and Disabled people.

Summary of Achievements

Independence and Inclusion: Our AQS accredited Information & Advice service provided support in 342 Information & Advice and Advocacy cases. We supported 318 unique individuals through our casework services, providing 1,228 sessions of in-depth support. We also supported wellbeing, information, signposting, guidance, and connection in a further 423 cases. Our work throughout the year contributed £876,324 to the local economy. 61% of service users saw increased resilience after using our services.

Challenging Discrimination: Merton CIL spent 605 hours on policy and strategy work on behalf of Deaf and Disabled people. We continued to ensure that we supported members and service users to speak up around topics like housing, welfare reform, social care and hate crime. We supported Deaf and Disabled People to respond consultations and make statements on issues that matter to us. We continued to work with Inclusion London and Stay Safe East on the pan-London disability hate crime project. We supported a number of London based DDPOs to build and develop their disability hate crime projects.

Achieve Change Locally: We now have 427 members – 336 (78%) are Deaf and Disabled people or people with a long-term health condition and 90 (22%) are non-Disabled people who support our work and values. Throughout the year we delivered 20 events including Craftivism and Chat Groups, My Voice Matters our AGM. We engaged with 125 people through events activities and outreach, and another 2906 engaged with us across our social media platforms. 100% of attendees at our events rated them good or great. Volunteers and trustees provided 264 hours of support. Their donation of time helped us to achieve our aims. We also worked closely with a group of Deaf and Disabled people passionate about pushing for a more accessible borough. We supported the group to run 6 sessions.

Please see our 2022-23 Impact Report for further details of the year's achievements.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The results for the year and financial position of the Charity are shown in the annexed statements. The charity brought forward unrestricted funds of £103,356 and restricted funds of £28,048 from the previous accounting period. During the current accounting period, the net surplus is £7,476 of

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

which £(17,087) is unrestricted and £24,563 restricted. This leaves final balances to carry forward of £86,269 unrestricted and £52,611 restricted funds.

EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

The Charity continues to rely on grant applications and fundraising to fund its activities. The Trustees are confident that these grants will continue to be available for the valuable work the charity is doing. During the year, the Charity's Trustees have monitored the financial position of the organisation to ensure that the charity's funds, both restricted and unrestricted, are correctly applied and accounted for.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Throughout 2022/23, we continued our work supporting local Deaf and Disabled people. We also began to think more about how strengthening our internal environment/culture could help our organisation to support our community better. The cost-of-living crisis as well as the lasting effects of the pandemic combined with the increasing cost of disability, affected the community that we serve and our team. This required us to think about wellbeing, purpose, and growth in a more multi-faceted way. Struggles around recruitment have led us to think about how we develop people and build roles around Disabled people who are keen to get involved at Merton CIL.

Over the next year, we plan to:

- Continue working to develop our new strategy. The pandemic, lockdowns and current cost of living crisis have changed a lot for local Deaf and Disabled. We will work to ensure that our strategic priorities meet our new, evolving, and interlinked needs in accessible ways.
- Provide support to local Disabled people with issues arising from the cost-of-living crisis/cost of disability and the effects of the pandemic.
- Continue delivering information and advice around welfare benefits, low income, health, grant applications, housing, and social care.
- Continue the advocacy pilot and explore ways to address the needs of Deaf and Disabled people outside of an advice framework.
- Increase our policy capacity and work to identify and challenge discrimination effectively.
- Increase engagement with the local authority and councilors to work

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

towards more local co-production work.

- Continue campaigning for reduced social care charges.
- Conclude our trainee caseworker programme that is funded until 2024 and establish new ways to build advice skills in local Deaf and Disabled people.
- Continue to work with Deaf and Disabled people to achieve change locally and speak up about issues affecting our community.
- Increase our capacity to facilitate more member led social policy work.
- Improve our strategic communications work to increase engagement with members and supporters and make our messaging clearer.
- Better connect craftivism & chat with our strategic policy work to increase impact and purpose for attendees.
- Conduct a review of our volunteering programme to ensure that it's meeting the needs of local Disabled people, and the organisation.
- Expand capacity around fundraising and bringing in unrestricted income.
- Aim to secure multi-year funding to provide security for services and allow for growth.
- Strengthen our internal culture and embed learning and innovate ways to manage change based on learning from previous years.
- Use learning from previous years around hiring and retention of staff to rethink organisational approach to recruitment and career development.

RESERVES POLICY

Merton CIL will maintain sufficient reserves to allow it to cover known liabilities and contingencies, absorb setbacks and take advantage of change and opportunity.

Merton CIL will hold unrestricted funds to meet at least 1 month's running costs and aims to hold 4 months running costs by 2024. This will enable Merton CIL to provide reliable services over the long term, and to provide a safety net against dramatic swings in income or costs, and sufficient time to replace lost income, through fundraising.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

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 company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to select suitable

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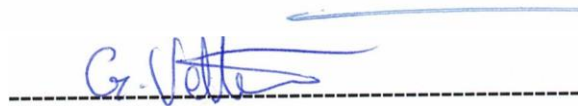
accounting policies and then apply them consistently; make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

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

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amanda Edwards", written over a horizontal dashed line.

Amanda Edwards (Co-Chair/Secretary)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Vettese", written over a horizontal dashed line.

Giovanna Vettese (Co-Chair)

Date: 26th October 2023

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Registered Charity No. 1152825

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE MERTON CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 set out on pages 14 and 15 which have been prepared under the accounting policies set out on page 16.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiners' report


My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanation from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently, no opinion is view given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair" view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

Independent examiners' statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention to indicate that:

- accounting records have not been kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006;
- the accounts do not accord with such records:
- where accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, whether they fail to comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006, or are not consistent with the Charities SORP (FRS102)
- any matter which the examiner believes should be drawn to the attention of the reader to gain a proper understanding of the accounts apart from that set out below:



Date: 26th October 2023

Lesley Cornwell FCCA of Cornwell & Cornwell 194 Stanley Road Teddington
TW11 8UE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR ENDED MARCH

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31 2023^{2a}

	Note	Un-restricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
Incoming Resources	2b				
Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities	3a	65,669	260,174	325,843	333,093
Voluntary income	3b	6,863	-	6,863	1,243
Other Income	3c	2,063	-	2,063	9,477
Total Incoming Resources		74,595	260,174	334,769	343,813
Resources Expended	2c				
Charitable Activities	4d	91,682	226,539	318,221	351,664
Governance Costs	4l	-	9,072	9,072	9,745
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		91,682	235,611	327,293	361,409
Net Incoming / (Outgoing) Resources		(17,087)	24,563	7,476	(17,596)
Total Funds Brought Forward	3d	103,356	28,048	131,404	149,000
Total Funds Carried Forward	3e	86,269	52,611	138,880	131,404

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 16-19 form part of these accounts.

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
CURRENT ASSETS:			
Cash at bank and in hand		150,558	145,276
Debtors and prepayments		28,312	13,987
		178,870	156,293
LIABILITIES:			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4k	39,990	27,858
		138,880	131,404
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		138,880	131,404
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		138,880	131,404
RESERVES			
Unrestricted Funds	5	86,269	103,356
Restricted Funds		52,611	28,048
		138,880	131,404

For the year ending 31 March 2023 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 Directors' 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 26th October 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Amanda Edwards (Co-Chair/Secretary)



Giovanna Vettese (Co-Chair)

The notes on pages 16-19 form part of these accounts.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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 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 or grants given with no expectation of a specific service in return.

3c Other income is earned interest and funds received for consultation contributions.

3d Funds brought forward means funding retained from 2021-22 for use during 2022-23.

3e Funds carried forward means funding reserved for 2023-24.

3f 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.

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Charitable Activities				
Henry Smith Charity	3g	-	60,000	60,000
Henry Smith Covid Fund	3h	-	38,500	38,500
City Bridge Trust	3i	-	53,430	53,430
Edward Gostling Foundation	3j	-	5,000	5,000
Inman Charity	3k	5,000	-	5,000
NHS SW London	3l	-	12,364	12,364
Merton Giving	3m	-	9,650	9,650
Merton Connected	3n	2,500	-	2,500
Wimbledon Foundation	3o	-	9,792	9,792
Wimbledon DNMB	3p	-	321	321
Trust for London	3q	-	63,700	63,700
Real SVRR Phase 2	3r	-	7,417	7,417
Cornerstone	3s	2,624	-	2,624
Inclusion London	3t	55,545	-	55,545
Total Income from Charitable Activities	3a	65,669	260,174	325,843
Voluntary Income	3b	6,863	-	6,863
Other Income	3c	2,063	-	2,063
Total Incoming Resources	2b	74,595	260,174	334,769

3g Henry Smith Charity - core funding to support the organisation.

3h Henry Smith Covid Funding – funding to help us increase our capacity in response to needs emerging from the pandemic.

3i City Bridge Trust - funding to support the information and advice service.

3j Edward Gostling Foundation - funding to support our achieve change locally project.

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

3k Inman Charity - grant to support with the costs of our independence and inclusion project.

3l NHS SW London ICB - funding to support with a health advocacy pilot.

3m Merton Giving - funding to support with the adaptation of services during the pandemic.

3n Merton Connected – funding to support attendance at community meetings.

3o The Wimbledon Foundation - funding to support with a health advocacy pilot.

3p Wimbledon DNMBS - grant to cover the costs of service user grant application awards.

3q Trust for London SVRR - funding to support our trainee caseworker programme.

3r Real SVRR Phase 2 - funding to support our policy work around social care charging.

3s Cornerstone – funding to support our achieve change locally project.

3t Inclusion London - 3-year pan-London hate crime prevention partnership programme where Merton CIL is the lead partner. Supporting our work to challenge discrimination.

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.

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 £247,304 includes: Salaries and Employers' NIC £223,250, Pensions £9,597, HR Costs £10,200, Other (DBS checks, Travel, Development) £4,257.

The number of employees whose emoluments amounted to over £60,000 during the year was nil.

4d Costs Allocated to Activities 2023

	Note	£
Cost of Charitable Activities		
Independence and Inclusion	4e	211,155
Challenging Discrimination	4f	59,003
Achieving Change Locally	4g	57,135
Total Cost of Charitable Activities		<u>£327,293</u>

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Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL)

4e Independence and Inclusion Project – Information and Advice support for local Deaf and Disabled people to resolve issues around benefits and low income, social care, housing, health, concessionary travel, and grant applications.

4f Challenging Discrimination Project – Disability Hate Crime awareness and prevention in Merton as well as across London as part of a pan-London disability hate crime project.

4g Achieve Change Locally Project - Social policy work, Member led policy work, Craftivism and Chat group, events, consultations, and voice activity with Deaf and Disabled People.

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

4l Governance costs include accounting and audit costs, Annual General Meeting costs, insurance, trustee expenses.

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. According to the business continuity plan £13,600 of reserves is designated to secure immediate business continuity and the Board has approved this to be set aside in a Designated Fund.

		2023		2022
RESERVES	£	£	£	£
Designated Funds	13,600		13,600	
General Funds	<u>72,669</u>		<u>89,756</u>	
Unrestricted Funds		86,269		103,356
Restricted Funds		52,611		28,048
TOTAL RESERVES		138,880		131,404