



Merton Centre for Independent Living

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2012-13

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Merton CIL is a company limited by guarantee.
Company number 7645926
Charity number 1152825

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Board of Directors

Chair	Roy Benjamin
Vice Chair	John Kelly
Treasurer	Patrick Daly (until June 2013)

Members of the board

Claire Benjamin
Martia Bevan
Slim Flegg
Sarah Henley
Carole Mathurin
Geoff Parsons (until June 2012)
Nick Pizey
Gina Vettese

Registered office

Merton Centre for Independent Living
Unit 3 Batsworth Road, Mitcham, CR4 3BX

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Registered Company number 7645926 (England and Wales) **Registered Charity number** 1152825 (since 11 July 2013)

Independent examiner

Tesfai Meresse, Community Accountant, Merton Voluntary Service Council,
The Vestry Hall, London Road, Mitcham, CR4 3UD

Principal Bankers

HSBC, Crown House, 102 London Road, Morden SM4 5AY

GOVERNANCE

The organisation is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 24th May 2011.

The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the organisation and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

The Objects

Merton Centre for Independent Living is a user led organisation that supports and promotes the independence and inclusion of disabled people in Merton and surrounding areas, based on the social model of disability, enabling people to live as full and equal citizens in all aspects of life.

Appointment of Directors

The Board of Directors is made up of not less than three and no more than twelve persons

Directors are elected from the membership at the AGM.

Directors must be aged 16 years or older.

At least 75% of directors should be disabled.

All directors give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the organisation.

Induction and training of new directors

New directors are given induction on their roles and responsibilities and are offered additional training.

Organisation

The Directors are responsible for the assets and strategic direction of the organisation. The Manager is responsible for carrying out the day to day management of the charity.

Risk management

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

DIRECTOR PROFILES

Roy Benjamin, Chair, has worked in the social care field for longer than he can remember, which is not long these days, and for the last 30 years has been an ardent campaigner for equalities.

John Kelly, Vice Chair, has over 20 years experience of working within the disability and independent living movement as well as being a fantastic musician.

Patrick Daly, Treasurer, has worked with groups for people with various impairments for 18 years. He resigned from the board June 2013

Claire Benjamin is a visually impaired mum of 2 disabled children who has lived in Merton for 15 years.

Martia Bevan has a background in Psychology, Counselling and Disability support in the public and voluntary sector, and guides our Peer Support Programme

Slim Flegg is extremely active locally having been a local councillor 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!

Carole Mathurin's family have given her many years of experience of disabilities to call on which have informed her awareness of discrimination and the need for continuing campaigning for equalities.

Geoff Parsons resigned from the board in June 2012 due to over commitment. Geoff's wealth of experience in the field of Mental Health was missed.

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

Gina Vettese has been disabled since she was 13 years old and has been part of the Go4M and with Merton CIL from when it was just a steering group, as well as being a talented seamstress.

CHAIR'S REPORT



Well this has been a very exciting year, during which we have seen a number of developments. Not to mention the appointment of our manager who on top of her achievements for Merton CIL has also produced a bouncing baby boy.

Claire Benjamin, Martia Bevan and Roy Benjamin on Merton CIL Roadshow in Wimbledon Piazza December 2012

During a time of financial constraints we have produced 3 information-packed newsletters, started a peer support programme, held a "have your say" week of events, held pilot advice sessions, and obtained funding for a development worker, and an advocate. Much of the credit for which must fall to Lyla, our manager.

On behalf of my fellow directors I would like to express my appreciation to our funders, details of which can be found later in the report. I would also like to pay tribute to my fellow directors who have given generously of their time to support the development of the CIL.

Before signing off, can I draw your attention to our web site, www.mertoncil.org.uk, another considerable achievement where you can keep up to date with news and events, not to mention telling us about services or support you might find helpful in the future.

Roy Benjamin

Chair of Merton CIL

ABOUT MERTON CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Merton CIL is a grassroots organisation run and controlled by disabled people, for disabled people.

We enable deaf and disabled people to take control over their lives and achieve full participation in Merton and wider society

We were established as a steering group in 2008 and incorporated in 2011 to support disabled people to live independent lives by identifying and filling gaps in services, to support the voice of disabled people in the borough being heard and to provide support in all areas of their lives. We fill a long standing gap in provision as there is no umbrella organisation able to represent the strategic interests, needs and identity of the full diversity of deaf and disabled people in the borough.

Our Aims

- To promote the independence and inclusion of deaf and disabled people in Merton
- Challenge discrimination facing deaf and disabled people in Merton
- Encourage deaf and disabled people and supporters to achieve change locally

Merton CIL celebrates the broad diversity of disabled and deaf people whatever their ethnic background, age, gender, sexual identity as well as people with mental health needs who often face additional barriers to inclusion.

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. This review looks at what we achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous 12 months.

Our Work

In 2012-13 we delivered 3 key areas of work.

Peer Support Programme:

- trained 7 Peer Supporters with lived experience of disability in mentoring and coaching techniques
- promoted the programme around Merton to members, partner organisations, GP surgeries, etc
- matched 2 local disabled people with peer supporters

Advice and Information Service:

- piloted an advice service based on outreach advice surgeries between February and March 2013
- responded to 28 advice enquiries
- developed a new 'home and phone advice service' for 2013-14

Events and Consultations:

- delivered our first AGM in June 2012
- in December 2012 ran a borough-wide roadshow (6 venues) culminating in a 'My Voice Matters' debate
- attended partner events and activities
- delivered 3 newsletters
- responded to consultations on: changes to Blue Badge eligibility (Jun 2012); introduction of charges for lost Freedom Passes (Jul 2012); plans to remove discretionary Freedom Passes in Merton (Oct 2012); changes to footway usage in Merton (Oct 2012)

Future Activities

In addition to the value of continuing activities, our work this year confirmed the need for an Advocacy Service for disabled people in Merton. This service will roll out from September 2013.

We are guided by the needs and opinions of our members. Please get in touch to share your views and aims for the future

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Statement of Financial Activities for Year Ending 31 Mar 2013^{1,2}

	2012-2013	2011-2012
	£	£
INCOME³		
MVSC Grant		3,387
ODI Grant	9,485	-
LBM Grant	24,499	-
MPH Grant	3,000	-
Other Grants	-	-
Other Income	-	-
Total Income	36,984	3,387
EXPENDITURE⁴		
Salaries and associated costs	10,401	-
Hardware and software	144	2,329
Training	978	-
Events	1,878	-
Publicity	3,900	-
Office overheads	3,635	-
Governance	733	-
Total Expenditure	21,670	2,329
Net Income	15,314	1,058
Balance carried forward	16,372	1,058

Balance Sheet as at 31st Mar 2013

	2013		2012	
	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS				
Tangible fixed assets	752		-	
CURRENT ASSETS				
Debtors	151		-	
Cash at bank and in hand	16,312		1,058	
	<u>16,463</u>		<u>1,058</u>	
CREDITORS⁵	91		-	
NET CURRENT ASSETS		16,372		1,058
NET ASSETS		<u>17,123</u>		<u>1,058</u>
FUNDS		<u>16,372</u>		<u>1,058</u>

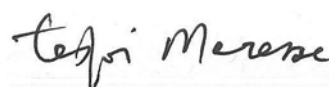
The Directors are satisfied that the Company is entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

- no members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476
- the Directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts
- the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Companies Act 2006

These financial statements were approved by the members of the board on the 20/08/13 and are signed on their behalf by:



Roy Benjamin
Chair of Merton CIL



Tesfai Meresse
Independent Examiner

Notes to the Accounts

1. These Notes form part of the financial statements.

2. Accounting Policies

1. **Basis of Accounting:** The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, and in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards, and the Companies Act 2006.
2. **Income:** from grants, donations and contributions represents the amounts receivable in respect of the year.
3. **Expenditure:** is recognised in the year in which it is incurred.
4. **Fixed Assets:** are capitalised and written off over their useful lives on a straight line basis
5. **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.
6. **Pension Costs and other post retirement benefits:** The company does not contribute to any pension scheme.

3. Income

1. In 2012-13 we carried forward £1057.81 of MVSC grant
2. ODI grant paid on a refund basis for which we submitted receipts. It covered publicity including website, equipment and accessible software, events and Peer Support Programme
3. LBM grant included salaries, office overheads, governance, insurance and volunteer expenses
4. MPH grant was for the Advice Service pilot Feb-Mar 2013

4. Expenditure

1. Salary and recruitment costs were from Aug 2012 for 1 part-time manager until Jan 2013 when she went on unpaid maternity leave
2. Hardware includes laptop and printer in 2012, Easy Read software in 2013
3. Training covers coaching and mentoring training for our volunteer Peer Supporters
4. Events cover Dec 2012 Roadshow; 'My Voice Matters' Debate
5. Publicity includes website, leaflets, flyers and advertising
6. Overheads include rent Jan-Mar 2013, plus office supplies, phones and insurance
7. Governance includes Annual General Meeting 2012 and room hire for board meetings

5. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

Statement of Directors' Responsibilities

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Report of the Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Directors 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 incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Directors are required to

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

The Directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

Acknowledgements

Merton CIL has been supported by the following funders in 2012-13

- London Borough of Merton (LBM) £24,499
- Office of Disability Issues (ODI) £9,485.14
- Merton Priory Homes (MPH) £3,000

We have also received a significant amount of advice and in-kind support from individuals and organisations including:

- Our board of directors and volunteers gave 350 hours support
- Go4M successfully campaigned for Merton CIL to exist
- MVSC helped us set up our initial procedures and processes
- Merton Mind gave us rent-free office space from Aug-Dec 2012
- Social Enterprise Press provide us with subsidised office space
- Wendy Fry of www.bepositive.me.uk gave us reduced rates for Peer Support Training



PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMME

In November 2012 we trained 7 Peer Supporters in safeguarding, disability equality, and coaching and empowerment. Our volunteers can support local disabled people to make plans and take the steps they want to take in their own way and in their own time.

Two of the Peer Supporters went on to help run the Programme, with the remaining 5 able to offer a free, 3-month programme of support and coaching to disabled and deaf people in Merton.



November 2012 training, L-R Sarah, Chris, Charles, Josie, John, Wendy, Martia, Gina

Peer Supporter Josie said, "I really wanted to get involved with a project that would enrich the lives of the people that are my neighbours and Merton CIL's ethos definitely has this as its focus. The training given to help volunteers develop the skills needed to perform well in the role was extremely useful. We exchanged ideas on how to support our peers, help them develop their confidence and the impact that just listening can make.

It was conducted in a relaxed group setting where everyone felt accepted and comfortable to speak. When you are in an environment like this (which is sometimes hard to come by) it makes you feel great! Which just goes to show that you can't help helping yourself when you volunteer your time to a good cause."

Case Study

James* has had 3 strokes which have affected his ability to do things the way he used to.

“I sometimes forget things, and find my hearing is sometimes difficult on the phone. I am on anti-depressants for sometimes having low mood. I do not feel like doing things much, although I am still able to walk, go on a bus, or cook, I don’t feel like doing it.”

John joined the peer support programme looking for some help with motivation and getting things done. He was matched with a peer supporter who is also disabled and can relate with John’s feelings and experiences, as well as being trained in supportive techniques.

Following his sessions, John feels he has been able to think more clearly, and has begun to start new activities and get back to previous ones, although he sometimes gets a bit impatient with not being able to make more progress. Some successes include memorising his phone number, travelling home alone from Wimbledon, and buying some support aids for the home which he hopes will make him more confident and independent.

“It has really helped me to have someone outside the family to talk to and find ways of moving forwards in my life. My goal is now to increase my independence so I won’t be so reliant on family and get more exercise to help me lose weight. The biggest change is that I am more positive now”

Our Peer Supporters have lived experience of disability so whether someone is thinking about making a life change like leaving home or starting employment, looking for a little extra practical or emotional support, or newly disabled, they can talk to someone who has been through similar experiences.

*not his real name

PILOT ADVICE AND INFORMATION SERVICE

Throughout February and March 2013 we piloted a new advice and information service. If you had a question on issues like looking at your finances, getting into employment or education, getting the most out of your social care providers or if you need advice in any other area, Merton CIL was there to help!

This included outreach surgeries in 13 venues, such as community centres and libraries, across Merton. 11 external partners also attended the surgeries.

We recruited a volunteer who was given Safeguarding and Disability Equality Training and supported the Advisor. Another volunteer did desk research.

We saw a total of 28 clients, many with multiple advice needs, and 25 follow ups were conducted with the clients who initially got in touch. The majority of advice given was on financial matters including benefits, employment, education, debt and social care.

Client feedback on the service was very positive,

“Merton CIL made suggestions I hadn’t had from anywhere else before, which was very useful”

“There was lots of useful information – I would try you again and recommend you”

Based on the pilot we have developed a Home and Phone Service focusing on offering advice at home or by telephone. It includes a ‘robust referral’ policy whereby we check that when clients are referred elsewhere, the case is resolved satisfactorily, as many clients said that that when we refer to other agencies, clients are not always getting contacted back by them.

Case Study

Mary* came to one of our outreach advice sessions in February 2013 having been referred to us by her local community centre. Part of the local Eastern European community, Mary came to us with multiple concerns including immigration worries, unemployment, low family income and debts, as well as concerns about her family pet.

We supported Mary in several ways including initial advice on the day, and detailed follow-up by email. This included:

- Information about dog chipping including how to get free microchipping
- Information on where to get legal advice and other places where she could get immigration support
- We advised her on her priority and non-priority debts, explained how to contact creditors and provided a sample letter,
- and signposted her to Merton Adult Education and the Merton Employment Team, one of whom she was able to see at the outreach session as they were partnering with us.

We offered a home visit to follow-up but Mary felt she didn't need it. Mary successfully used our advice to get in touch with her creditors and negotiate a smaller monthly payment over a longer period of time. She is now in touch with a solicitor regarding her immigration concerns and she says

“I got in touch with the college about classes and my confidence is beginning to improve. My debts are reduced and I have longer to pay them off, and I am now getting a disability allowance.”

Mary gave Merton CIL very high feedback when we phoned her for an update and said she would definitely recommend the service to others because it

“allows people to speak out what they have in their heart and mind confidently, it helps people to speak out their worries.”

After piloting the advice service at the start of 2013, Merton CIL will be offering a home visiting and telephone advice service from Summer 2013 as the best way to support local disabled people, and complement services from other agencies.

*not her real name

EVENTS AND CONSULTATIONS

We ran our first AGM in June 2012, attended by over 50 members, where we launched our website and first quarterly newsletter, 'CIL Matters'.



In December 2012 we ran a borough-wide roadshow across 6 venues culminating in a 'My Voice Matters' debate. We directly engaged nearly 180 people, gained 8 new members, achieved press and radio coverage, and maximised social media gaining 34 new Twitter followers.

John and Gina at
Whatley Avenue Adult Education Dec 2012

The debate included 5 speakers on topical issues to celebrate UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The proposals to cut discretionary Freedom Passes for mental health service users in Merton from March 2013, was an important topic of debate. Geoff Parsons from Merton Platform identified that: "Someone living with a severe and enduring mental health problem is very much affected by a disability. The decision to cut Freedom Passes to people with mental health problems would not save money in the long-term and is an injustice to mental health service users. It is very much a postcode lottery on who is eligible for a discretionary Freedom Pass in London and we need a consistent London-wide approach."

Through the debate we connected local mental health service users concerned about the proposed cut to their freedom passes with the LBM Head of Direct Provision, Adult Social Care.

We also attended the South Thames College Disability Awareness Week in March 2013, and the Volunteer Centre Merton/Raynes Park High Careers Event in April 2013.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

All Merton CIL's services, programmes and events are supported by volunteers. One of our volunteers is Tony, who helps us with "lifting, shifting and moving!" He helps out with office admin, supports the Advice Service and has helped out at events.



Tony says, **"I've worked with other CILs in the past, and seen the good they can do. I really want to see Merton CIL take off. I don't have money, but I can give my time."**

Tony and MCIL Manager Lyla welcoming people to My Voice Matters Debate December 2012

Another volunteer, Chris, is one of our Peer Supporters, and he says **"I'm local and I wanted to be involved. I've experienced disability and I want to support others in the same situation. Working with my peer has given me more confidence because I can see the things he has achieved with a bit of support."**

We always have opportunities for volunteers including:

- becoming a peer supporter
- supporting the Advocacy service
- supporting our Advice service
- events accessibility and organisation
- promoting Merton CIL
- office admin

Don't hesitate to get in touch to find out more!



Merton Centre for Independent Living

Celebrating Independent Lives

RUN AND CONTROLLED BY DISABLED PEOPLE, FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

Merton CIL offers services and opportunities
for disabled people living or working in London
Borough of Merton

- Advice Service
- Advocacy Services
- Peer Support Programme
 - Debates and events
- Responding to consultations
- Volunteering opportunities

**We enable deaf and disabled people to take
control over their lives and achieve full
participation in Merton and wider society**

Contact Us to find
out more about what
we do, or how you can
get involved:



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