



WALTHAM FOREST COMMUNITY HUB
ANNUAL REPORT
2020-2021



New book captures Waltham Forest community kindness during Covid



Waltham Forest Community Hub (WFCH) came together to create a book featuring stories of local kindness during lockdown. Here, the creators and designers describe making the book...



Waltham Forest Community Hub

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WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE STAND FOR

WF Community Hub was established in 2005 by a group of local people whose vision was to create an active community centre for local residents.

The organisation still operates with these roots at the heart of everything it does: supporting marginalised, vulnerable and socially excluded people through its charitable work.

We believe that everyone has skills and potential to grow and develop.

As a united community, we trust we can take collective responsibility to create a positive future.

**WELCOMING • EMPOWERING • ADAPTABLE
COLLABORATIVE • INCLUSIVE • AMBITIOUS**

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Omar Idrissi
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Atifa Pathan

Musa Attan
Tasnim Rahman
Nashieka Bramble
Maariya Saiyed
Aasif Rehman

+ OVER 60 VOLUNTEERS

to whom we are very grateful for their support and keeping us going during the pandemic

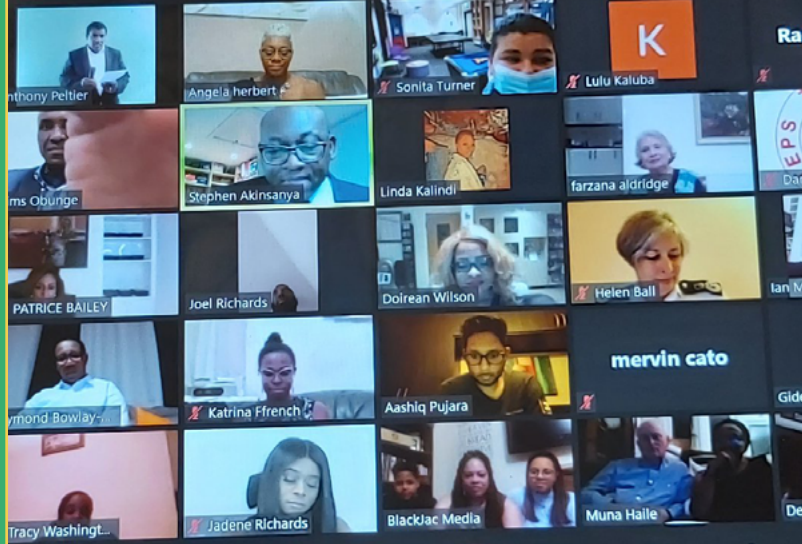
REFLECTIONS ON THE LAST YEAR

This has been an exceptional year – one that will linger long in the memory for our staff, volunteers, trustees, partners, donors and our beneficiaries. As we passed through the pandemic the role of grassroots organisations became paramount to supporting our beneficiaries through uncertainty and isolation. Chaos and confusion around guidelines were key themes which threatened our beneficiaries' lives during the pandemic. We saw vulnerable and marginalised people in many cases finding themselves worse off due to emergency powers and measures taken to manage the pandemic.

We celebrated the milestone of 15 years of our charity in December 2020! I am very proud of what WFCH has achieved this past year – reaching out to people all over the borough who needed our support. The efforts and sacrifices of WFCH's workforce and the impact on our financial resources were significant. We demonstrated a shared passion and ethos to work together with our beneficiaries, partners, donors and stakeholders who could effect change with us.

Thank you to everyone who was part of our Community Hub story this past year.

Joga Kabra,
Chair of Board of Trustees



THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

In each year of Waltham Forest Community Hub's 16-year history, we have seen a remarkable increase in demand for the charity's services. When we went into lockdown in March 2020, we had to suspend all our activities and cancel bookings, which completely depleted our income from venue hire.

We had to make some drastic decisions to safeguard the wellbeing of our staff, volunteers and service users. Throughout this period of turmoil and uncertainty we maintained communication with our funders and were extremely fortunate to receive support and understanding from all our funders.





We also engaged and collaborated with our Local Authority and other voluntary sector organisations, including mutual aid groups to identify emerging need and explore possible solutions.

At the beginning of the pandemic, we took a lead and produced a borough wide map of support services to enable the community to access emergency support. To develop our organisation and better prepare ourselves to meet emerging needs of our community, we decided to review our business plan in January 2021 by consulting people (service users, volunteers, trustees, staff and stakeholders) connected at all levels of our organisation.

As a result, we have been able to strategize and consider the best ways we can develop

and strengthen our infrastructure over the next 12 months. We now have a new vision and mission and are focusing on adapting our charitable activities to meet new objectives that prioritise our charity's development, tackle isolation, champion and advocate for youth empowerment and employability and lead in collaboration.

Whilst we can't change the impact of social factors that are faced by many disadvantaged groups, we can have a positive impact on a person's sense of self-worth and confidence. Knowing there's a huge need for our service and that we make a demonstrable difference to countless lives, our biggest challenge remains to ensure we're here in the future.

OUR NEW VISION

Our borough is a place where every individual and community is valued, supported and can thrive.

OUR NEW MISSION

to bring together and lead the community, providing opportunities and resources that value and empower all.



OUR VISION AND FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To respond to new challenges, our new strategy will focus on the following aims:

Developing a sustainable organisation that can meet the future needs of the community.

1

We will invest in making our organisation sustainable by growing our resilience and ambition in the following ways:

- Development of our people: staff, volunteers, trustees
- Diversifying our income streams
- Outreach and online delivery
- Signposting and collaboration
- Impact measurement
- Quality assurance

Engaging and empowering young people to participate, grow and achieve.

3

We will ensure more young people engage with our youth opportunities, mentoring and advocacy services to ensure that they achieve their potential:

- Youth clubs and sports projects
- 1-1 Mentoring
- Volunteering and social action
- Employability
- Youth Advisory Board

Reducing isolation and improving wellbeing in those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable.

2

We will provide a space for local people to feel connected and support each other through:

- Befriending services
- Open access clubs
- Volunteering opportunities
- Community events
- Advice services

Strengthening the community of Waltham Forest by sharing our space, voice and expertise.

4

We have listened to what the community has fed back to us and are prepared to play an important role in leading and strengthening the community by sharing resources and increasing overall capacity through:

- Partnership working
- Community room hire
- Community training
- Volunteering opportunities
- Community cohesion events



**WE GREW
OUR REACH
TO HELP MORE
PEOPLE**



5,000+
People Supported

85%
Services Rated
5 out of 5

7
Services Supported

20
Wards benefitted from
borough wide Map

60+
Volunteers

500+
COVID-19 Crisis Response
issues supported

8
Staff adapted to provide ur-
gent information & advice

12,889,624
Steps walked raising
£4,100 for our charity

90
New referrals for telephone
befriending for isolated
residents

4000+
Calls and Contacts

745
Telephone befriending calls
made to isolated senior citi-
zens

12
Volunteers making
befriending calls

200
people attended
Community Theatre
Group's Pantomime
raising £1,461
for work tackling isolation

50+
lunches delivered to
isolated senior citizens
courtesy of KraPow London

1957
keep in touch calls to
our seniors' club members

53
young people helped into
work, education or training.

£1,622
crowdfunding raised for the
festive hampers initiative
with WFWN

76
Christmas hampers delivered
to isolated senior citizens

20
Wellbeing Hampers delivered
to low income families

350
Gift packages/festive
hampers delivered to care
homes, single parents
and young people
in collaboration with
WFWN

VOICE OF OUR BENEFICIARIES



MARTINE

"I feel better than just having my daughter and granddaughter to speak to. Just speaking to someone else has made such a great difference to me. I look forward to my Thursdays and sometimes Fridays as I know I will be speaking to someone other than family. The Hub has done very well in keeping in touch."

MARTINE

a Senior Citizens Club member who developed a speech impairment following a stroke.

"Being in this lockdown has meant that I have been sat at home on my own as I cannot always get out due to my disability. Since lockdown begun, the Hub Team have been giving me weekly calls, which if I didn't have would have affected my mental health. They have proven to be my lifeline and I cannot thank them enough for this."



CLEM

a Senior Citizens Club member in his 60s with limited mobility

"Lovely to be thought of and not forgotten."

JUNE

a beneficiary of our Telephone Befriending Service



"I really appreciate all the phone calls you have made for being so concerned during the covid-19 lockdown. I did look forward to the weekly chat with you all as well as that wonderful hamper I received at Christmas."



WILMA JEAN CHUNG
a Senior Citizens Club member

"My experience at Headstart has been unique and interesting, and I have slowly gained some confidence."



PRESTON (14 years old)
a participant of our Headstart Action Programme.

"I learnt quite a few things on the Headstart Programme. I didn't even know there was a Community Hub until my Social Worker told me about it."

JAMIE (17 years old)
a participant of our Headstart Action Programme.

"Volunteering at the Hub gave me a new and wonderful insight into the community I live in. The staff at the Hub are like a family and have helped me find direction in my volunteering path and skills build up."

KARIMA

a volunteer who was flexible in supporting our activities during the pandemic.



"I've loved volunteering at the Hub and I look forward to going every week. I love being a part of the team. It's satisfying making relationships with others and doing something positive. Sonita (Volunteer Coordinator) is a great support, and has helped me with new befriendees, supporting and guiding me. During the pandemic I suddenly had no work, so this has given me a tiny bit of purpose in my week – it does me and my mental health a favour too."

HILARY a volunteer Telephone Befriender during Covid



**WE ADAPTED OUR
SERVICES TO MEET
CHANGING NEEDS**

SERVICES WE OFFERED

Telephone Befriending for isolated families

1-1 youth employability support

Detached youth work for 11-19 year olds

Weekly calls to Seniors

Information & Signposting

Emergency support

Food Parcels

Online youth work sessions

Hampers

SETTINGS WE SUPPORTED

Children & Adult Social Services

Local Communities

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Care Homes

Sheltered Accommodation

Mental Health Services

Social Prescribing Teams

Local Foodbanks

Mutual Aid Groups

GP Surgeries

Voluntary Organisations

Schools and Colleges



WE INNOVATED AND LAUNCHED NEW SERVICES

YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION & EMPLOYABILITY

Although we shut down our Youth Clubs at the start of the pandemic, we offered a telephone number for young people and their parents to contact us for any support. We delivered youth work online and continued to offer targeted social action and employability opportunities through City Leaders and Headstart Action to small groups of young people.

DISCORD COMMUNITY

Our Youth Advisory Board members supported us to use Discord, a platform designed for creating communities, to reach out to our younger Youth Club members. Users communicate with voice calls, video calls, text messaging and by sharing media files in private chats or as part of communities called “servers”.

During the pandemic, our Youth Advisory Board President, Gabriel, created a Discord community for the Community Hub where staff and volunteers were able to communicate effectively both via messages and voice calls. Even our own podcast, HubChat, which was created by our Youth Advisory Board, was



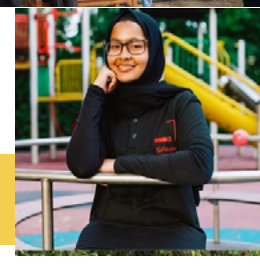
HUBCHAT PODCAST



MAARIYA



GABRIEL



TASNIM

Our Youth Advisory Board created their very own podcast! Maariya, Tasnim, and Gabriel worked together diligently in planning, recording and editing videos as well as uploading them online.

When asked about their experience in creating the podcast, Tasnim’s immediate response was “HubChat has been a very positive experience. It kept me busy and gave me something to look forward to during the pandemic while helping me improve my social and communications skills”. During their first season of HubChat, they tackled different social topics, as well as having local heroes as guests in some episodes and talked about their own interests. According to Maariya “some of the best moments during HubChat were sometimes off-camera. Getting to see every-

one prepare and get ready to be in front of the camera was something new to me. The funny chats and discussions we have before the cameras turn on always help us loosen our nerves while creating timeless memories for us". Currently the group is working on completing the second season of HubChat, which now takes place in a physical setting! Keep an eye on our social media for upcoming promotions.



ADAPTING TO PROVIDE TELEPHONE BEFRIENDING

After we shut down our Seniors Club and Youth Clubs in March 2020, we continued to provide weekly telephone support to our members. We realised we had to adapt the way we were used to doing things and start providing services remotely to ensure that our service users could still continue to access support from us.

As the word spread about our telephone support, we started to receive referrals from other local organisations as well. We soon realised the chaos and confusion felt by residents and many local organisations struggling to adapt and being really unprepared to support a crisis without knowing what resources were available in the community.

We set out to create a map of the borough, highlighting the emergency services people could tap into for support during the crisis. To do this we collaborated with many wonderful residents, Mutual Aid groups and grassroots organisations across the borough.



The map was created by Frances Reeves

OUR SIGN POSTING MAP

Waltham Forest Ward Map ~ COVID 19 Support Network

This special Waltham Forest Ward Map gives an overview of the mutual support and emergency services operating in different areas of the borough. The coloured dots act as rough ward locations of organisations and are only guideline indicators, however many are working borough-wide during this crisis. It's best to refer to them for more information.

- 1 Waltham Forest Council**
Community Help Network set up by the Connecting Communities Team
Helpline service offering support ~ **020 8496 3000**
www.walthamforest.gov.uk/covid-19

- 2 Citizens Advice Waltham Forest**
Essential advice services via telephone, including:
Advice line service | Universal Credit help line | Pension Wise
SENDIASS | Immigration service | Social Prescribing Service
Advice line ~ **0300 330 1175**
Professionals can refer by contacting
admin@citizensadvicewalthamforest.org.uk

- 3 Waltham Forest Community Hub**
Telephone befriending for young people & senior citizens
Monday to Friday from 10am - 5pm
www.wfchub.org
Office - **0208 223 0707** ~ info@wfchub.org
Youth number **07716736315**

- 4 Age UK Waltham Forest**
Shopping, Befriending, Information/Advice, form filling & emergency parcels.
Waltham Forest Resource Hub North,
58 Hall Lane
Chingford
E4 8EU
Monday to Friday from 10am - 3pm ~ **020 8558 5512**
Or via Community Network line ~ **020 8496 3000**
Email ~ info@ageukwalthamforest.org.uk
www.ageuk.org.uk/walthamforest

- 5 OrganicLea**
Essential food production, distribution, sale & delivery. Plus a Social Prescribing link worker providing a phone based service.
Telephone ~ **020 8524 4994**
Email ~ info@organiclea.org.uk
www.organiclea.org.uk

- 6 Highams Park Food Hub**
Have created a food aid group delivering prepared meals & food packages supplied to vulnerable people.
(Sponsored & jointly managed by -
All Saints Church / Waltham Forest Scouts & Highams Park Covid 19 Volunteers)
To request an application form please send an email to ~
highamparkfoodaid@gmail.com

- 7 Al-fath Trust**
Food & household essentials & home deliveries from ~
37 Palmerston Road,
Walthamstow, E17 6PR
Telephone ~ **07809 649312**
or **07984 062282**

- 8 Eat or Heat Food Bank**
Continuing to provide a Food Bank, but it can only be accessed by referral from one of the organisations on their website
Please check ~ www.eatorheat.org
Telephone ~ **0800 772 0212**

- 9 Waltham Forest Migrant Support**
Providing advice & information for migrants
Text your full name to ~ **07496394175** & somebody will call you back.
Please **do not call** this number as there is no-one to answer it.
www.wfma.org.uk

- 10 The HEET Project**
Focused on ensuring people on low incomes or with long-term health conditions or a disability have essential services such as water and heat.
Telephone ~ **0208 5201900**
www.theheetproject.org.uk

- 11 PL8 4U - Al Suffa**
Food Bank taking referrals via a completed PL84U referral form. To request this & for more information email ~ pl84u@suffa@gmail.com
Telephone ~ **07539364110**

- 12 Hornbeam**
Café is open as community food distribution centre providing freshly cooked nutritious ready meals on a pay as you feel basis.
Cafe hours for collecting meals from 12 - 3 pm weekdays.
Questions call ~ **07492915531**
Or email ~ Anne@hornbeam.org.uk
www.hornbeam.org.uk/hornbeam-covid-19

- 13 Revert 2 Reality**
Offering a telephone befriending service.
Telephone ~ **020 8610 9393** or **07976 807 268**
For more information ~ info@revert2reality.com

- 14 Samaritans Waltham Forest**
Telephone helpline ~ **0330 094 5717**
www.samaritans.org/branches/leyton

- 15 Elim Pentacostal Church**
Food Bank based in the Elim Pentacostal church
Open 10am - 12pm on Wednesday & Thursday via appointments or drop-in.
Telephone ~ **020 8539 2286**
Email ~ info@elimleytonstone.org

- 16 Salvation Army Leytonstone**
Supporting members of congregation & acting as a food bank in Leytonstone.
Food bank collections on Thursdays 10-11am
Telephone ~ **07827 031422** or **020 8558 7290**
Email ~ marie.burr@salvationarmy.org.uk

- 17 St Margaret with St Columba**
Offering a Food Share service.
Food Share ~ Thursday 2pm - 3pm £1.50 for a pre-prepared bag of food, either fresh or dried produce.
For more info call ~ **07709611310**
Email ~ stmargareta11@gmail.com

- 18 Cann Hall Mosque**
Emergency shopping & food supplies
145 Cann Hall road, E11 3NJ
admin@cannhall.org
Telephone ~ **020 8555 0963 / 07984 602475**

- 19 Rukhsana Khan Foundation**
Food bank
Open to the public for collections/donations on Saturdays ~ 10am - 12pm
William Morris Community Centre
6-8 Greenleaf Rd
Walthamstow, London E17 6QQ
www.rukhsanakhanfoundation.org
Telephone ~ **07939 232 123**

- 20 Kukoolala Cafe**
Drop off point for Food bank & a local Womens Refuge donations, plus free hot meals for those whom are vulnerable - part of Lea Bridge Mutual Aid support. Open to the public for collections/donations;
Tuesday to Saturday ~ 12.30pm - 3pm
3 Marsh Lane, Leyton, E10 7BL
Telephone ~ **0208 539 0732**
Email ~ aid@loveleabridge.com





**WE INCREASED
CAPACITY
THROUGH
COLLABORATION**

VOICE OF OUR PARTNERS

JOINT FUNDRAISING AND HAMPERS PROJECT WITH WALTHAM FOREST WOMEN'S NETWORK



“Collaboration on the Festive Hampers Project between our organisation and WF Community Hub gave us an opportunity to really work closely together on a cause close to our hearts during a difficult time. We formed strong bond and were able to work together on many more projects after that. We discovered real benefits to working in partnership, developing a support network and helping each other by drawing on each other’s expertise. “



FARAH AHMED

Chair of Waltham Forest Women's Network



“When word got out about what we were doing, donations in money, home made gifts, food you name it, people gave. From scrub hub who made the most beautiful scrub bags that we filled with delicious goodies for George Madon Lodge. Tiny knitted hearts, fabulous knitted hats from a lady whom we have never met.



We all worked together to bring a little kindness and happiness to people who we cared about. Care home staff, residents, homeless, migrants all received a gift of friendship.”



LESLEY FINLAYSON

Management Committee Member
of Waltham Forest Women's Network

JOINT COMMISSIONING OF BEFRIENDING SERVICE WITH CREST WALTHAM FOREST



We were commissioned jointly with Crest Waltham Forest to work collaboratively to co-design an operating model to deliver a Buddying and Befriending Service.

The target population was vulnerable residents aged between 18 and 59 with significant needs (often with multiple co-morbidities) who would benefit from being connected to support services that reduce/slow deterioration and increase independence and wellbeing.

It has been a huge learning curve for two very different charities in finding ways to collaborate and support each other during Covid.

“Having celebrated 50 years of supporting communities in WF in 2021 another local partnership opportunity to work with WF Community Hub was an additional development for CREST. Over the decades our different partnerships have been useful structures to enable the wider delivery of a broad range of services for local people. The Befriending Service is an excellent example of a service that can flourish due to the skills and expertise that rest across more than one organisation”.

CHRIS O’SULLIVAN

Co-ordinator
of the Befriending Service within CREST



COLLABORATION WITH THE METROPOLITAN POLICE

The collaboration with London Metropolitan Police has been hugely beneficial in the past year.

We've been fortunate to have the incredible support of Sirajuddin Nasir, who got involved in planning, risk assessing, fundraising, workshop delivery and deep level engagement with challenging young people.

His presence on our Youth Team not only gave us reassurance but helped to overcome perceptions and breakdown the huge barrier between the police and young people. Every youth provision could benefit from a 'team player' like Siraj, who has been a massive support for us.



"It's sad that my time has been limited with a great team who thoroughly enjoy working with partners & have a positive outlet for young people on the borough."

SIRAJUDDIN NASIRNG

London Met Youth Engagement Police Officer

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Previously we were supporting activities within our Car park, running regular events and delivering training to maximise income from venue hire to offset the high costs of running a building. During the past year we have had to rely heavily on grant funding from trusts and foundations, commissioning and donations, whilst we went into lockdown twice.

The Trustees have considered the reserves requirement for the charity and have agreed that our reserves level should always remain equivalent to at least three to six month's running costs. We were fortunate to receive emergency funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and a discretionary grant from London Borough of Waltham Forest, enabling us to meet some of the urgent needs of disadvantaged residents, particularly those who were shielding and those who were diagnosed as clinically extremely vulnerable.

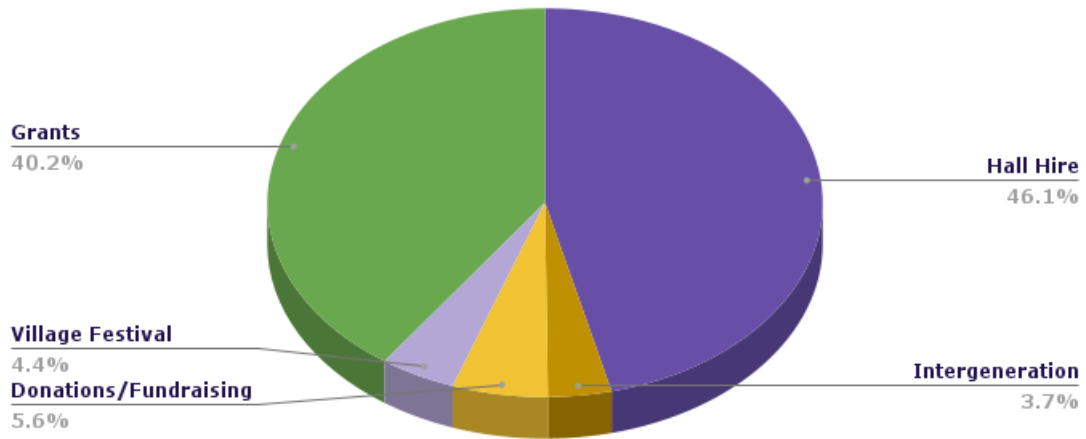
INCOME 20/21

Hall Hire	£118,109.00
Intergeneration	£9,453.00
Donations/Fundraising	£14,215.00
Village Festival	£11,311.00
Grants	£102,886.00
TOTAL	£255,974.00

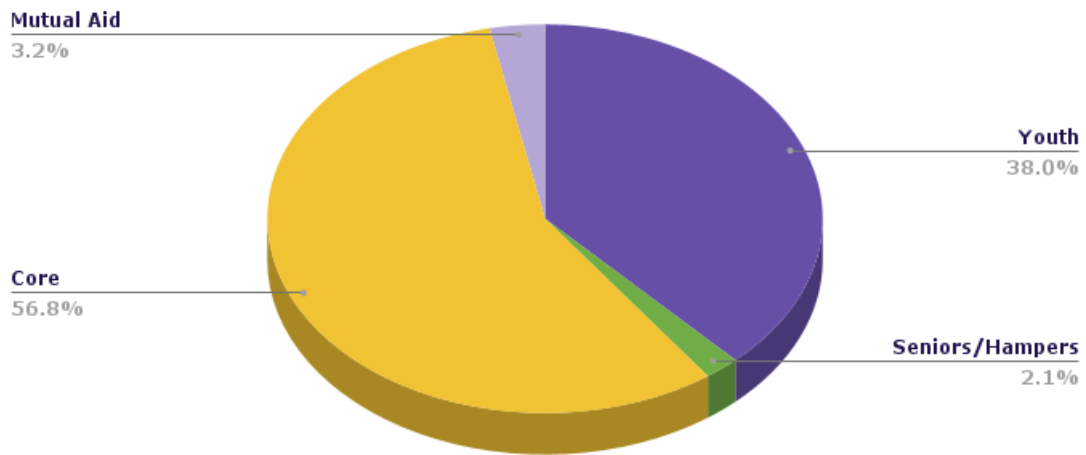
EXPENDITURE 20/21

Youth	£118,109.00
Seniors/Hampers	£9,453.00
Core	£14,215.00
Mutual Aid	£11,311.00
TOTAL	£233,973.00

INCOME



EXPENDITURE





THE YEAR AHEAD 2021 - 2022

Building on our strengths, partnering with others and listening to our community, we will make the best use of our resources to support the community where they need us. We will work collaboratively with other groups sharing ideas, skills and resources – making us more resilient and increasing our capacity to achieve our vision. Through strong governance, obtaining appropriate service user feedback and maintaining quality standards, we will continue to uphold our reputation as a trusted organisation delivering quality services.

Since 2005 we have been working to engage, empower and bring together diverse communities in Waltham Forest. Over the years we have adapted and developed our work streams to serve disengaged residents who are the most disadvantaged within our community. Being able to serve our community during crisis by creating an emergency map, offering emergency support and capturing stories of kindness from so many local people has been tremendously rewarding for our charity.

We will continue to lean into our five-year strategy and focus on co-production and lived experience so that we can better design and develop our services to adapt to the unmet needs of our beneficiaries. We will also be investing in a multi-year upskilling programme for our workforce to strengthen advocacy, safeguarding, wellbeing, service design and development. We will build upon the equality, diversity and inclusion work we started last year.

As we continue to grow, we will utilise our expertise, connections and influencing voice to effect the change needed to better support our beneficiaries, educate those working in wider public services on the role of the voluntary sector and promote human rights for everyone. I look forward to the experiences the next year will bring and the progress we will make together as a community.



MONWARA ALI
Director



Monwara with Tommy and Rose



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR WORK

Website: www.wfchub.org
Our Strategy 2021-2026

CONTACT

PHONE: 020 82230707
EMAIL: info@wfchub.org

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[@WalthamForestCommunityHub](https://www.facebook.com/WalthamForestCommunityHub)



[@wfcommhub](https://www.instagram.com/wfcommhub)



[@The Community Hub](https://www.youtube.com/TheCommunityHub)

