



CAMBRIDGE CONVOY REFUGEE ACTION GROUP

Cambridge Convoy Refugee Action Group

Annual Report 2018 - 2019

Published 17 October 2019

available online at camcrag.org.uk/docs/annualreport2019.pdf

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CamCrag Trustees (as of 16 October 2019)

David Adamson
Joanna Garratt
Elliot Harris
Tony King

Edward Sexton
Terry Spencer
Ian Tod
Catharine Walston

Published 17 October 2019

Small Company Charity Provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (FRS102) (effective 01/01/2016) and in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Cambridge Convoy Refugee Action Group

Registered Charity Number 1170180

c/o Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum

16-18 Arbury Court

Cambridge

CB4 2JQ



www.camcrag.org.uk



camb4calais

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report is a summary of the things that CamCrag volunteers have done over the last year, but in a way it only scratches the surface.

It's been four years now since the explosion of public awareness about the suffering and abuse experienced by displaced people looking for sanctuary in Europe, particularly on the Greek islands and in Northern France.

CamCrag formed as part of that response and continues to support refugees in France and Greece by sending volunteers, donated items and funds to NGOs who directly support refugees. Over the years we've forged strong links with these frontline NGOs, ensuring that everything we do is informed by real needs.

The needs have not gone away. Arrivals in Greece have risen sharply in recent months, rescue efforts are openly blocked by authorities, and camps are overflowing and lacking in basic services. There are still between 1,000 and 2,000 displaced people in the Calais and Dunkirk area, whose temporary 'camps' are subject to frequent police clearances. Paris has upwards of 3,000 refugees in similar conditions.

Among these there are unaccompanied children who have a legal right to be resettled in the UK but who, along with many adults, take dangerous risks because they cannot access this right. In some of the wealthiest countries in the world, traumatised people are subjected to fear and further trauma. Mental health issues and suicide are increasingly common.

Public awareness and media attention has largely moved on, but grassroots groups like ours remain committed. We're frequently asked how CamCrag still manages to raise thousands of pounds and engage an army of volunteers, when most other local solidarity groups have wound up or are soldiering on with a few dedicated, but often exhausted, people.

We believe it's simply that our philosophy has always been to try to help as many volunteers as possible get involved and learn the big secret: Anyone can make a difference. Our convoys to Calais, every six weeks or so, bring aid and both new and experienced volunteers to the Auberge Warehouse to support the front-line volunteers with our enthusiasm, skills and experience. Each of these convoy volunteers come back and advocate for people suffering as a direct result of government policies. Many others also work to make ponchos, collect donations, raise funds, salvage tents or just tell people about an ongoing crisis most have forgotten.

Inside this report you'll see a glimpse of the things our volunteers have accomplished. We want to thank every single one of you for what you've achieved with us and we're looking forward with pride to what we will achieve next year, together. We're only just getting started.

CamCrag volunteers on the November 2018 weekend convoy, at the L'Auberge warehouse in Calais.

See camcrag.org.uk/convoys for upcoming convoy dates, and how to apply.



CONVOYS AND THE FUTURE

CONVOYS IN 2019

Volunteers continue to sign up for our convoys and to help with a wide variety of jobs in the warehouse. From chopping onions to splitting logs, sorting clothes to distributing food, we are always welcomed by the team from Help Refugees and LAuberge des Migrants. CamCrag has organised seven Convoys to Calais over the past year, taking the total number of people who have gone to help out at the warehouse for a weekend to over 650 since we first started! We will continue to support the work on the ground in this way for as long as there are still refugees in need there, and volunteers willing to help.

VOLUNTEERING IN CALAIS FROM OCTOBER 2019 ONWARDS

Help Refugees and French association LAuberge des Migrants have been running the current warehouse in Calais for the last four years, providing an umbrella for a number of organisations and directly managing some services, including Non-Food Item (NFI) distribution. Up to this point, CamCrag convoy volunteers have registered with Help Refugees and worked in the Refugee Community Kitchen (RCK), the Calais Woodyard and on sorting NFIs in the warehouse.

Throughout the rest of Europe, Help Refugees primarily funds and supports other NGOs, rather than delivering services directly. Going forwards they are focussing their activity on this funding and support, which they consider their particular strength.

Therefore, from October 2019, Help Refugees will cease running operational activities in France, instead providing funding and support to the organisations providing services. RCK and Calais Woodyard will remain in the Auberge warehouse, while NFI sorting and distribution will now be handled by Collective Aid in a warehouse in the same area of Calais.

CamCrag is pleased to enjoy a close relationship with RCK, the Woodyard and Collective Aid, and will continue to bring convoy volunteers and collected donations from Cambridge to work with these groups.

CAMCRAG IN 2019-20

In August 2019 we held a consultation with our trustees, committee members and any volunteers who chose to come along to think about our priorities over the next 12 months.

The key suggestions which came out were to:

- Continue our 6-weekly volunteer and donated aid convoys to Calais
- Organise some longer 4-day volunteer convoys further afield, such as Brussels or Paris
- Continue with the very successful Poncho Project
- Spend a higher proportion of our funds supporting work in Greece, as this is where the highest concentration of people in need is
- Seek activities to fund which can change people's situation (i.e. advice or legal aid) as well as meeting basic needs
- Open a fund to support local volunteers with transport costs for long-term volunteer placements in Greece
- Support other solidarity groups around the country to benefit from our experience and contacts when organising their own convoys
- Share more information with our volunteers and supporters about other groups in Cambridge, the UK and abroad who they may wish to volunteer with
- Continue and expand the 'Tentastic' project, including Tentfest, SOS Tents and Big Cambridge-Calais Sleepout, involving more volunteers in the organisation and delivery
- Prepare as best we can to minimise the potential impact on volunteers of Brexit, especially regarding border controls between the UK and France

VOLUNTEERS

CamCrag has a great group of dedicated volunteers ranging from sixth form and university students to retirees and grandparents. They all contribute in their own ways to the smooth running of the organisation.

Some go on CamCrag's regular convoys, usually to northern France but perhaps in the future further afield. Whilst there, they help with preparing food, chopping firewood, sorting and mending clothes and bedding, repairing tents and distributing aid to refugees.

Others put their energies into the back-up operation in Cambridge, where there is always plenty to do.

Volunteers provide CamCrag with fundraising ideas and run our regular fundraising events. In the last year these have included concerts, a poetry reading, a sponsored mid-winter sleep out and winter fair, a three-week art exhibition in central Cambridge and regular poncho sewing sessions, producing a continuous supply of warm, light, easily washed ponchos for which there is endless demand in northern France.

Volunteers also staff our regular donation collections, where people can bring clothing, bedding, tents and other supplies for us to deliver to refugees. And they help us to sort and repair these donations. In September this year, we ran a very successful one day 'Tentfest', where around ninety volunteers sorted, put up, checked, repaired, took down and packed up hundreds of discarded tents salvaged from summer music festivals. Volunteers have also washed and repaired large numbers of sleeping bags over the course of the summer, discarded at the same festivals.

CamCrag works hard to raise awareness of the continuing refugee crisis and volunteers have run stalls at community events, given talks and presentations to interested groups, written articles and distributed publicity.

We are enormously grateful for all this hard work and for the generosity of everyone who gives their precious time. In order to support our volunteer effort, Salesforce recently donated a brand new CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system to us, which allows us to keep in close contact with our volunteers, register particular skills they may have, and alert them to projects and events that may be of interest to them.

If you would like to join our band of active volunteers, and donate your time and skills, please register at camcrag.secure.force.com/member. Email volunteer@camcrag.org.uk if you have any questions.

Our monthly e-newsletter contains general news about the charity and upcoming events - sign up at camcrag.org.uk/newsletter



Volunteers on the October 2018 convoy to Calais - but there's plenty you can do in Cambridge as well!

FUNDRAISING AND EVENTS

It has been another amazing year of fundraisers and events, thanks to your creative ideas and hard work!

During the year since July 2018, we have raised over £10,000 for our funds through events and activities either organised by CamCrag or by other groups on our behalf. The biggest fundraiser was our **second Sleepout** at St Giles Church in January, and which raised £4,493 each for CamCrag and for the Whitworth Trust, which supports vulnerable, homeless young women in Cambridge. A third Sleepout is planned in February 2020.



CamCrag's stall at Strawberry Fair in June 2019

In June, linked to Refugee Week activities, we organised a three-week-long **art exhibition on the theme of 'Home'** at the Michaelhouse Centre. The exhibition aimed to raise awareness about homeless people in Cambridge and homeless refugees in northern France. Over 60 pieces of work were displayed. We raised about £1,200 for CamCrag and the Cambridge Churches Homeless Project.

Two **concerts organised by Diana Kazemi** at her home raised nearly £1,500. She is arranging another folk concert in November.

In March **Valerie and Marc Kerr ran the Cambridge Half Marathon**, which raised £539 for us, while in June **pupils at Hills Road Sixth Form College** collected £475 in a sponsored bike ride and quiz.

Three other events raised a total of £805 for CamCrag: Small World Dancing Club In November, Dave Kelso's Christmas gig, and the Strummers folk collective gig in June.



Volunteers enjoy a final dinner at St Giles before the January 2019 sponsored sleepout

Mill Road Winter Fair, Strawberry Fair, a City of Sanctuary event with Abdulaziz Dukhan, and Holocaust Memorial Day in March.

A huge thank you to everyone who supported these events, especially to the organisers.

A huge thank you to everyone who supported these events, especially to the organisers.



Viewing evening of our 'Home' art exhibition

BIG SLEEPOUT 2019

This year our second sponsored Big Sleepout, on 26th and 27th of January, hosted once more by St. Giles church on Castle Hill, raised over £9,000.

This year our charity partner was the Whitworth Trust, which supports homeless and vulnerable young women in Cambridge.

We held a 'Winter Fair' during the Saturday afternoon with our volunteers organising fabulous raffle hampers, flyers, soup, teas and coffees, delicious cakes, photographs and ponchos.

The afternoon finished with speeches from Councillor Douglas de Lacey, Maddie from RCK in Calais, and Ruth Jackson, the chair of the Whitworth Trust - which is when we heard the heartbreaking news that Whitworth House, the accommodation for young women run by the Whitworth Trust, was to have its funding cut and would have to close.

After our evening meal we settled down to sleep (or try to) in tents and, in a few cases, under just a tarpaulin! Whereas last year the weather had been windy but mild, the signs this year were more ominous with a front coming in from the West, and sure enough, at 4am we were hit by a storm - wind and freezing rain.

Everybody managed to stay reasonably warm and dry and at 7am, while the aroma of bacon rolls started to fill the church, a few of us travelled to BBC Radio Cambridgeshire for an interview (although we were possibly less than coherent).

Twenty two sleepers braved the weather that night and the final tally from sponsorship and the Winter Fair was £9,274. In April we were presented with a very big (in both senses) cheque by the mayor, Gerri Bird, at the Guildhall.

And in May we learnt that a motion to extend funding to Whitworth House for a further 18 months was passed by the County Council's Children and Young People Committee.

Read more about the sleepout and other projects at camcrag.org.uk/projects



The Saturday afternoon winter fair was a great success



Councillor Douglas de Lacey speaks ahead of the sleepout



Volunteers braved the wind and rain outside the Church to raise money for CamCrag and The Whitworth Trust

COMMUNICATIONS

CamCrag was born on social media and our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter feeds are always humming with news, campaigns and events.

Whilst we know that this is how many of our supporters find us and stay in touch, we also know that lots of people don't use Facebook so our website and newsletter remain key to our communications.

Although the new legislation on GDPR had an impact on our mailing list in May last year, newsletter sign-ups at the University Freshers Fair, Mill Road Winter Fair, Cambridge Assessment Refugee Week Volunteering Fair and Strawberry Fair, as well as after convoys, have brought numbers up well above previous levels, with over 600 subscribers, almost 50% of whom are rated 'very engaged' by Mailchimp. Our **Facebook Group has over 1,500 active members**, and we have new requests for membership at least weekly, which shows that people remain interested and concerned about refugees, despite the lack of media coverage.

We continue to campaign for press coverage and succeeded in getting good coverage for the Sleepout in January, with interviews on local TV and radio, and **articles in the Cambridge News, Cambridge Independent and CU student newspaper Varsity**. The subsequent Big Cheque handover was also covered in the local print media, aided by the support of the mayor, Gerri Bird, and Professor Lord Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, who is a trustee of our partner charity, the Whitworth Trust.

The Home Art exhibition in June was also covered by the local papers, radio and That's TV, but a real coup was an item on **BBC Look East on 1 March about our convoys**. For this, the BBC used one of the brilliant videos made by Sol Escobar, who has done a great job of documenting recent CamCrag activities. We are also very grateful to Lucy Eden for her continuing design work, producing leaflets and posters often at very short notice. We are lucky to have a fantastic dedicated communications team but always need help!

Got skills you can offer the communications team? Email volunteer@camcrag.org.uk

Press and other media outlets please email publicity@camcrag.org.uk

**Our monthly e-newsletter contains general news about the charity and upcoming events:
Sign up at camcrag.org.uk/newsletter**

www.camcrag.org.uk

  [camb4calais](https://www.facebook.com/camb4calais)



**CamCrag continues to promote interest in the refugee crisis in the local media:
You can find a full list of media mentions at camcrag.org.uk/mediacoverage**

DONATIONS AND PONCHO PROJECT

DONATIONS

There has been a fantastic response to our requests for donations since last October. So much so that we have entirely filled our donation shed! We've held five **drop off days in church halls in Histon, Fulbourn, Chesterton, Cambourne, and St John's on Hills Road.**

People have been incredibly generous and have turned up with bags full of sleeping bags, tents and walking boots, all of which are ideal for conditions in Calais.

Some very kind people drove all the way from Norfolk with a huge bin bag full of brand new underwear and others have made up individual snug packs with warm hats, gloves and scarves for the new arrivals to Europe.

In addition to this, we have collected van loads of donations from our drop-off points at **Daily Bread in King's Hedges** and the **Argyle Street Housing Co-op**. Daily Bread have also sold cards for us and keep a collection pot by their till, which has raised hundreds of pounds this year. Staff at **Cambridge Assessment** organised a collection for us during Refugee Week too. All of this is much appreciated.

One Step Beyond Events, who organise the Cambridge Half Marathon, agreed that we could have eleven giant bags of fleeces and coats left by runners at the start line! Although that took some sorting, it provided us with many boxes of warm clothing to take to Calais.

As conditions have changed in Calais, so has the type and quantity of items needed. We are still collecting small tents, sleeping bags, blankets, and warm men's clothing, but we have a huge stock of women's clothing, and would request that people donate no more.

Please see www.camcrag.org.uk/donating for current information about what we need, and don't need, and where to take it - do email donations@camcrag.org.uk if you have any questions.



Donations from January's drop off day

PONCHO PROJECT

The poncho project turns blankets bought by CamCrag into ponchos for distribution to refugees, thanks to the time, hard work and sewing machines of dozens of volunteers. The team have had a busy year, making over 1000 ponchos to send to Calais, as well as a whole range of different coloured ponchos and crafts to raise money for the blankets. The NGOs in Calais gave us great feedback and have asked us to keep sending more. Thank you to all our wonderful cutters, pinners, sewers and folders, and to those who have helped lead sessions, transport materials and coordinate events. It's been a real team effort and we look forward to welcoming new people to the team this year - for more information see camcrag.org.uk/ponchos or email ponchos@camcrag.org.uk



Remaining sewing sessions in 2019

Friday 18 October 11.30am to 6.30pm

Friday 13 December 11.30am to 6.30pm

All sessions are at Hartington Grove Meeting House
91 - 93 Hartington Grove, CB1 7UB

We are also holding a festive offcuts decoration workshop on 23 November at Jesus Lane Friends Meeting House, to make Christmas decorations for sale at the Mill Road Winter Fair and other events.

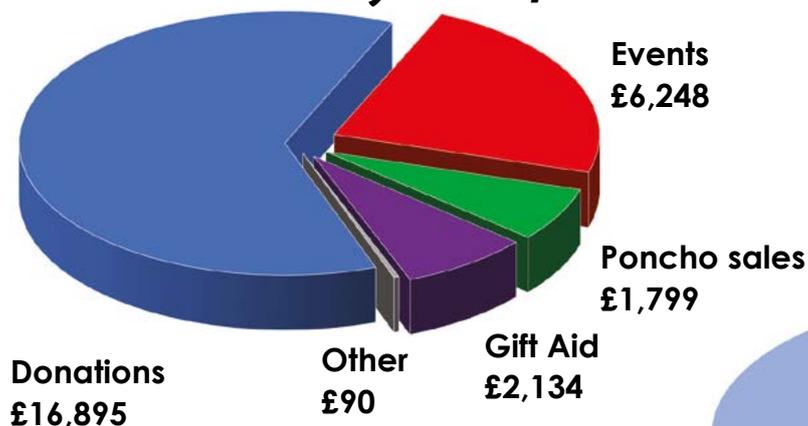
To register your interest in a sewing session email ponchos@camcrag.org.uk



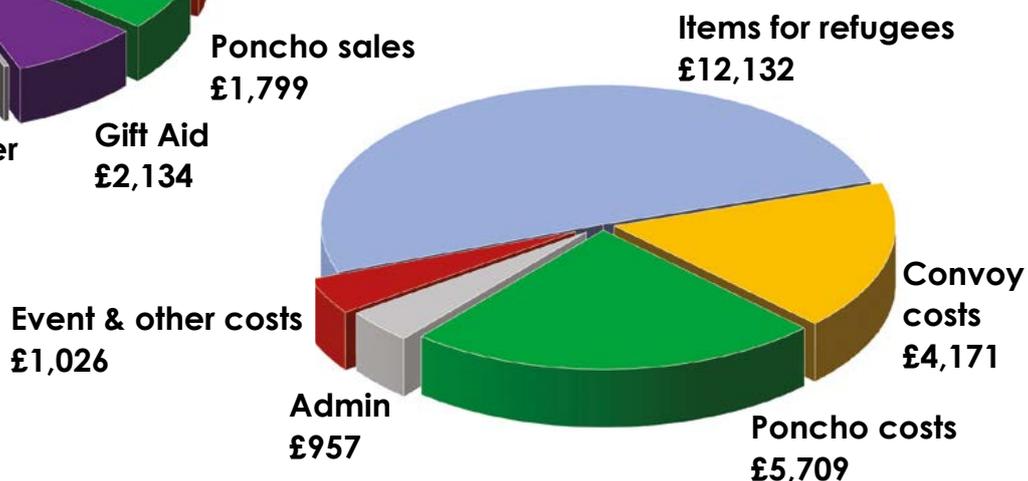
Decorations made from poncho offcuts

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

Where our money came from in 2018/19...



...and how we spent it



ACCOUNTS

For the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019. All figures to the nearest £

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Receipts						
Donations (cash and bank transfers)	14,231	2,664	16,895	16,303	23,435	15,032
Fundraising events (organised by us)	6,248	-	6,248	14,090	11,754	5,283
Sale of cards	87	-	87	157	307	492
Sale of ponchos	-	1,799	1,799	890	-	-
Gift Aid	2,134	-	2,134	-	-	-
Administration	3	-	3	-	-	-
Total Receipts	22,703	4,463	27,166	31,480	35,630	20,807
Payments						
Cost of events	895	-	895	25	627	-
Cost of cards	131	-	131	71	101	103
Purchases of items for refugees	12,132	-	12,132	22,692	20,139	14,395
Convoy costs	4,171	-	4,171	2,908	5,043	4,310
Production costs for ponchos	1,346	4,363	5,709	5,272	-	-
Administration	957	-	957	927	168	294
Total Payments	19,632	4,363	23,995	31,894	26,078	19,102
Net of receipts / (payments)	3,071	100	3,171	-415	9,552	1,704
Cash funds last year end	10,841	-	10,841	11,256	1,704	-
Cash funds this year end	13,912	100	14,012	10,841	11,256	1,704

The charity has no assets besides cash funds, and no liabilities

THANK YOU!

CamCrag would like to thank the many individuals and groups who have helped us throughout the year. We could not do what we do without you.

We would like to extend a special thank you to these CamCrag supporters:

St Giles Church & Revd Ank Rigelsford

Councillor Douglas de Lacey (South Cambridgeshire District Council)

Michaelhouse Centre & Great St Mary's Church

Diana Kazemi

Valerie and Marc Kerr

Hills Road Sixth Form College Year 12 Cambridge to Calais Bike Riders

Dave Kelso

Strummers Folk Collective

St Mark's Church, Newnham

Jesus Lane & Hartington Grove Friends Meetings

Box Café

Downing Place United Reform Church

Selwyn College

Artists and contributors to Home Art exhibition, Liz Stephan & Deanna Tyson

Cambridge University RAG

Girton College

Homerton College

Corpus Christi College

Emmaus

Daily Bread

Argyle Street Housing (ASH) Coop

Thanks also to the Gates Scholars for their volunteering days, to every individual donor and, most importantly, to all our volunteers who have come on convoys, delivered leaflets and posters, sorted donations, sewn ponchos, baked cakes, staffed stalls, attended meetings and so much more.



Cambridge Convoy Refugee Action Group
registered charity number 1170180
Annual Report 17 October 2019



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name Cambridge Convoy Refugee Action Group	No (if any) 1170180
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CC16a

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01/07/18	To	Period end date 30/06/19
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations (cash and bank transfers)	14,231	2,664	-	16,895	16,303
Fundraising events (organised by us)	6,248	-	-	6,248	14,090
Sale of cards	87	-	-	87	157
Sale of ponchos	-	1,799	-	1,799	890
Gift Aid	2,134	-	-	2,134	-
Admin	3	-	-	3	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	22,703	4,463	-	27,166	31,440
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	22,703	4,463	-	27,166	31,440
A3 Payments					
Cost of fundraising events	895	-	-	895	25
Cost of cards	131	-	-	131	71
Purchases of items for refugees	12,132	-	-	12,132	22,692

Convoy costs	4,171	-	-	4,171	2,908
Admin	957	-	-	957	927
Ponchos	1,346	4,363	-	5,709	5,272
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	19,632	4,363	-	23,995	31,895

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	

Total payments	19,632	4,363	-	23,995	31,895
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Net of receipts/(payments)	3,071	100	-	3,171	- 455
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	10,841	-	-	10,841	-
Cash funds this year end	13,912	100	-	14,012	- 455

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	At Unity Trust	13,912	100	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	13,912	100	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
	Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Small stock of cards and badges		-	-
	Small stock of ponchos ready for sale		-	-
	Collecting pots		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

		-	-
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B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
J Garratt	JOANNA GARRATT	07/06/2020

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of **Cambridge Convoy Refuge Action Group**
(Charity number **1170180**)
on the accounts for the year ended 30 June 2019

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 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

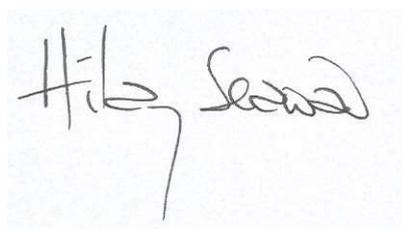
- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. 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 seeking explanations from the 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 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.

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination

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



Hilary Seaward, FCA
Chartered Accountant
9 Sherlock Road
Cambridge, CB3 0HR

31 May 2020